

1. Q: Why would students or staff be excluded from school during disease outbreaks?

A: Excluding people who were potentially exposed or known to be susceptible to a disease can stop an outbreak for some diseases.

2. Q: Why is exclusion done for some diseases and not for others?

A: Exclusion is thought to decrease the spread of some diseases more than others. The local health officer makes the determination if excluding persons susceptible to the disease during an outbreak is warranted.

3. Q: Who decides if students or staff will be excluded in an outbreak situation?

A: The County's local health officer has the authority to exclude from any students, staff, and volunteers in schools or childcare centers if they are infectious, exposed, or susceptible to the disease. See [WAC 246-110-020](#) for more information.

4. Q: Are there immunization requirements for school staff?

A: There is no state or federal legal requirement for K-12 school staff to have immunizations. However, in the case of a disease outbreak, the local health officer has the authority to exclude school staff who cannot provide proof of immunity, just like students.

5. Q: Are there immunization requirements for child care staff?

A: Employees and volunteers at public and private child care centers that are licensed by the Department of Children, Youth and Families, and Head Start/ECEAP preschools are required to provide immunization records indicating they have received the MMR vaccine or proof of immunity to measles. See [RCW 43.216](#) for more details.

6. Q: Are there exemptions for school staff?

A: There are no requirements for immunizations in Washington state for school staff, therefore there is no formal process for exemptions. Schools may have their own requirements and exemption process.

7. Q: Are there exemptions for child care staff?

A: [RCW 43.216](#) allows a person to be employed or volunteer on the premises if the person provides the child day care center with a written certification signed by a health care practitioner, as defined in [RCW 28A.210.090](#), that the measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine is, in the practitioner's judgment, not advisable for the person.

8. Q: What documentation is needed in the event of an outbreak at a school or child care?

A: Staff and students who have already provided documentation of immunity may continue to attend school as usual. If documentation of immunity has not been provided, staff and students may return to school immediately upon providing appropriate documentation. If they don't provide documentation, they can return when the exclusion period has ended. The local health officer will determine what documentation is acceptable.

As an example, acceptable measles documentation includes one of the following;

- 1) date of birth before 1957.
- 2) record of age-appropriate measles vaccination with a live measles virus-containing vaccine. This means two doses for anyone 4 years and older, or one dose for adults, verified by a licensed health care provider.
- 3) A letter from a licensed health care provider documenting infection with and full recovery from previous measles illness.

4) A letter from a licensed health care provider that confirms a blood test showing measles immunity. Proof of immunity should be prior to a disease exposure. Those staff and students who receive vaccination after exposure may still be excluded.

9. **Q: How long can students and staff be excluded?**

A: The student and staff exclusion time depends on the exposure period and the incubation time of the specific disease. As an example, exclusion for measles lasts until 21 days have passed since the date of last known possible exposure. This is in accordance with WAC 246-105-040. This exclusion time may be extended if another case occurs.

10. **Q: Are staff required to use their sick leave or vacation if they are excluded?**

A: This would depend on the child care, district or school's policy and procedures.