

Frequently Asked Question About Illinois School Dental Exam Requirement

Posted: April 3, 2006

When did the law take affect?

The law went into effect on July 1, 2005.

Which children are required to have a dental examination?

Children in kindergarten, 2nd and 6th grades, beginning with the 2005-2006 school year.

Why are the grades required for a dental examination different from the required medical physical examinations of kindergarten, 5th and 9th graders?

Dental examinations are needed during 2nd and 6th grades as the back teeth (molars) usually erupt during this time. This allows dentists the opportunity to apply dental sealants to these teeth to help prevent future cavities.

Does it affect all types of schools?

Yes. It applies to public, private and parochial schools. No schools have been given blanket waiver from this state law.

What does it specifically require?

Children in these designated grades must have a dental examination performed by a dentist by May 15th of the end of their school year, or they must present proof to the school that one is scheduled in the next 60 days.

Has a specific form been developed to report these examinations to the schools?

Yes. The Illinois Department of Public Health has developed a *Proof of School Dental Examination Form* that is recommended for use by dentists when they report that the examination has been completed. A PDF version of the form is available at the Illinois Department of Public Health website at http://www.idph.state.il.us/HealthWellness/oralhlth/DentalExamProof%2011_05.pdf or on the Illinois State Dental Society's website at <http://www.isds.org/newsroom/articles/DentExam.pdf>

Can a child use a recent dental examination to comply with this requirement?

The examination may have been completed within the 18 months prior to the May 15th deadline. For example, a child that had a dental examination after October 16th of their 1st grade year may use that examination to comply with the 2nd grade requirement.

Can a child receive a waiver from this requirement if they cannot find a dentist to do an examination?

A waiver for may be submitted on behalf of a child to the school if the parent or guardian can show an undue burden or a lack of access to a dentist.

What happens if a child does not comply with the state requirement?

Schools may withhold the 2nd and 6th grade children's report cards if they fail to provide proof of examination or a waiver form by May 15th.