*# # #*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | *Rappahannock Area Health District*  *News Release* |
| 109 Governor Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219 ● **www.vdh.virginia.gov** | |

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE June 29, 2021**

**Media Contact:** Mary Chamberlin, mary.chamberlin@vdh.virginia.gov

**Rappahannock Area Health District Reminds Families of Updated Immunization Requirements for   
Back to School; Provides Free Drive-thru Clinics**

(Fredericksburg, Virginia) -- The Rappahannock Area Health District (RAHD) is reminding families of changes to school immunization requirements effective July 1, 2021. These changes include:

* Children entering kindergarten now need two properly spaced doses of the hepatitis A vaccine (HAV). The first dose should be administered at age 12 months or older. The HAV vaccine requirement is an addition to the existing kindergarten vaccine requirements.
* Children entering 7th grade are required to present proof of their first dose of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, one booster of the tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis vaccine (Tdap), and their first dose of the meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MenACWY). All are required for both boys and girls before entering the 7th grade.
* Students entering 12th grade now need to have a booster dose of the meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MenACWY).

“Though so much of the last year has been focused on COVID-19, it is important to stay up to date on other recommended immunizations to protect yourself and your family and prevent outbreaks of other illnesses,” said RAHD Health Director Dr. Olugbenga Obasanjo. “As we enter the middle of summer, now is a great time for parents to make a plan to ensure their students are immunized before returning to school in August or September.”

Vaccines are available from many pediatricians, family physicians, and pharmacies, and are often available at no cost through health insurance benefits. Families with health insurance and a primary care provider are encouraged to seek vaccines through their doctors’ offices or local pharmacies.

To ensure all immunization access for all students, RAHD will be holding a series of drive-thru immunization clinics for school-age children to provide many of the required vaccines. Tdap, MenACWY, and HPV vaccines will be available at each of these clinics. Vaccines will be available at no cost. Children will be able to receive the vaccine regardless of insurance status, but if your child does have health insurance, please bring a copy of the insurance card. A parent or guardian must be present for the child to be vaccinated at these drive-thru events.

The clinic schedule is as follows:

* Thursday, July 1, 5-7:30 p.m.- King George Middle School, 8246 Dahlgren Road, King George, VA
* Saturday, July 10, 8:30-11 a.m.- Massaponax High School, 8201 Jefferson Davis Highway, Fredericksburg, VA
* Thursday, July 15, 5-7:30 p.m.- Colonial Forge High School, 550 Courthouse Road, Stafford, VA
* Saturday, July 17, 8:30-11 a.m.- James Monroe High School, 2300 Washington Ave., Fredericksburg, VA
* Thursday, July 22, 5-7:30 p.m.- Caroline Middle School,13325 Devils Three Jump Road, Milford, VA

Vaccines will be available on a first come, first-served basis. These events will be held rain or shine.

For more information on school immunizations in Virginia, visit [www.vdh.virginia.gov/immunization/requirements/](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/immunization/requirements/). For updated information from RAHD including current clinic schedules, visit [www.vdh.virginia.gov/rappahannock/](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/rappahannock/).