

Healthy Handbook

2026 – 2027



A publication from the Henderson ISD Health Services Department

**PLEASE MAKE SURE ALL HEALTH INFORMATION
IS COMPLETE WHEN REGISTERING ONLINE**

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2026-2027 Immunization Requirements for Schools

A student shall show acceptable evidence of vaccination prior to entry, attendance, or transfer to a public or private elementary or secondary school in Texas.

Required immunizations for school-age children are listed on the website below (English and Spanish). Please contact your child's school nurse for immunization guidance.

www.dshs.texas.gov/immunizations

- Click on Vaccine Requirements for School and Childcare
- Click on Minimum Requirements for Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade

Requesting an Exemption for Reasons of Conscience

To claim an exclusion for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the child's parent, legal guardian, or student 18 years of age or older must present to the school a completed, signed, and notarized affidavit on a form provided by the Texas Department of State Health Services stating that the child's parent, legal guardian, or the student declines vaccinations for reasons of conscience, including religious beliefs.

The form must be submitted to the school within 90 days of the date it is notarized. The affidavit will be valid for a two-year period from the date of notarization. A child or student who has not received the required immunizations for reasons of conscience, including religious beliefs, may be excluded from school in times of emergency or epidemic declared by the commissioner of the department.

Obtaining an Affidavit

A person claiming exclusion for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, from a required immunization may obtain the affidavit form by visiting the Texas Department of State Health Services website at <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunizations/school/exemptions> .

PLEASE NOTE: THE CAMPUS MUST RETAIN THE ORIGINAL AFFIDAVIT. PLEASE CONSIDER PRINTING AN ADDITIONAL AFFIDAVIT FOR YOUR RECORDS.

Email or telephone requests cannot be processed. **Requests for affidavit forms must be submitted to the Department of Health through one of the following methods:**

Obtaining an Affidavit Online

Affidavits may be requested via the Immunization Unit Affidavit Request website.

Obtaining an Affidavit by Mail

A written request for an affidavit may be sent through the United States Postal Service (or another commercial carrier) to:

Texas Department of State Health Services

Immunization Section, Mail Code 1946

P.O. Box 149347

Austin, Tx 78714-9347

Obtaining an Affidavit by Fax

Fax written requests for affidavit to: (512) 776-7544

Obtaining an Affidavit in Person

Requests for an affidavit may be made in person at:

Texas Department of State Health Services

Immunization Section

1100 West 49th Street

Austin, TX 78756

NOTE: No requests will be filled at the time of hand-delivery. All affidavit forms will be mailed to you via U.S. Postal Service.

What does the school district do to help students stay safe and healthy?

HISD is committed to helping all its students stay healthy, safe and ready to learn each day. Part of that commitment is shown through the Health Services Department which provides services that contribute to a student's achievement and/or maintenance of optimal health. Their responsibilities include:

- Emergency care of the sick and injured
- Communicable disease control
- Health education and counseling for students, families, and staff
- Injury prevention
- Specialized procedures for children with health care needs
- Administration of medication per physician's orders
- Health assessments, including state-mandated vision, hearing, and spinal screenings
- Assisting families in accessing appropriate, local healthcare resources

Narcan

In response to the fentanyl crisis, HISD has Narcan (Naloxone) nasal spray available on each campus. Trained staff will administer Narcan if there is a suspected drug overdose. Please contact the Health & Wellness Coordinator for Narcan procedures.

Neffy (nasal epinephrine)

In the event a student, staff member, or visitor experiences an anaphylactic (life-threatening) reaction, each HISD campus has Neffy available. Trained staff will administer Neffy if there is a suspected anaphylactic reaction. Please contact the Health & Wellness Coordinator for Neffy procedures.

Student Illness (All Grade Levels)

It is important to remember that schools are required to exclude students with certain illnesses for periods of time as identified in state rules. For example, if your child has a fever of 100 degrees or higher, he or she must stay out of school until fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, he or she must receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. If the nurse determines that the child should go home, the nurse will contact the parent.

The district is also required to report certain contagious (communicable) diseases or illnesses to the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) or our local/regional health authority. The school nurse can provide information from DSHS on these notifiable conditions. (Chicken Pox, Lyme Disease, Tuberculosis, etc.)

Contact the school nurse if you have any questions.

What if my child needs medication at school?

Henderson ISD only provides emergency use medication for students such as Benadryl, Neffy, and Narcan. Henderson ISD does not provide other daily or as needed medications for administration to students. A written physician order is required for prescription and over-the-counter medications to be given at school. If your child's physician prescribes that a prescription or non-prescription medication be administered at school, the following requirements must be met by the parent/legal guardian.

The parent/legal guardian must bring the medication to the school. Students are not allowed to carry medication on the bus, in their backpacks, or on their person. The medication must be in the original container and prescription medications must be labeled by the pharmacist.

The label must include:

- Student's name
- Physician's name
- Name of medication
- Amount of medication to be given and frequency of administration
- Date prescription filled

A Medication Permission Form must be filled out and signed by the physician and parent/guardian. The completed form must be turned in to the campus nurse.

Except for specific asthma inhalers, diabetic medications, and epi pens/sprays, students are not allowed to have medication in their possession while at school.

If a student needs to carry life-saving medications such as diabetes medication, epi pens/sprays, or inhalers, a self-carry form must be completed and signed by the physician and parent/guardian. These forms are available from the campus nurse.

All over-the-counter medication must be in the original container with the label intact.

Who will administer the medication?

There is a nurse on each campus who will administer your child's medication and if the nurse is not available, the principal will designate other school personnel to administer your child's medication.

What about emergencies?

Each year, parents/legal guardians must complete an online emergency medical form that provides emergency information and authorizes school officials to obtain emergency medical treatment for children in case of illness or injury. **Included in this form are the names of parents/guardians and current daytime phone numbers as well as the name and phone numbers of the person to contact if the parent is unavailable.** Medical conditions such as allergies to food, insect bites, medications, etc. and chronic illnesses such as heart disease, seizures, diabetes, asthma, etc. should be noted online in the emergency medical form. This is kept on file at the child's campus and **should be updated as parent's/legal guardian's phone numbers, jobs, etc. change.**

What other health services are provided?

School nurses in HISD provide vision and hearing screenings on all four-year-olds, kindergarteners, and students in grades 1, 3, 5, and 7 as well as new students to the district. Screenings are also performed at the request of school personnel, students, and parents. If a child fails the initial screening for vision or hearing, he or she is rescreened after a two-week waiting period. If the child fails the second screening, parents/legal guardians will receive a referral letter requesting that the child is seen by a physician. A report of the physician's exam is to be returned to the school nurse's office for entry into the child's medical records.

What if I need financial assistance?

Parents/legal guardians who need financial assistance for eye exams or glasses should contact the school nurse's office for a reference to the Lion's Club for assistance.

Are students checked for scoliosis?

Yes, scoliosis (curvature of the spine) can appear during the years of a child's rapid growth, between the ages of 10 and 16.

In compliance with Health and Safety Code, Chapter 37, HISD nurses provide screening for abnormal spinal curvature in accordance with the following schedule:

- Girls will be screened two times, once at age 10 (**or Fall semester of grade 5**) and again at age 12 (**or Fall semester of grade 7**).
- Boys will be screened one time at age 13 or 14 (**or Fall semester of grade 8**).

The school nurse examines the student's back and notes any unusual observation. If a questionable finding is noted on the initial screening, the student will be rescreened. If the second screening reveals abnormal findings, a referral letter will be sent to the parent/legal guardian requesting that the child be examined by a doctor of their choice. A report of the doctor's exam should be returned to the school nurse's office for entry in the student's health record.

Food Allergies (All Grade Levels)

The district requests to be notified when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially those allergies that could result in dangerous or possibly life-threatening reactions either by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact with the food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic, as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the school nurse or campus principal if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy.

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan which addresses employee training, dealing with common food allergens, and specific strategies for dealing with students diagnosed with severe food allergies.

When the district receives information that a student has a food allergy that puts the student at risk for anaphylaxis, individual care plans will be developed to assist the student in safely accessing the school environment. The district's food allergy management plan can be accessed at:

<https://www.hendersonisd.org/o/hisd/page/food-allergy-management-plan>

Pre-Kindergarten – 8th Grade:

- All class parties and classroom snacks are nut aware.
- There are no restrictions on what a student may bring in their lunch from home.
- A nut-aware table is available in the cafeteria for students who have allergies. Students without food allergies may eat with their friend if there are no triggering allergens in their lunch.

Headstart:

- Please contact Headstart for food allergy procedures as they may have different guidelines.

High School:

- All class parties and classroom snacks must be nut aware.
- Please be mindful of the food items you bring from home.

- A nut-aware table is available in the cafeteria for students with allergies. Students without nuts or nut products in their lunch are welcome to sit with friends who have food allergies.

Head Lice (All Grade Levels)

Head lice, although not an illness or a disease, is very common among children and is spread through head-to-head contact during play, sports, or naptime. Head lice can also be spread through sharing things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones. If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student's parent. **The student does not need to be sent home.**

Notice to Parents

As of September 1, 2017, Texas Education Code, Chapter 38, Section 38.031, Notice of Lice, states the following: "The board of trustees of an independent school district shall adopt a policy requiring a school nurse of a public elementary school who determines or otherwise becomes aware that a child enrolled in the school has lice shall provide written or electronic notice of that fact to:

1. the parent of the child with lice as soon as practicable but not later than 48 hours after the administrator or nurse, as applicable, determines or becomes aware of that fact; and
2. the parent of each child assigned to the same classroom as the child with lice not later than the fifth school day after the date on which the administrator or nurse, as applicable, determines or becomes aware of that fact."

Lice Screening Procedures

Head lice screening programs have not been proven to have a significant effect over time on the incidence of head lice in the school setting.

Classroom screenings are disruptive to student and teacher class time and take away from the nurse's ability to address the needs of children who are sick and those with special healthcare considerations.

More information on head lice can be obtained from the DSHS website: Managing Head Lice in School Settings and at Home. <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/texas-school-health/skilled-procedures-texas-school-health/managing-head-lice-school>

Exclusion and Readmission

Students found to have a head lice infestation will be assessed by the school nurse/clinic personnel. For students found to have evidence of a live lice infestation:

- Students DO NOT have to go home immediately once live lice are found. Exclude students at the end of the school day. Students may go home at the end of the school day as usual. The parent/guardian may choose to pick the student up from school.
- School nurses will check students for live lice upon return to school to determine effective treatment.
- Instructions for head lice removal are available from the school nurse.

Illnesses

HEALTHY CHILDREN LEARN BETTER! Because the health and welfare of all school children must be considered, keep your child at home if he or she is sick.

Below is a list of illnesses and what to do:

Fever – An oral temperature of 100.0 or greater. Your child must stay home until 24 hours after fever subsides without fever-reducing medication.

Vomiting without fever – Keep your child home 24 hours after vomiting subsides.

Vomiting with fever – Contact your child's physician. Keep your child home 24 hours after fever/vomiting subsides or may return with a note from the physician.

Diarrhea without fever – Keep your child home 24 hours after diarrhea subsides.

Diarrhea with fever – Contact your child's physician. Keep your child home until 24 hours after fever/diarrhea subsides or may return with a note from the physician.

Rash with fever – See physician. May return with a note from the physician.

Sudden high fever, severe headache, vomiting – See physician immediately. May return with a note from the physician.

Strep throat, Scarlet fever, Scarletina – See physician. Keep your child home until 24 hours after fever subsides and treatment begins.

Chicken Pox – Contact physician. Keep your child home until 24 hours fever-free. The lesions must be dry. No blister-like lesions and 24 hours have passed with no new lesions.

COVID-19 – Stay home and away from others until 24 hours fever-free without fever-reducing medication and symptoms are improving. Contact physician if needed. May also return with a note from the physician. If you are exposed to someone with COVID-19, it is the parent's/staff member's decision whether to quarantine.

Flu – Contact physician. Keep your child home until 24 hours fever-free without fever-reducing medication and symptoms are improving. May return with a note from the physician.

CHILDREN SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN ASPRIN FOR ANY SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED VIRAL DISEASE WITHOUT CONSULTING A PHYSICIAN.

Conjunctivitis (pink eye) – Red eyes with discharge or crusting around eyes. Keep your child home until after the treatment begins or may return with a note from the physician.

Impetigo – Sores or blisters on skin that open and become covered with yellowish crusting. See physician. Keep your child home until after treatment begins. Keep covered.

Ringworm of scalp – See physician. Keep your child home until the treatment begins or return with a note from the physician.

Ringworm of skin – See physician if applicable. Keep covered. May return after treatment begins.

Scabies – Small, red, raised bumps or blisters on skin with severe itching. See physician. May return to school after treatment begins.

Fifth Disease – Redness of face (slapped cheek look) and body. Contact physician to rule out measles or rubella. May return to school after 24 hours fever-free.

Hepatitis A, B, C, D, or E – Fever, tiredness, headache, fatigue, jaundice, dark urine, light colored stools, loss of appetite, nausea, stomachache, vomiting. Contact physician. Vaccines are available for some types of hepatitis. May return to school with a note from the physician.

Meningitis: Bacterial and Viral; Meningococcal infections – Sudden onset of high fever and headache, usually with nausea and vomiting; stiff neck, and frequently a reddish or purplish rash on the skin or mucous membranes. See physician. May return to school with a note from the physician.

*******PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT THE DECISION TO SEND A STUDENT HOME IS BASED ON THE NURSE’S ASSESSMENT AND NURSING JUDGEMENT*******

A visit to the nurse’s office does not qualify as an excused absence if the nurse determines the student is able to remain at school.

- **If the nurse contacts a parent to inform them that their child needs a change of clothes and the nurse does not have clothing available, and the parent chooses to pick up the student, this will not be considered an excused absence. In this situation, the student is being picked up at the parent’s discretion, not sent home by the nurse.**

*******A physician’s order is required to administer first-aid such as Neosporin, Benadryl cream, burn cream, Orajel, rubbing alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, contact solution, Vaseline, etc.*******

A physician with UT Health signed standing orders for HISD nurses to perform first-aid care to students for the 26-27 school year. Skyward is checked to make sure parental permission has been given to administer first-aid to students.

Healthy Hints

- Clean hands are healthy hands! Encourage your child to always wash their hands before eating and after using the restroom.
- Encourage children to use Kleenex with runny noses. Keep hands clean!
- Cough into a Kleenex or the bend of the elbow. Germs coughed onto hands or into the air spread illnesses.
- Don’t share brushes, combs, hats, or other headgear. Head lice can happen to anyone!

- Remind your child not to play with other children's hair and to not allow other children to play with your child's hair.
- Don't forget mental and dental health!
- **ASTHMA: If your child uses an inhaler for asthma symptoms, please see that an inhaler is available at school with a physician order and parent permission. 911 may be called if an inhaler is not at school.**

NOTIFY THE SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY OF ANY CHANGE IN YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH STATUS.

IF YOU HAVE TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD DUE TO ILLNESS OR INJURY, PLEASE DO SO IN A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF TIME. (LESS THAN 1 HOUR)

The nurse is qualified to collaborate with you and your child's physician to provide an educational environment in which your child can learn and thrive. The nurse does not make medical diagnoses, prescribe treatments or medications, but can provide treatments and medications as prescribed by a physician with a doctor's order.

Students signed out for illness who have not been seen by the nurse will be noted as an UNEXCUSED absence. If a student texts their parent to pick them up because they don't feel well and the student does not see the nurse, the absence will be UNEXCUSED unless the student returns with a note from the doctor.

Do not send a sick child to school for the school nurse to decide whether he/she should be in school. If in doubt, call your child's physician. School nurses can assess and refer, but they do not diagnose and will always refer you to your physician.

If your child sustains an injury at home or off campus, please take care of the injury at home. The school nurse is more than happy to take care of injuries that happen during school hours, but the nurses do not take the place of your primary physician's evaluation and treatment.

If your child becomes ill enough to be removed from school, has more than a minor injury, or has an emergency, you will be notified.

Physical Education Excuses

Students requesting an excuse from PE must bring a note **signed by their parent/guardian** to the school office or school nurse. The school nurse will forward the information to the PE teacher/coach. **Any request for three or more consecutive PE excuses must be accompanied by a physician's written order/note.** PE teachers/coaches will be informed of the length of excuse, and any accommodation that needs to be made for your child. If your child has a health condition that causes him/her to miss PE class frequently, a doctor's note will be required.

All injuries requiring any type of orthopedic support or device on campus must be reported with a medical excuse to the school nurse. If your child sustains a fracture/break and has a splint/cast or has been authorized by a physician to use crutches or a wheelchair while on campus, please

check in with the nurse prior to the child returning to class. A written PE/activity restriction notice is also required, as well as a release to return to physical activity when the student's injury has healed.

*******THESE GUIDELINES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE BASED ON CHANGES MADE BY
REGULATORY AGENCIES.*******

HAVE A HEALTHY SCHOOL YEAR!!!

Updated 4/15/2026