



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

EDUARDO J. SANCHEZ, M.D., M.P.H.
COMMISSIONER

1100 W. 49th Street • Austin, Texas 78756
1-888-963-7111 • <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us>

October 5, 2005

RE: IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS AND CHILDREN DISPLACED BY HURRICANES

Dear School Administrator:

Students displaced by either hurricane and who are considered homeless under the federal McKinney-Vento Act, may attend school without documentation of immunizations as long as they meet the definition of homeless. The McKinney-Vento Act entitles students to immediate enrollment in the school district in which they are physically present without having to provide documentation of an immunization record.

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is also extending additional time for students and schools to obtain immunization histories for students displaced by the hurricanes through October 31, 2005. Effective November 1, 2005, students that are no longer considered to be homeless will have to begin the required vaccinations or provide documentation of immunizations. Students transferring from one Texas school to another should be given 30 days to obtain their records, even if the 30 days extends past October 31, 2005.

DSHS has implemented a temporary call center to conduct searches for immunization histories for children in the Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama immunization registries. This service is providing direct assistance to physicians and other health-care providers, schools, health departments, and parents of displaced children. Please contact the DSHS Immunization Branch at (800) 252-9152 for information on locating an immunization record.

DSHS regional offices and local health departments are available for assistance in obtaining verification of previously administered immunizations or in providing vaccination services. For a list of these resources, please go to: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/regions/default.shtm>.

If you have further questions, please contact the Immunization Branch Customer Service hotline at (800) 252-9152. Immunization information is also available at www.immunizetexas.com.

Sincerely,

Jack C. Sims, Manager
Immunization Branch