

School Health Update



DIVISION OF SCHOOL HEALTH

Chief of the Division of School Health

Colleen Schultz

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Please begin contacting the School Health Nurse Consultant in your region. Contact information below:

School Health Nurse Consultants

- Brenda Wallace – NW
bwallace@pa.gov (717) 571-2267
- Tammy Burford – SW
tburford@pa.gov (724) 290-7526
- Donna Wiles – NC
dowiles@pa.gov (570) -875-8674
- Ed Woods – SC
edwoods@pa.gov (717) 736-7375
- Sheri Mountz - NE
smountz@pa.gov (570) 892-4080
- Sharon Lawrence – SE
sharolawre@pa.gov (570) 590-9551

As a reminder, if there have been any changes regarding new nursing staff, nurse retirements, etc. please notify your school nurse consultant of the changes so we may keep our distribution lists up to date.





SEIZURE RECOGNITION AND FIRST AID TRAINING

On November 17, 2021, Act 84 was signed into law in Pennsylvania. This law, which is effective at the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year, added section 1414.11, related to seizure recognition and related first aid to the Public School Code. Act 84 enables professional employees of a school entity to be trained in seizure recognition and response through an online course or in-person training approved by Department of Health (DOH). The training is not required, but can count toward a professional educator's continuing professional education requirement and a school or system leader's continuing professional education requirement.

The following course from the Epilepsy Foundation meets the requirements of Act 84 and is approved for use in Pennsylvania schools:

[Seizure Training for School Personnel](#)

ACT 122 OF 2020:

VISION SCREENING

New vision screening guidelines will go into effect **after** regulations are promulgated. There is no definitive timeframe. School Health will send out more information when available.

Refugee Health Resources

As of August 1, 2022 individuals in Pennsylvania submitted nearly 6,000 applications to sponsor Ukrainian refugees. The below link provides information on Pennsylvania's Refugee Health Program.

<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/refugeesinpa/Pages/Refugee-Health.aspx#:~:text=%E2%80%8BREFUGEE%20HEALTH%20PROGRAM&text=The%20Refugee%20Health%20Program%20works,the%20way%20of%20successful%20resettlement.>

PA HAN 655 (attached) also provides additional information and resources.

Communicable Disease Questions

Please contact your state health center or your local county health department.

Please see website for contact information for your county.

<https://www.health.pa.gov/About/Pages/State%20Health%20Centers.aspx>

Medical Marijuana Questions

Please contact [717-547-3047](tel:717-547-3047) or

RA-DHMedMarijuana@pa.gov

The Division of School Health has no regulatory authority over the use of marijuana products in schools. We may only refer you to the medical marijuana program and its website.

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/programs/Medical%20Marijuana/Pages/School.aspx>

DIVISION OF IMMUNIZATION UPDATES

2022-23 Updates to the School Immunization Law Report (SILR)

For the 2022-23 school year there will be changes to the SILR reporting. Homeschooled students will be reported separately on database entries with an additional group of columns added. Please make sure you have all homeschool students' immunization data and exemptions available for this reporting.

Also, a friendly reminder, as always, the reporting period is December 1st through December 31st. To minimize issues, we encourage you to prepare to have the report entered as early as possible in December so that if issues do arise, you will have time to correct them, with help as necessary. Have a great school year!

IMMUNIZATION QUESTIONS



Please contact the Division of Immunizations at 717-787-5681.

School immunization information can be found at: <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/programs/immunizations/Pages/School.aspx>

COVID Guidance 22-23 School Year

COVID Health Guidance has moved to the [PA Department of Health COVID](#) page. The COVID Resources for Schools page has the most current guidance and information, in addition to PA HAN 656 (attached):

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/schools.aspx>

The CDC recently released [updated guidance](#) for schools as it relates to COVID-19. As noted previously, we encourage schools to align with CDC guidance to prepare for the upcoming school year.

The recently released CDC guidance includes updated recommendations for the management of COVID-19 in K-12 schools, including:

- Removed the recommendation to cohort
- Changed recommendation to conduct screening testing to focus on high-risk activities during high COVID-19 Community Level or in response to an outbreak
- Removed the recommendation to quarantine, except in high-risk congregate settings
- Removed information about Test to Stay

We strongly encourage schools to **voluntarily** continue their weekly reporting of COVID-19 cases to DOH. Schools may begin reporting positive cases to DOH at any time during the school year. Due to the unpredictability of COVID-19 variants and the low vaccination rate among school-aged children, understanding the spread of COVID-19 in schools continues to be an important tool for managing increases in cases and outbreaks. Public health responses to outbreaks may be delayed for schools if this level of case information is not reported. As a reminder, schools should contact DOH for technical assistance or public health consultation at RA-DHK12Epi@pa.gov, and schools within a [county or municipal health department](#) jurisdiction should continue to follow local reporting processes.

DOH will continue providing free testing resources to schools for the 2022-23 school year. If you have questions about the school testing program, please contact DOH at RA-DHK12COVIDTEST@pa.gov.

