

### **Changes for Vaccine Schedule Take Effect July 1**

**FRANKFORT, Ky.** (June 15, 2011) - Regulations governing the state's immunization schedule for infants, toddlers and school-age children have been amended, adding or altering the types of certain vaccines required for school, day care, preschool and Head Start entry and changing the vaccination schedule for others, the Kentucky Department for Public Health announced today.

Immunization requirements were updated to better align Kentucky's schedule with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The new version of the administrative regulation adopts changes that put the Commonwealth in line with national pediatric standards.

"Improving the health of Kentucky, particularly our children, is a top priority of my administration," said Gov. Steve Beshear. "The vaccine program for years has served as the cornerstone of public health, shielding individuals from illness, and also preventing the spread of dangerous communicable disease to the broader population. These changes reflect our commitment to this continued mission and give providers more flexibility in vaccine distribution to patients."

Parents, teachers, school administrators, licensed child care facility operators and healthcare providers should be aware of the new requirements, which take effect on July 1, 2011.

Among other things, the new regulation requires age appropriate vaccination with pneumococcal vaccine for children up to 5 years of age, and a dose of meningococcal vaccine for sixth-grade entry. In addition, a second dose of varicella vaccine will be required for kindergarten and sixth-grade entry; a dose of tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis (Tdap) vaccine will be required for entry into sixth grade; and a second dose of measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine is now required for children by the age of 6 years old. For more information, visit <http://www.chfs.ky.gov/dph/epi/Immunization+Program.htm>. Because some of these requirements have been CDC recommendations for some time, many children are expected to already be in compliance with the amended regulation.

"Adopting these recommendations into our public health vaccine schedule is one more thing we can do to improve the health and well-being of our fellow Kentuckians," said William Hacker, M.D., commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health. "These changes better align Kentucky with national standards and represent a significant change for the public, particularly those affected by requirements for school entry. We strongly encourage school administrators, health care professionals, parents, teachers and child care providers to familiarize themselves with the requirements."

DPH has worked collaboratively with local health departments, school administrators and child care providers to address concerns about the changes and educate them about new requirements for entry into schools and child care facilities. All certificates for school or day care entry submitted on July 1, 2011 or after, should meet the new requirements.