

Immunisation after enrolment

Information for parents/carers of children enrolled in an early childhood services in Victoria

From 1 November 2018, parents and carers of children attending early childhood education and care services in Victoria are required to provide the service with evidence that their child continues to be up to date with immunisations while attending the service.¹

This is in addition to the requirement that parents/carers provide evidence of their child's up-to-date immunisation status in order to initially enrol in an early childhood service.

Who does this apply to?

This new requirement applies to parents/carers of children enrolled in long day care, kindergarten, occasional care and family day care (early childhood services).

Parents/carers are responsible for maintaining their child's immunisation and for ensuring the service has current evidence of immunisation.

Early childhood services are required to regularly request this evidence from parents/carers of children attending the service.

Why is this required?

The Victorian Government introduced this requirement to provide an important reminder to parents/carers about immunisation as part of a continued effort to maintain high childhood immunisation rates and protect the community from vaccine-preventable diseases.

While the majority of children in Australia are fully vaccinated, these additional requests can assist parents/carers to remember and prioritise timely vaccination in the face of competing life pressures.

Accurate and up-to-date evidence of immunisation also helps services and health authorities to quickly identify children at risk (for example, children too young to be fully immunised against a disease), and take whatever

action is required to protect health if there is an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease at the service.

What is the early childhood service required to do?

Twice a year, usually at the same time as other update requests, the service will request parents/carers to provide evidence of up-to-date immunisation for their attending child. Services review the immunisation evidence provided to make sure it meets the requirements of the law, and keep it with the child's enrolment records. This record may be reviewed by a health authority in the event of a disease outbreak at the service.

What are you required to do?

If your child has received a vaccine while they are attending an early childhood service, you are required to obtain an updated Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) and provide it to your child's service.

If you receive a request from the service for the latest Immunisation History Statement, and you know you have already provided this to the service, **you do not need to provide another copy.**

What is an Immunisation History Statement?

It is a statement from the AIR that shows what vaccines your child has received and, if applicable, which vaccines are due in the future, and when. If a child cannot have a vaccine for medical reasons, this will be listed on the statement. All vaccines recorded on the AIR will appear in your child's Immunisation History Statement. It is the job of the vaccine provider to tell the AIR when they give your child a vaccine and which vaccines they have given. The vaccines are provided

¹ *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, section 143E

free under the National Immunisation Program Schedule.

When do I provide a new Immunisation History Statement?

You can do this as soon as is practical after your child receives a vaccination, or in response to a request from the early childhood service.

How do I obtain an Immunisation History Statement?

The quickest way to get your child's Immunisation History Statement is by using your Medicare online account through myGov or the Express Plus Medicare mobile app. Alternatively, you can visit your local Medicare service centre or request for your child's statement to be posted to you by calling the AIR enquiries line on 1800 653 809. It can take up to 14 days to get an Immunisation History Statement by post.

How do I tell if my child is 'up to date'?

Review your child's most recent AIR Immunisation History Statement. At the bottom of the statement, there is a section titled 'Next due immunisation(s)'. If the date of the next due vaccination is in the future, then your child's immunisations are up to date for their age. If your child has completed all their childhood vaccinations, there will be no vaccines listed under the 'Next due immunisation(s)' heading.

What if I need help?

Discuss your situation with your child's service. Services can provide information regarding local support or immunisation services. If you have questions or concerns about immunisation speak with your doctor.

Why immunise?

Immunisation is a proven and safe way to be protected against diseases that cause serious illness and sometimes death. Immunisations are free and protect the vaccinated person as well as those in the community who can't be vaccinated by reducing the chance of diseases spreading.

When are immunisations due?

The National Immunisation Schedule program provides free vaccinations to children at birth, 2 months (from as early as six weeks), 4, 6, 12 and 18 months of age and 3½-4 years of age.

To find out what immunisations your child needs:

- see your doctor or contact your local council immunisation service
- search 'childhood immunisation' on the [Better Health Channel](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au) <www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au>.

More information

- [Better Health Channel](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au) <www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au>
- [Department of Health and Human Services website](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation) <www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation>
- [Commonwealth Government Department of Health and Ageing Immunise Australia Program](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au) <www.immunise.health.gov.au>
- For translated versions of this document search 'starting childcare or kindergarten' on [Health Translations](http://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au) <www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au>
- Translating and interpreting service call 131 450

To receive this publication in an accessible format phone 1300 882 008 using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or [email](mailto:immunisation@dhhs.vic.gov.au) <immunisation@dhhs.vic.gov.au>.

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Available at: <www.health.vic.gov.au/no-jab-no-play>