



Department of Health

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

JAMES V. McDONALD, MD, MPH
Commissioner

JOHANNE E. MORNE, MS
Executive Deputy Commissioner

March 30, 2026

Dear Children's Camp Operator:

The purpose of this letter is to discuss the importance of immunization and vigilance regarding vaccine-preventable diseases in the camp setting, as well as New York State requirements for immunization records and response protocols.

There has been an increase in the number of cases of vaccine-preventable diseases in the United States over the last several years. According to the Centers for Disease Control, there were 2,280 confirmed measles cases and 3 deaths reported in the United States during 2025. Those aged 5-19 years were most affected by these outbreaks, and 94% of confirmed cases were unvaccinated or had unknown vaccination status. As of 3/19/26, there are already 1,487 confirmed measles cases in the United States this year.

Vaccine-preventable diseases can easily spread in summer camp settings where many people are housed in close proximity. There are also significant numbers of international campers and staff in New York State, who may introduce diseases that are circulating in their countries of origin. Additionally, there are multiple communities in the United States, including within New York State, with low vaccination rates, putting campers and staff at risk.

Summer camps in New York State have historically been affected by vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks, including three mumps outbreaks that began in summer camps and a measles outbreak among multiple camp staff. The best protection against vaccine-preventable diseases in camps is broad vaccination coverage among all campers and staff. Therefore, age-appropriate vaccination of all individuals who will be working at or attending children's summer camps is **strongly recommended**.

Individual camps may choose to recommend or require specific immunizations of their campers and staff. Because of recent measles outbreaks internationally, in the United States and in New York State, it is particularly important to ensure that all staff and campers are immunized against measles, and that staff are made aware of the signs of symptoms of measles and can report suspected cases to the camp health staff and director immediately. Camp operators are required to immediately report any suspected or confirmed vaccine-preventable disease to the [permit-issuing official](#) and the [city](#) or [county health department](#). Information about measles is available via the links provided in the resource section below.

IMMUNIZATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CAMPERS

State Sanitary Code Subpart 7-2 requires that camps maintain immunization records for all campers but does not specify which vaccines are required for camp attendance. Individual camp policy may recommend or require specific immunizations of their campers. For the optimal health and safety of all campers, the New York State Department of Health **strongly**

recommends that all campers meet the age-appropriate immunization schedule as set forth by the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) and the [American Academy of Family Physicians](#).

At a minimum, campers should meet the same immunization requirements as school-aged children as indicated in Public Health Law Article 21, Title 6, Section 2164. Refer to [New York State Immunization Requirements for School Entrance/Attendance](#).

Further, New York State, Public Health Law Article 21, Title 6, Section 2167 and Section 7-2.8(c)(2) of Subpart 7-2 require camps to notify parents/guardians of campers about recommendations for and the availability of meningococcal vaccine for all campers attending overnight camps for a period of seven or more consecutive nights. Meningococcal ACWY (MenACWY) vaccine is recommended at age 11 or 12 years, with a booster dose at age 16 years. The New York State Department of Health recommends that campers receive either dose of MenACWY vaccine according to the recommended age schedule.

IMMUNIZATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STAFF

Individual camp policy determines recommendations or requirements for specific immunizations of camp staff. For the optimal health and safety of all camp staff, including international staff, the New York State Department of Health **strongly recommends** that all staff meet the age-appropriate immunization schedule as set forth by the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) and the [American Academy of Family Physicians](#).

At a minimum, routinely recommended immunizations include:

- 2 measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine doses.
- 1 tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis (Tdap) vaccine booster dose within the last 10 years in addition to the primary series of catch-up doses.
- 2 varicella vaccine doses.
- Hepatitis B vaccine is recommended for staff with reasonably anticipated risk for exposure to blood or body fluids (e.g., health care workers, lifeguards).

MAINTAINING VACCINATION RECORDS

Subpart 7-2 of the New York State Sanitary Code requires camps to maintain and update annually immunization records for all campers. The records must include dates for all **age-appropriate** immunizations against diphtheria, hepatitis B, measles, mumps, rubella, poliomyelitis, tetanus, and varicella (chickenpox).

Camps are highly recommended to also maintain a detailed list of staff, campers and other individuals who are not fully immunized or protected against vaccine-preventable diseases or who do not have a record of immunization clearly identifying which disease(s) an individual is at risk of contracting. This immunization and health information should be readily available as camps will need to quickly identify individuals at risk if a suspected or confirmed case of a vaccine-preventable disease occurs during the summer camp season. Camps will be expected to review their plan and share preliminary lists of susceptible individuals with inspectors during pre-operational visits, and to show updated lists to health department staff who perform other visits during the season.

REPORTING VACCINE-PREVENTABLE DISEASE

All suspected or confirmed communicable diseases, including measles and other vaccine-preventable diseases, are required by Subpart 7-2 of the State Sanitary Code to be reported to the [permit-issuing official](#) within 24 hours. If you suspect a case of any vaccine-preventable disease, please notify your permit-issuing official as soon as possible and they will work with you to implement control measures that may prevent additional cases. Additionally, all communicable diseases are required by [Part 2 Section 2.12](#) of the State Sanitary Code to be reported to the [city](#) or [county health department](#). Camps that have permits that are issued by a State District Office must also report to the [city](#) or [county health department](#).

EDUCATION FOR STAFF

The camp health director or other healthcare provider should discuss the symptoms of vaccine-preventable diseases with camp staff prior to the camp season so they can assist in identifying anyone with signs of illness and report the first sign of illness to the camp health director or camp director in accordance with established procedures for handling outbreaks in the approved camp safety plan.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION

We highly recommend taking the following six steps to reduce the risk of an outbreak of vaccine-preventable diseases at your camp:

1. Amplify the importance of age-appropriate immunization for all staff and campers, especially against measles;
2. Review the immunization records of all campers, and staff records when provided, and consider requiring additional vaccines for individuals who are not immune;
3. Maintain up-to-date immunization records for all campers, and for staff when provided, including a list of those with known exemptions or individuals who lack immunity;
4. Ensure that staff are educated about the signs and symptoms of measles and other vaccine-preventable diseases;
5. Develop a policy that includes contact information for the immediate notification of the [permit-issuing official](#) and the [city](#) or [county health department](#) of any suspected or confirmed case of vaccine-preventable disease; and,
6. Maintain a plan for isolating suspected or confirmed cases and quarantining exposed individuals if there are suspected or confirmed cases in the camp until the individual(s) leaves the camp. Consult with your local health department on how to isolate or quarantine safely.

Vaccines are a critical tool in preventing potentially deadly diseases. For the optimal health and safety of all campers and camp staff, the New York State Department of Health strongly recommends that all campers and staff at children's summer camps meet the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) and [American Academy of Family Physicians](#) age-appropriate immunization schedule.

Operators of children's camps have the authority to require all age-appropriate immunizations for their campers as well as for their staff. Immunization requirements are strongly recommended for all members of the camp, including campers and staff, for the safety and protection of the entire camp community.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Children's Camps in New York State: health.ny.gov/environmental/outdoors/camps
- Measles information: health.ny.gov/measles
- New York State vaccine schedules and school entrance requirements: health.ny.gov/publications/2370.pdf
- General Information on vaccine-preventable diseases: health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization
- Communicable Disease Fact Sheets: health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable

Thank you for your partnership and efforts to keep camps free of vaccine-preventable diseases, and to provide a safe and healthy summer camp season for all campers and camp staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "P. Ruppert" followed by a stylized flourish.

Patricia Schnabel Ruppert, DO, MPH, CPE, DABFM, FAAFP
Medical Director
Center for Environmental Health
New York State Department of Health