



MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

The goal of administration of medication during school hours is to assist students in being healthy, safe, and ready to learn. **This procedure refers to both prescription and over the counter (OTC) medications.** School nurses must adhere to the Alabama Nurse Practice Act / Administrative Code and the most updated copy of the Alabama State Department of Education / Alabama Board of Nursing *Medication Curriculum*.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Treat minor illnesses at home.
 - Children with minor illnesses requiring frequent medication should remain at home.
 - School nurses are not permitted to stock medications for general “as needed” dispensing.
- Obtain signed Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization (PPA) form granting permission for a child to receive medication at school.
 - PPA forms remain valid for one (1) calendar year.
 - A new, updated PPA is required with any medication change.
- Provide the school with medication that is in a correctly labeled, original container.
 - School nurses are not permitted to administer medications when there is a discrepancy (i.e., label different from instruction or contents, label is unclear, name is incorrect, DOB does not match, or label is torn).
 - School nurses are not permitted to accept medications without healthcare provider order (PPA).
- Provide parent authorization for OTC medications needed on a short-term basis (less than 2 weeks).
- Obtain prescriber authorization for OTC medications required more than 2 weeks.
 - School nurses are not permitted to administer OTC medications for longer than 2 weeks without authorization from a licensed healthcare provider.
- Deliver all medication in-person to the school nurse or other designated personnel.
 - No more than a 30-day supply of medication may be stored at the school.
- Count all controlled substances upon delivery and document appropriately.
- Provide duplicate medications and forms for AfterSchool Care Programs.
 - Health Room nurses are not permitted to “float” medications to AfterSchool Care Programs
- Pick up any unused or expired medication in-person.
 - Any medications not picked up by the parent/guardian will be destroyed 2 weeks, or 10 school days, from date of notification by the school nurse. Notification for medication pick-up may be done through verbal or electronic platforms and may not be individualized to student.
- Administer the first dose of a new medication at home or a change in dosage (increase or decrease) of current medication at home, except for emergency medications.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Notify school personnel at the onset of any distress, adverse event, or allergic reaction.
- Understand that **self-administration** means that the student is able to consume, inject, instill, or apply medication in the manner directed by the licensed healthcare provider, without additional assistance or direction.
- Safely and appropriately self-carry medications to and from school, during school, and all school-sponsored events (**applies to self-carry students only**). Self-carry status may be adjusted at any time to ensure safety.
- Identify and select the appropriate medication, know the frequency and purpose of the medication ordered, and follow self-administration procedures (**applies to self-medicate students only**). Self-medicate status may be adjusted at any time to ensure safety.

SCHOOL NURSE RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Identify individuals as unlicensed medication assistants (UMAs) who shall ensure appropriate and safe medication administration.
- Train UMAs on all policies, guidelines, laws, and expectations regarding safe medication administration. This includes, but is not limited to, record-keeping, handling and disposing, storage of medications, communication, student identification, and counting and reconciliation.
- Provide student-specific training from the delegating school nurse to the unlicensed personnel.
- Ensure a safe and private setting for medication administration.
- Provide emergency care in the event of an adverse or allergic reaction.
- Count all controlled substances upon delivery and document appropriately.
- Obtain clarification from prescriber as needed for safe medication delivery.
- Never accept medication without a licensed healthcare provider order (PPA).
 - Schools are not permitted to store medication.
- Never accept a medication order or change a medication order that comes through a third party (parent, student, or other individual who is not licensed to give such orders).
 - The school nurse may accept verbal medication orders from a legally authorized prescriber, but an updated PPA should be obtained within 48 hours.

REFERENCES:

Alabama Board of Nursing (ABN). Administrative Code.

<https://admincode.legislature.state.al.us/administrative-code/610>

Alabama State Department of Education. (2019). *Medication Curriculum: Curriculum to Teach Unlicensed School Personnel how to Assist with Medication in the School Setting*.

<https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Final-Amended-Medication-Curriculum-2018.pdf>

Miotto MB, Balchan B, Combe L, et al; American Academy of Pediatrics, Council on School Health; National Association of School Nurses. Safe Administration of Medication in School: Policy Statement.

Pediatrics. 2024; 153(6): <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2024-066839>