

Missouri Western State University

Policy Name: Meningitis Immunization Policy	Date Approved: October 2026
Policy Category(ies): Health and Safety	Date Effective: October 2026
Policy Number:	Date Last Revised: June 2026
Approval Authority: General Counsel	Date Last Reviewed: May 2026
Responsible Office or Official: Student Health Services	Recommended Review Cycle: Annual

I. Purpose

This policy establishes meningococcal immunization and exemption requirements for students residing in on-campus housing. It supports prevention of meningococcal disease and compliance with Section 174.335, RSMo., and applicable recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). First-year college students living in residence halls are a group at increased risk for meningococcal disease.

II. Applicability

This policy applies to all students residing in on-campus housing at Missouri Western State University. For purposes of Section 174.335, RSMo., on-campus housing also includes fraternity or sorority residences on or near campus, regardless of private ownership.

III. Definitions

- a) MenACWY vaccine: A meningococcal vaccine that protects against serogroups A, C, W, and Y. MenACWY does not protect against every cause of meningitis or against serogroup B.
- b) Booster dose: An additional vaccine dose administered in accordance with applicable ACIP recommendations, based on age, vaccination history, time since the previous dose, and relevant risk factors.
- c) Medical exemption: Signed certification by a physician licensed under Chapter 334, RSMo., indicating that immunization would seriously endanger the student's health or life, or that the student has documentation of the disease or laboratory evidence of immunity to the disease.
- d) Religious exemption: A signed written statement submitted by the student to the University indicating that immunization violates the student's religious beliefs.
- e) Enrollment hold: An administrative restriction preventing enrollment for a subsequent semester until applicable immunization or exemption documentation requirements are satisfied.

IV. Immunization requirement

Before moving into on-campus housing, students must submit documentation of a MenACWY vaccination administered on or after their sixteenth birthday and not more than five years before enrollment, consistent with applicable current ACIP recommendations, or have a valid medical or religious exemption on file with the University.

Student Health will review vaccination records against applicable requirements. A dose administered at age 16 or older does not automatically satisfy the requirement indefinitely. Additional doses may be needed based on elapsed time or individual risk factors. Students with incomplete or unusual vaccination histories should obtain guidance from Student Health or their healthcare provider.

V. Exemptions

Students seeking a medical exemption must submit the physician certification described above. Students seeking a religious exemption must submit the signed written statement described above. Student Health will review submissions for completeness and consistency with applicable requirements and coordinate unresolved questions with General Counsel. Submitting an incomplete request does not establish compliance.

VI. Submission of records

Submit vaccination records or exemption documentation to the Esry Student Health Center before moving into housing. Records must identify the student and document the vaccine and administration date or contain the required exemption statement or certification.

- a) Student Health Portal: <https://mwsu.studenthealthportal.com/>
- b) Email: health@missouriwestern.edu
- c) Mail: Esry Student Health Center, 4525 Downs Drive, Blum 203, St. Joseph, MO 64507
- d) Fax: 816-271-4498

VII. Responsibilities and records

- a) Esry Student Health Center reviews documentation, maintains vaccination and exemption records for covered residents, notifies students of deficiencies, and communicates necessary compliance status to authorized offices.
- b) Residence Life coordinates resident lists and housing compliance checks with Student Health before move-in and for later housing assignments.
- c) The designated enrollment office places and removes enrollment holds based on verified compliance information from Student Health.

Records will be maintained in accordance with applicable privacy requirements, including FERPA where applicable, and University records retention requirements. Authorized housing and enrollment personnel will receive only information necessary to carry out their compliance responsibilities.

VIII. Compliance and enforcement

Students must satisfy documentation requirements before moving into on-campus housing. Student Health and Residence Life will coordinate verification and communicate unresolved deficiencies before the scheduled move-in date. Students who fail to satisfy the requirement will have an enrollment hold for the subsequent semester until Student Health verifies qualifying vaccination or exemption documentation.

Students will be informed of the reason for a hold or unresolved compliance status, the documentation needed to resolve it, and the Student Health contact for assistance. Holds will be removed through the designated enrollment process after compliance is verified.

IX. Education and case response

The University will provide the DHSS meningococcal disease informational brochure to all students and, for students under age 18, to their parent or guardian, as required by Section 167.638, RSMo. Student Health will coordinate with the appropriate enrollment and student communication offices to establish distribution procedures.

Suspected or confirmed meningococcal disease cases will be addressed promptly through the University's communicable disease response procedures in coordination with appropriate public health authorities. Medical evaluation, exposure assessment, and preventive treatment decisions will be directed by qualified healthcare professionals and public health authorities. Emergency symptoms require immediate medical attention.

X. Related policies and references

- a) University Communicable Disease Policy and Emergency Operations Plan, as applicable.
- b) Section 174.335, RSMo.: <https://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneSection.aspx?section=174.335>
- c) Section 167.638, RSMo.: <https://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneSection.aspx?section=167.638>
- d) CDC meningococcal vaccine recommendations: <https://www.cdc.gov/meningococcal/hcp/vaccine-recommendations/>