



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Final Analysis

Audra Tidball

S.B. 121

131st General Assembly
(As Passed by the General Assembly)

Sens. Hite, Yuko, Schiavoni, Seitz, Williams, Burke, LaRose, Coley, Thomas, Jones, Lehner, Patton, Beagle, Balderson, Brown, Cafaro, Eklund, Manning, Obhof, Oelslager, Sawyer, Tavares, Widener

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Effective date: October 15, 2015

ACT SUMMARY

- Requires pupils to be immunized against meningococcal disease at an age recommended by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH).
- Begins the requirement with the 2016-2017 school year.
- Requires ODH to specify the recommended age for pupil immunization against meningococcal disease and to approve the method of immunization.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Meningococcal disease immunization requirement

With certain exceptions, the act requires pupils who attend public or nonpublic schools subject to minimum state educational standards to be immunized against meningococcal disease at an age recommended by ODH. The requirement begins with the 2016-2017 school year.¹ "Meningococcal disease" can refer to any illness caused by the type of bacteria *Neisseria meningitidis*, also known as meningococcus. These illnesses

¹ R.C. 3313.671(A)(3).

are often severe and include infections of the lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis) and bloodstream infections (bacteremia or septicemia).²

The act specifies that a pupil cannot remain in school for more than 14 days, unless the pupil presents written evidence satisfactory to the person in charge of admission that the pupil has been immunized against meningococcal disease by an ODH-approved immunization method or is in the process of being immunized against that disease. "In the process of being immunized" means the pupil has received at least the first dose of the immunization sequence and presents written evidence to the school's principal or chief administrative officer of each subsequent dose required to obtain immunization against meningococcal disease at ODH-prescribed intervals.³

Exceptions

The act specifies two exceptions to the immunization requirement. A pupil does not have to provide proof of meningococcal immunization if:

(1) The pupil presents a written statement of the pupil's parent or guardian in which the parent or guardian declines to have the pupil immunized for reasons of conscience, including religious convictions; or

(2) The pupil's physician certifies in writing that immunization is medically contraindicated for the pupil.

These exemptions are the same as in law unchanged by the act governing pupil immunization against mumps, polio, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, rubeola (measles), rubella, hepatitis B and chicken pox. (Law unchanged by the act also contains an exemption for pupils who have had natural rubeola (measles), mumps, or chicken pox if the pupil presents a signed statement from the pupil's parent, guardian, or physician to that effect.)⁴

Recommended age for meningococcal disease immunization

The act requires ODH to specify the recommended age for pupil immunization against meningococcal disease and approve a method of immunization.⁵

² U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Meningococcal Disease, available at www.cdc.gov/meningococcal.

³ R.C. 3313.671(A)(3) and (4).

⁴ R.C. 3313.671(A) and (B).

⁵ R.C. 3313.671(E).



HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	03-09-15
Reported, S. Health & Human Services	04-22-15
Passed Senate (32-1)	04-22-15
Reported, H. Health & Aging	05-27-15
Passed House (93-3)	06-25-15

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