

IMMUNIZATION Update

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Updates on 2024 Louisiana legislative session and vaccinations

Louisiana's 2024 legislative session saw significant changes to the state's vaccination laws, reflecting evolving perspectives on public health and individual rights. Gov. Jeff Landry signed three important bills into law, impacting providers, school administrations and school health providers. These changes, set to take effect on August 1, 2024, emphasize the need for awareness and adherence to the new regulations.



Key Legislative Changes:

HB46 by Representative Edmonston

- **Summary:** Stipulates that no person shall be required to receive a COVID-19 vaccine as a condition of enrollment or attendance at any public or non-public school.
- **Current Status:** Signed by the Governor, now Act 674.
- **Implications:** School administrators must ensure that COVID-19 vaccination is not a mandatory prerequisite for students enrolling in or attending their institutions.

HB47 by Representative Edmonston

- **Summary:** Mandates that all communications (from educational and other facilities list in La. R.S. 17:170) regarding immunization requirements must include information on available exemptions. Also provides that exemptions listed in La. R.S. 17:170 apply not only to students seeking to enter school, but also to those currently attending school.
- **Current Status:** Signed by the Governor, now Act 675.
- **Implications:** Schools must update their immunization communication materials to include exemption information and apply exemptions comprehensively to both new and

current students.

HB908 by Representative Amedee

- **Summary:** Prohibits discrimination against students based on their vaccination status.
- **Current Status:** Signed by the Governor, now Act 460.
- **Implications:** Schools and providers must ensure that no student is discriminated against due to their vaccination status.

Action steps for providers and administrators:

- **Update Policies:** Review and revise school policies to align with the new laws, ensuring compliance by August 1, 2024.
- **Educate Staff:** Conduct training sessions for school health providers and administrative staff to ensure they understand the new requirements and can implement them effectively.
- **Communicate Changes:** Inform parents, students and staff about these legislative updates, highlighting how they affect school vaccination requirements and exemption processes.
- **Monitor Compliance:** Establish monitoring mechanisms to ensure ongoing compliance with the new laws and address any issues that arise promptly.

The changes enacted in this legislative session highlight the importance of balancing public health goals with individual rights. By staying informed and proactive, providers and school administrators can ensure a smooth transition and maintain a supportive educational environment for all students.

The content contained in this Update is general information and should not be construed as legal advice. It is not designed to be and should not be relied upon as your sole source of information when analyzing and resolving a specific legal issue. If you have specific questions regarding a particular legal issue, you should consult with your own attorney or with the legal counsel for your organization.

Updated 2024-2025 flu vaccine recommendation

CDC recommends everyone 6 months of age and older, with rare exceptions, receive an updated 2024-2025 flu vaccine to reduce the risk of influenza and its potentially serious complications this fall and winter.

Most people need only one dose of the flu vaccine each season. While CDC recommends flu vaccination as long as influenza viruses are circulating, September and October remain the best times for most people to get vaccinated.



The updated 2024-2025 flu vaccine will be trivalent and will protect against an H1N1, H3N2 and a B/Victoria lineage virus. The composition of this season's vaccine compared to last year has been updated with a new [influenza A\(H3N2\) virus](#).

Updated RSV vaccination recommendations for adults 60+

If you have not already received an RSV vaccine and are age 60 or older, CDC now recommends a single dose of RSV vaccine as listed below:

- Everyone ages 75 and older
- People ages 60-74 who are at increased risk of severe RSV, meaning they have certain chronic medical conditions, such as lung or heart disease, or they live in nursing homes or other long-term care facilities.

The updated recommendation for adults 60 and older simplifies RSV vaccine decision-making for clinicians and the public. It is based on data about those most likely to get a severe RSV illness and on the effectiveness of RSV vaccines introduced in 2023.



While it's best to get the RSV vaccine in late summer or early fall before RSV season kicks off, you can still protect yourself with vaccination any time of year.

Learn more [here](#)

Reminder/recall feature in LINKS helps keep patients up to date on their vaccinations

Assistance to keep your patients up to date on their recommended shots is available at your fingertips in the [LINKS](#) (Louisiana Immunization Network) online platform. This reminder/recall feature can:

- Identify patients who are due or overdue for vaccines
- Increase your clinic or organization's immunization rates

Reminder/recall is entirely customizable to your organization or facility's needs. You can tailor a search by specific groups, such as age range, timeframe and specific vaccines. There are many different ways to utilize the reminder/recall functionality, from generating a patient list, to printing letters and creating labels, to sending emails and more.

To help providers improve vaccination rates, the Immunization Program has added a reminder/recall feature to LINKS. Every member of your team can now use this tool to schedule important follow-up appointments.

Learn how to use reminder/recall in LINKS by signing up for the free instructional course today in the [LINKS Learning Management System \(LMS\) training portal](#).



ICYMI: Study suggests HPV vaccine prevents head and neck cancer in men

Experts are reporting that the HPV vaccine not only prevents cervical cancer but also significantly benefits men.

The vaccine, which has reduced cervical cancer



rates in women by 90%, now shows promise in [reducing the risk of head and neck cancers in men](#) by more than half. Analysis of data from over 5 million U.S. patients revealed 2.8 cases of head and neck cancers per 100,000 vaccinated men compared to 6.3 cases per 100,000 unvaccinated men.

The study, presented at the American Society of Clinical Oncology conference by Jefferson DeKloe, a research fellow in the department of otolaryngology at Thomas Jefferson University,

indicates that the vaccine reduces overall HPV-related cancers and highlights the need for better public health messaging to promote vaccination among boys.

Schools have offered the vaccine to boys since 2019, but uptake rates lag behind girls despite the vaccine's clear benefits. The vaccine delivers a "double whammy" effect, preventing the virus's spread and reducing HPV-related cancers in both genders.

The study underscores the importance of HPV vaccination in reducing cancer rates.

Read the full article [here](#).

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