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BACK-TO-SCHOOL PLANNING FOR TENNESSEE PARENTS INCLUDES UPDATING IMMUNIZATIONS FOR THEIR CHILDREN

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Tennessee children are currently enjoying their summer break – swimming, going to camps, or just spending time outside – and this is a good time when parents can make sure their children are ready for back-to-school with up-to-date immunizations.

“We want all children to be safe, healthy, and ready to learn in the classroom as we get ready for another school year,” Tennessee Health Commissioner Ralph Alvarado, MD, FACP said. “Just like school supplies and proper school attire, we know back-to-school immunizations are an important part of getting ready for another school year.”

What Parents Should Know

- Kindergarteners and other children enrolling in a Tennessee school for the first time must provide schools with a complete, official Tennessee Immunization Certificate before classes begin. The certificate must be signed by a qualified health care provider or verified by the state’s Immunization Information System.
- All current students entering seventh grade are required to give the school a limited official Tennessee Immunization Certificate showing they have had a booster shot for tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis, also called a Tdap booster.
- Immunization requirements for college entry vary by institution, but teens who have had all recommended vaccines including their meningitis booster, after they turn 16, will meet all state-run college’s requirements.

Immunizations are available from most health care providers across the state, including county health departments. The complete list of Tennessee child care and school immunization requirements can be found on TDH’s website at [tn.gov/health/cedep/immunization-program/ip/vfc](https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/immunization-program/ip/vfc).

Local schools and school districts can provide information about when and how parents should provide immunization certificates.

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