

I. Introduction: What is USIIS?

The Utah Statewide Immunization Information System (USIIS) is a confidential, population-based computerized system that records immunization doses administered by participating facilities to persons residing in Utah. USIIS is a life-span system, designed to coordinate immunization services for persons of all ages. USIIS is operated by the Utah Department of Health (UDOH).

At the point of clinical care, USIIS provides consolidated immunization histories for use by a vaccination provider in determining appropriate client vaccinations. At the population level, USIIS provides aggregate data on vaccinations for use in guiding public health action with the goals of improving vaccination rates and reducing vaccine-preventable disease.

USIIS provides for the sharing of immunization information among authorized users. Participation in USIIS by healthcare providers is voluntary. USIIS is an “opt-out” system, requiring individuals who do not want their or their child’s immunizations in USIIS to request to opt out of the system.

USIIS is designed and operated to protect the security of data, privacy of participants, and confidentiality of information.

USIIS is developed under the authority of the following provisions of the Utah Code: Title 26, Chapter 3, Health Statistics; Title 26, Chapter 6, Communicable Diseases Control Act, Section 26-1-17.5; Title 53A, Chapter 11, Part 3, Immunization of Students, and the Utah Administrative Rule (R386-800) Immunization Coordination.

II. Consent

Utah Administrative Rule (R386-800) Immunization Coordination became effective June 28, 2000. This rule established a requirement allowing individuals to withdraw (i.e., opt out) from the USIIS registry.

A. Voluntary Participation

Individual participation in the immunization registry is voluntary. Immunization records may be included in the system unless the individual or parent/guardian withdraws.

An individual will be included in the system until such time as the individual withdraws from the system.

Utah Code Section 26-3-7(6) permits that under specific circumstances individually identifiable immunization information may be released to “health care personnel or public health personnel who has a legitimate need to have access to the information in order to assist the patient or to protect the health of others closely associated with the patient.”

B. Notification

The UDOH will provide information on the use of USIIS directly to parents/guardians at birth hospitals and birthing centers. The UDOH will also provide USIIS participation notification materials to participating facilities for them to display.

Participating facilities shall cooperate with the UDOH in providing information about USIIS to individuals or parents/guardians and their right to withdraw from the system.

C. FERPA (for public schools only)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents/guardians certain rights with respect to their children's education records. Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or guardian before releasing any information, other than "directory" information (i.e. student's name, address, phone number) from a student's education record to any organization or agency that does not have a legitimate educational interest.

In Utah, immunization records are part of a student's education record, and therefore, permission must be obtained from the parent/guardian prior to sharing or including the immunization record in USIIS. The school's annual FERPA notification process may be used to obtain parent / guardian permission. The UDOH will provide schools with the appropriate format and language to assist in this process.

D. Withdrawal

An individual or parent/guardian may withdraw their participation from the system at any time. Individuals or parents/guardians may obtain a withdrawal form by contacting the UDOH or by visiting the USIIS website.

Utah Department of Health
USIIS Program
P.O. Box 142012
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-2012
Phone: (801) 538-9450 or (800) 678-3440
Fax: (801) 538-9440
www.usiis.org

A withdrawal form with the individual, parent, or guardian's signature must be received in order to complete the withdrawal request.

E. Re-enrollment

If an individual or parent/guardian has withdrawn consent from USIIS but would like to re-enroll, they may do so by contacting the USIIS Program at the above contact information.

III. Use of Data and Classification of Users

USIIS may be accessed only by authorized users at participating facilities, including healthcare personnel, schools, day care centers, publicly funded programs, pharmacies and the UDOH. Authorized users may access USIIS only when needed to coordinate immunization services of clients—such as assuring adequate immunizations, avoiding unnecessary immunizations, confirming compliance with mandatory immunization requirements, and/or controlling disease outbreaks.

Health plans, policy makers, and bona fide researchers may request access to the USIIS information for a specified period, solely for valid research and statistical purpose determined in accordance with Utah Code 26-3-7(3).

Individuals or parents/guardians may query their own or their child's immunization information contained in USIIS through their healthcare provider if the provider participates in USIIS, through a participating school or day care, or by submitting a Release of Immunization Record form to the UDOH. Individuals or parents/guardians may obtain the form by contacting the UDOH or by visiting the USIIS website. Authorized provider, school, and day care personnel shall allow the individual or parent/guardian to inspect, copy, and if necessary, amend or correct their immunization records.

IV. Data Access and Security Procedures

A. Participating Facility Enrollment

Facilities are required to complete and sign an Enrollment Agreement form and abide by its requirements. The enrolled facility is responsible for the actions of their users regarding the confidentiality and security of information contained in USIIS. Participating facilities agree to usage and privacy and security conditions described in the Enrollment Agreement.

A facility shall require each staff user to read this policy and sign the User Confidentiality and Security Agreement. Once completed, they may access identifiable patient information in the system only for authorized purposes.

B. User Confidentiality and Security Agreement

Individual users must be affiliated with a participating facility.

A facility shall require each staff member who becomes an authorized USIIS user to read this policy and sign the User Confidentiality and Security Agreement. Once completed, they may access identifiable patient information in the system for authorized purposes.

All USIIS users shall safeguard their username and password, and must:

1. NOT give a username and password to others; or
2. NOT post a username and password that is visible to others.

C. Penalty

Any person who violates any provision of the User Confidentiality and Security Agreement or this USIIS Confidentiality and Security Policy may be assessed a civil money penalty not to exceed the sum of \$5,000 or be punished for violation of a class B misdemeanor for the first violation and for any subsequent similar violation within two years for violation of a class A misdemeanor (Utah Administrative Rule R386-800-8).

D. USIIS Program Agreement

The UDOH shall maintain reasonable and appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to ensure the integrity and confidentiality of health information as stated in this policy. This includes:

1. The USIIS database resides in a secured area with physical and software preventative measures to protect the underlying network infrastructure from unauthorized access, misuse, or improper disclosure.
2. The USIIS uses encryption technology for data at rest and in transport.
3. The UDOH requires annual confidentiality and data security training for its staff.

V. References

CDC (Gail Horlick). 1997, 1999, 2000. Community Immunization Registries Manual: Chapter II Confidentiality. Prepared by All Kids Count Program of the Task Force for Child Survival and Development, The National Immunization Program of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, The national Vaccine Advisory Committee.

CDC. Immunization Information System Functional Standards, 2013-2017.
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/iis/func-stds.html>