

FAMILY PACKET

Ready-To-Use Materials



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA



ATTENDANCE IN THE EARLY GRADES



Many of our youngest students miss 10 percent of the school year—about 18 days a year or two days every month. Chronic absenteeism in kindergarten, and even PreK, can predict lower test scores, poor attendance and retention in later grades, especially if the problem persists for more than a year. Do you know how many young children are chronically absent in your school or community?

WHO IS AFFECTED?

1 in 10 kids in kindergarten and 1st grade are chronically absent. In some schools, it's as high as 1 in 4.



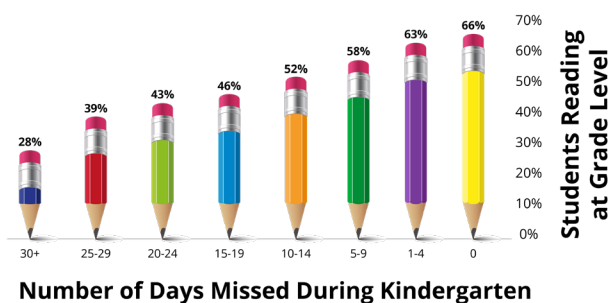
2 in 10 low-income kids miss too much school. They're also more likely to suffer academically.

2.5 in 10 homeless kids are chronically absent.

4 in 10 transient kids miss too much school when families move.

WHY IT MATTERS

If children don't show up for school regularly, they miss out on fundamental reading and math skills and the chance to build a habit of good attendance that will carry them into college and careers.



WHAT FAMILIES CAN DO

Find out what day school starts and make sure your child has the required shots.

Build regular routines for bed time and the morning.

Talk about the importance of regular attendance and about how your child feels about school.

Don't permit missing school unless your child is truly sick. Use a thermometer to check for a fever. Remember that stomach aches and headaches may be signs of anxiety.

Avoid medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session.

Keep a chart recording your child's attendance at home. At the end of the week, talk with your child about what you see.

Develop back up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Ask a family member, neighbor or another parent for help.

Seek support from school staff or community groups to help with transportation, health problems, or no safe path to school.

Adapted from materials provided by Attendance Works.



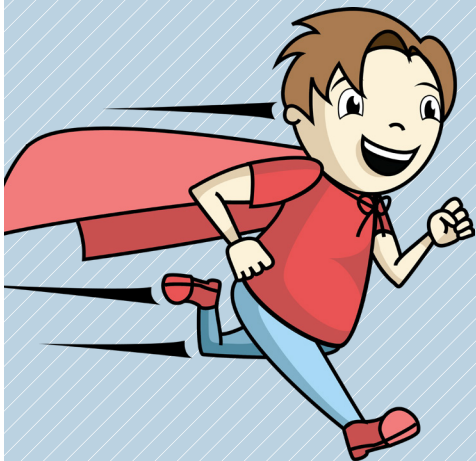
THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA



Attendance Heroes

Everyone can be an attendance hero.

Good attendance helps you become a strong reader and do well in school.



How do I get good attendance?

Don't miss more than nine days during the school year, or no more than two days every report-card period.

Do I have to be on time, too?

Yes, every day counts, start to finish, especially because reading is taught first thing in the morning.

Family Checklist

Good habits build confidence that lasts a lifetime.

- ☐ Map the best way to school.
- ☐ Get clothes and backpack ready the night before.
- ☐ Set a regular wake-up time.
- ☐ Have a backup plan to the backup plan.
- ☐ Get there on time because reading is taught first.
- ☐ Share health updates with your school nurse.



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA



Pledge of Attendance



STUDENT PLEDGE:

I, _____, pledge to attend school and class, every day, on time. If I am absent from school, I will turn in an excuse note as soon as I return and will complete all of my assignments that I missed.

I will respect myself, my education, and my community by having good school attendance and by being involved in my education. I will come to school prepared to learn and with a positive attitude.

By signing this pledge, I agree to do my best, each and every day!



PARENT PLEDGE:

I, _____, pledge to help my child to attend school and class, every day, on time. If my child is absent from school, I will send an excuse note as soon as he/she returns and will make sure that he/she completes all of the assignments that he/she missed.

I understand that regular attendance and punctuality are vital parts of my child's success. I agree to help monitor my child's daily attendance and to partner with the school if my child has any issues.

By signing this pledge, I agree to support and encourage my child to do his/her best, each and every day!



Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

School Name: _____

EVERY DAY COUNTS, START TO FINISH!



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA



EVERY DAY COUNTS START TO FINISH

MAKE PERFECT ATTENDANCE A WEEKLY FAMILY GOAL

Coming to school every day helps young students become strong readers.

FAMILY CHECKLIST

*Good habits build confidence
that lasts a lifetime.*



- ☐ **MAP THE BEST WAY TO SCHOOL.**
- ☐ **GET CLOTHES AND BACKPACKS READY THE NIGHT BEFORE.**
- ☐ **SET A REGULAR WAKE-UP TIME.**
- ☐ **HAVE A BACKUP PLAN TO THE BACKUP PLAN.**
- ☐ **GET THERE ON TIME BECAUSE READING IS TAUGHT FIRST.**
- ☐ **SHARE HEALTH UPDATES WITH YOUR SCHOOL NURSE.**

WEEKLY TRACKER 2019-2020

*Make it to school on time every day for the whole week?
Fill in a star and treat the whole family!*

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL:
GRADES K-12

9/3	9/9	9/16	9/23
9/30	10/7	10/14	10/21
10/28	11/4	11/11	11/18
11/25	12/2	12/9	12/16
FIRST DAY BACK FROM WINTER RECESS			
1/2	1/6	1/13	1/20
1/27	2/3	2/10	2/17
2/24	3/2	3/9	3/16
FIRST DAY BACK FROM SPRING RECESS			
3/23	3/30	4/13	4/20
4/27	5/4	5/11	5/18
5/25	6/1	6/8	
LAST WEEK OF SCHOOL			



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA



EVERY DAY COUNTS START TO FINISH

FAQs DISTRICT ATTENDANCE POLICIES

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT MY CHILD ATTEND SCHOOL?

When children miss a day of school (or arrive late or leave early) they are missing out on opportunities to strengthen their reading, learn new subjects, or build friendships. Research shows that children who attend every day, on time are more likely to achieve and excel academically.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL?

For all absences, parents are required to write an excuse note giving the child's name, classroom, date(s) absent and reasons for absence. Schools must receive the excuse note within three days following your child's absence.

All absences of three or more days in a row also require a doctor's note. When a student has been absent, excused with a parent note, totaling eight (8) days (cumulative), all subsequent absences require a doctor's note.

DOES BEING LATE OR LEAVING EARLY IMPACT STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND HURT SCHOOL PERFORMANCE?

Yes, when your child is tardy or leaves early, they are missing out on instructional time and classroom activities. Any K-8 student coming to school two hours after the start or leaving two hours before the end of the school day will be marked as absent one half-day.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN EXCUSED ABSENCE AND AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE?

Excused: The following conditions are considered excusable: authorized school activities, illness, quarantine, recovery from accident, required court appearance, and a death in the family. Funeral leave as follows:

Five (5) days, including day of funeral: parent/step-parent, child.

Three (3) days, including day of funeral: sibling, grandparent/step-grandparent, resident of same house.

Day of funeral: aunt, uncle, first cousin, niece, nephew.

Unexcused: Absences are unexcused if (1) they do not meet any of the above-listed conditions and (2) if the school does not receive a signed excuse note from a parent.

Family vacations on school days are considered unexcused absences. Please use our District calendar to plan family vacations as well as doctor visits around school days: philasd.org/calendar.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD IS TRUANT?

Students are considered truant when they have three illegal unexcused absences. If your child is truant, the school will generate a Third Day Illegal notice to send home. If your child continues to be truant you will be invited to attend a conference where a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) will be created in order to support you and your child in identifying and removing attendance barriers. If the plan is in place and your child continues to be truant with ten or more illegal unexcused absences, a truancy referral may be made to the Office of Attendance and Truancy.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD'S ATTENDANCE RECORDS ARE INCORRECT?

If you feel there is an error/discrepancy on your child's attendance record, you have the right to address it with the school. Be ready to present proper documentation about the change you're requesting. Once all required information is provided to your school, either the principal or designee can approve the change for the current school year.

Any changes to a prior year's records must be completed by the Office of Attendance and Truancy. All such requests can be forwarded to attendanceandtruancy@philasd.org or mailed to:

The Office of Attendance and Truancy
School District of Philadelphia
440 North Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19131
215-400-4830, Option 1

We're here to help. Let your school know if you are moving or have a change of address or phone number.



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA



EVERY DAY COUNTS **START TO FINISH**

HELPFUL RESOURCES TO OVERCOME ATTENDANCE BARRIERS

PARENTS, WE'RE HERE TO HELP.

We know it takes a lot to get children to school every day, on time. Thank you for doing what you do to make daily, on time attendance a family goal to help your child succeed in school.

We want to help keep your child from falling behind, so please tell us as soon as possible if your family is facing challenges related to transportation, health issues, housing instability, tough work schedules, or anything else so we can try to come up with a solution together. Meanwhile, we hope these resources help. Ask your school for copies of handouts or download them at readyby4th.org/attendance or on the Office of Attendance and Truancy page at philasd.org.

STUDENT HEALTH

When Sick is Too Sick for School. Not sure about sending your child to school or keeping them at home when they're feeling sick? Keep this handout handy. Talk with your child's school nurse, and check the District's site for updated policy information, including about asthma: philasd.org/studenthealth.

Mental Wellness /Drug and Alcohol Support.

Resource for children and families seeking, or in need of mental health, behavioral counseling, and/or support: philadelphia.pa.networkofcare.org/mh.

Community Behavioral Health is the city-operated health maintenance organization for persons needing mental health care. Substance abuse treatment (through the Coordinating Office for Drug and Alcohol Abuse Programs-CODAAP) can also be accessed through CBH. Medical Assistance patients should call this number first for information and referrals: 215-413-3100 or 1-888-545-2600. The crisis hotline number is 215-686-4420.
dbhids.org/community-behavioral-health

Call the number on the back of your insurance card if you need help getting connected to a medical provider. For those who don't have insurance, this website lists free health clinics in Philadelphia:
freeclinics.com/cit/pa-philadelphia.

If your family is facing any challenges that make it difficult for your child to attend school every day we encourage you to reach out to your child's school and ask for either the School Counselor or Attendance Designee for support.

EMERGENCY FUNDS + FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

For students experiencing a crisis, emergency funds may be available through philasd.org/homeless/programsservices/emergency-funding and cradlestocrayons.org/philadelphia/family-assistance.

For students facing homelessness or housing instability, the Office of Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness can help with uniforms, coats, tutoring, transportation and other things. Email ECYEH@philasd.org or call 215-400-4830, Option 4.

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LiHEAP) can provide help paying energy bills: dhs.pa.gov/citizens/heatingassistance/liheap.

The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare provides cash assistance, medical assistance, and energy assistance. To find out if you qualify, call the general helpline at 800-692-7462.



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA



EVERY DAY COUNTS *START TO FINISH*

HELPFUL RESOURCES *TO OVERCOME ATTENDANCE BARRIERS*

FAMILY SUPPORT

In-home case management services and support.

Families can refer themselves for in-home case management services and support with health, financial, heating, electrical, and transportation issues through the Family Empowerment Services Program. Call the DHS hotline: 215-683-4000, then select menu option #5 and ask to be referred to the Family Empowerment Services Program.

NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits are available through an Access card, which works like a debit card. Use it to buy food at supermarkets, corner and convenience stores, and most farmers' markets. Find out if you qualify today. Call the SNAP Hotline at 215-430-0556.

Low-income pregnant and breastfeeding women, new moms, and children under age 5 can receive food, health screenings, and nutrition counseling under the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women Infants and Children (WIC) program. Call 1-800-743-3300 to find out if you are eligible or visit wicprograms.org/ci/pa-philadelphia.

The Coalition Against Hunger connects families and individuals with food pantries across the city: hungercoalition.org.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

The General Intake Unit provides legal advice and referrals to clients with a wide variety of legal problems. Applicants must meet financial eligibility guidelines. To see if you are eligible, visit philalegal.org/intakeunit or call 215-981-3800.

EMERGENCY HOUSING

The City of Philadelphia provides emergency and temporary housing to persons experiencing homelessness, as well as case management assistance to assist households with obtaining appropriate long-term housing. philadelphiaofficeofhomelesssservices.org/find-a-place-to-stay/emergency-housing.

If your family is experiencing housing instability, contact the Office of Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness to learn what resources they can offer to support your family during this period. ECYEH@philasd.org or call 215-400-4830, Option 4.

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE

The Early Learning Resource Center helps families seeking assistance paying for childcare and other early childhood supports (previously provided by CCIS and the Regional Keys). philadelphiachildcare.org

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Philadelphia Domestic Violence Hotline is free and open 24/7. Call 866-723-3014 or 215-456-1529.

These organizations provide support (such as counseling or shelter) for individuals who have experienced or are experiencing sexual or physical abuse:

- Women Against Abuse: womenagainstabuse.org
- WOAR (Women Organized against Rape): woar.org

REFUGEE + IMMIGRANT PARENTS

Nationalities Services Center offers free and/or low-cost translation and interpretation services for non-English speaking and English language learners, as well as other social and educational services. nationalitiesservice.org

The School District of Philadelphia's Office of Multilingual Family Support includes Bilingual Counseling Assistants who speak more than 30 languages. Call 215-400-4180.

**EVERY DAY
COUNTS** *START
TO FINISH*

SCHOOL HEALTH STATEMENT

SCHOOL NURSES ARE HERE FOR YOU

Did you know that each school building in the district has an assigned school nurse?

A school nurse is here to help you and your children in many ways. Not only do we assess and treat your child's physical health needs during the school day, we also help to organize health and wellness opportunities to benefit you and your family.

Responsibilities of the school nurse include but not limited to:

- Vision, hearing and dental screenings
- Medication administration and first aid
- Coordination of care with your primary care provider

School nurses can answer any health questions you or your child may have and discuss your child's medical needs. Please call or stop by to see your school nurse with questions or to talk about any concerns you may have.

The following checklist includes important things to remember to discuss with your school's nurse.

- ☐ **Tell your school nurse about your child's recent or long-term health problems.** The school nurse can work with you to develop a plan to lessen the chances that health problems will get in the way of your child's attendance and learning in school.
- ☐ **Make sure to share any updates about your child's health condition with the school nurse as soon as they occur.** There are forms that the school nurse will provide to you so that you can tell the school about your child's health history. Those forms should be given to the nurse at the beginning of the year. You can also update the forms at any time of the year with new health information.
- ☐ **Your school nurse will let you know if we do not have up-to-date records of your child's shots.** The nurse will send a letter home to you with the list of shots that your child needs. Please take the letter to your child's health care provider. Your provider will update the shot record if your child already had the vaccine or will provide proof that your child is no longer at risk for the infection. If your child needs to receive the shot, your provider will give the vaccine. It is important that you follow up with your school's nurse after your visit with the health care provider so we can update your child's school health record.
- ☐ **The school nurse can provide you with a list of resources if you need any help accessing health care or other essential needs.**
- ☐ **If your child has a chronic health condition like asthma or diabetes the school nurse can help you keep your child healthy, in school and able to learn.** Chronic health conditions do not have to stop your child from coming to school. Remember to share information about your child's health condition with the school nurse, including any medications needed.
- ☐ **If any of your contact information changes during the school year, please notify the school's main office and the school nurse.** This will help us to contact you and follow up with any important information you need to know regarding your child.



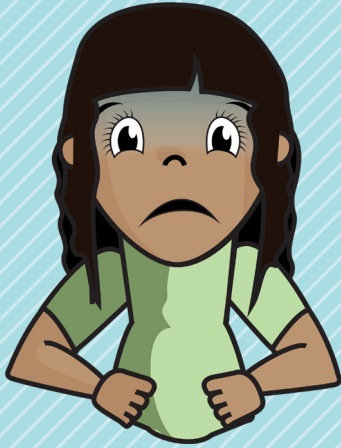
THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA



**EVERY DAY
COUNTS** START
TO FINISH

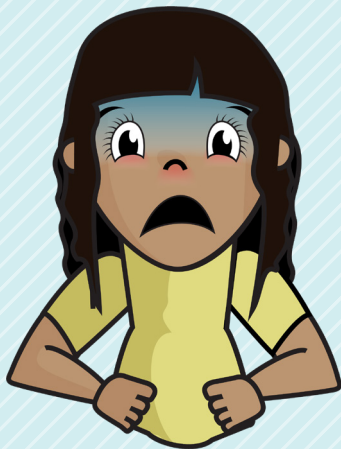
"I DON'T *FEEL GOOD*" WHEN SICK IS TOO SICK FOR SCHOOL

Talk with your child's school nurse addressing any questions or concerns about your child's health.



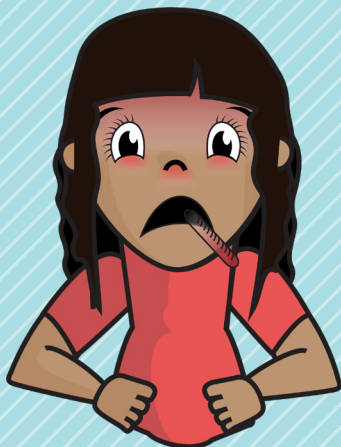
SEND TO SCHOOL

- ☐ No other symptoms but a runny nose or just a little cough.
- ☐ No fever in the past 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine.
- ☐ No vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours.



KEEP AT HOME

- ☐ Fever higher than 100.5 degrees even after taking medicine.
- ☐ Vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours.
- ☐ Eyes pink and crusty.



CALL THE DOCTOR

- ☐ Fever higher than 100 degrees for more than two days.
- ☐ Vomiting or diarrhea for more than two days.
- ☐ Sniffles for more than a week, and not getting better.
- ☐ Asthma symptoms after using asthma medicine.

Call 911 if your child is having trouble breathing after using an inhaler.

Adapted from materials provided by Attendance Works.



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA



Is Your Child Ready for School?

Guide to School District of Philadelphia Immunization Requirements

School-age children enrolled K to 12 must be up-to-date on vaccines based on their grade level for school attendance. Check with your doctor to make sure your child's vaccinations are up to date.

FOR ATTENDANCE IN ALL GRADES (K - 12)



Diphtheria, Tetanus, & Acellular Pertussis (DTap) 4 doses

Polio (IPV) 4 doses

Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) 2 doses

Hepatitis B (HepB) 3 doses

Chickenpox (Varicella) 2 doses

FOR ATTENDANCE IN 7TH GRADE



Tetanus, Diphtheria, & Acellular Pertussis (Tdap) 1 dose

Meningococcal Conjugate (MCV4) 1 dose

FOR ATTENDANCE IN 12TH GRADE



Meningococcal Conjugate (MCV4) 1 dose

THINGS TO KNOW

- ☒ Proof of vaccinations or medical certificate must be provided to your child's school no later than the first day of their attendance. Parental recall or verbal history of any disease is not accepted.
- ☒ Students who do not have proof of all vaccines will not be able to attend school unless an exemption form has been submitted and approved by the Office of Health Services.
- ☒ These requirements allow for the following exemptions: medical reasons, religious belief, or philosophical/strong moral or ethical conviction. Even if your child is exempt, he or she may not be able to attend school during an outbreak of vaccine-preventable disease.

Don't have a doctor?

VISIT A CITY HEALTH CENTER

Need vaccines for your child but you don't have a doctor? Visit a Philadelphia city health center! City health centers can give your child the vaccines they need to stay healthy and enter school.

Operated by the Department of Public Health, city health centers accept patients with no insurance, Medicaid, HMO plans, and most other insurance options. Walk-in to any of the centers listed below for more information, or call (215) 685-2933 to schedule a vaccine appointment.

Need proof of a vaccine that was already given? Call the Immunization Hotline at (215) 685-6784, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday

Philadelphia City Health Centers

Health Center 2

1700 S. Broad St., Unit 201, Philadelphia, PA 19145 (215) 685-1803

Health Center 3

555 S. 43rd St., Philadelphia, PA 19104 (215) 685-7504

Health Center 4

4400 Haverford Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19104 (215) 685-7601

Health Center 5

1900 N 20th St., Philadelphia, PA 19121 (215) 685-2933

Health Center 6

301 W. Girard Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19123 (215) 685-3803

Health Center 9

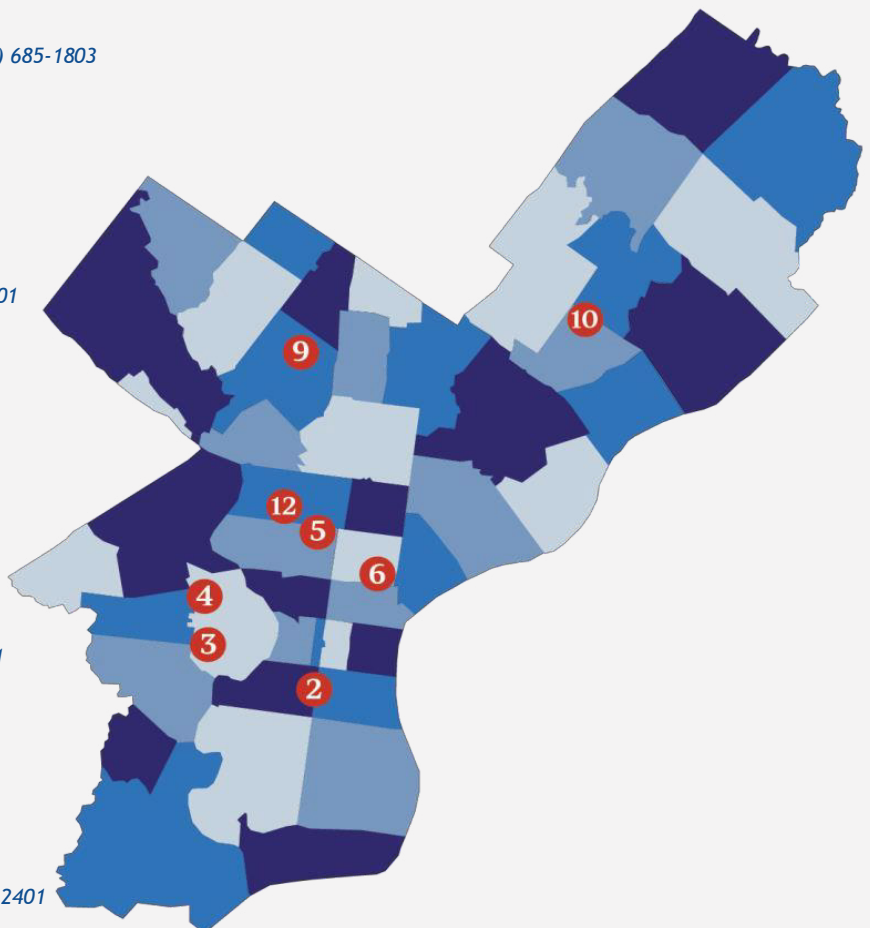
131 E. Cheltenham Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19144 (215) 685-5701

Health Center 10

2230 Cottman Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19149 (215) 685-0639

Health Center 12 (Strawberry Mansion)

2840 West Dauphin St., Philadelphia, PA 19132 (215) 685-2401



FQHCs in Philadelphia

Federally Qualified Health Centers



Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) are “safety net” providers such as community health centers. The main purpose of the FQHC Program is to enhance the provision of primary care services in underserved communities.

Any Philadelphia resident is eligible for free or low cost care at the City’s AHS Health Centers.

North Philadelphia

Facility	Address	Zip Code	Phone
AHS Health Center #5	1900 N. 20th St	19121	215-685-2933
AHS Health Center #6	301 W. Girard Ave	19123	215-685-3803
Strawberry Mansion Health Center	2840 Dauphin St	19132	215-685-2401
DVCH Fairmount Primary Care Center	1412 Fairmount Ave	19130	215-235-9600
QCHC Cooke Family Health Center	1300 W. Loudon St	19141	215-457-6902
QCHC Family Health Center	2501 W. Lehigh Ave	19132	215-227-0300
QCHC Meade Family Health Center	1600 N. 18th St	19121	215-765-9501
GPHA Hunting Park Health Center	1999 W. Hunting Park Ave	19140	215-228-9300
GPHA Medical Suite At Temple	3223 North Broad St	19140	215-226-3789
DVCH Maria De Los Santos Health Center	401 W. Allegheny Ave	19133	215-291-2500
Esperanza Health Center – Kensington	3156 Kensington Ave	19134	215-831-1100
Esperanza Health Center – N. 5th St.	2940 N. 5th St	19133	215-221-6633
Esperanza Health Center – N. 6th St.	4417 N. 6th St	19134	215-302-3600
PHMC Health Connection	1900 N 9th St	19122	215-765-6690
PHMC Health Center at Temple	3401 North Broad St	19140	215-731-7144
PHMC Congreso	412 W. Lehigh Ave	19133	267-765-2272
Project Home-Stephen Klein Wellness Ctr	2144 Cecil B Moore Ave	19121	215-320-6187
Spectrum Broad St Health Center	1415 N. Broad St	19122	215-235-7944

Northeast Philadelphia

Facility	Address	Zip Code	Phone
AHS Health Center #10	2230 Cottman Ave	19149	215-685-0639
GPHA Frankford Ave. Health Center	4510 Frankford Ave	19124	215-744-1302
PHMC Rising Sun Health Center	5675 N. Front St	19120	215-279-9666

FQHCs in Philadelphia

Federally Qualified Health Centers



DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

Northwest Philadelphia

Facility	Address	Zip Code	Phone
AHS Health Center #9	131 E. Chelten Ave	19144	215-685-5701
Covenant House Health Services	251 E. Bringham St	19144	215-844-0181
FPCN Abbottsford-Falls Family Practice	4700 Wissahickon Ave	19144	215-843-9720

South Philadelphia

Facility	Address	Zip Code	Phone
AHS Health Center #2	1700 South Broad Street	19145	215-685-1803
GPHA Carl Moore Health Center	1401 South 31st Street	19146	215-755-7700
GPHA Southeast Health Center	800 Washington Ave	19147	215-339-5100

West and Southwest Philadelphia

Facility	Address	Zip Code	Phone
AHS Health Center #3	555 S. 43rd St	19104	215-685-7504
AHS Health Center #4	4400 Haverford Ave	19104	215-685-7601
FPCN Health Annex	6120 Woodland Ave	19142	215-727-4721
GPHA Woodland Ave. Health Center	5000 Woodland Ave	19143	215-726-9807
Sayre Family Health Center	5800 Walnut St	19139	215-474-4444
Spectrum Community Health Center	5201 Haverford Ave	19139	215-471-2761

Center City Philadelphia

Facility	Address	Zip Code	Phone
GPHA Chinatown Medical Services	432 N. 6th St	19123	215-627-8000
FPCN 11th St. Family Health Services	850 N. 11th St	19123	215-769-1100
Philadelphia FIGHT Pediatrics	1207 Chestnut St, 5th Floor	19107	215-525-8600
PHMC Mary Howard Health Center	125 S. 9th St	19107	215-592-4500
PHMC Care Clinic	1200 Callowhill St. Suite 101	19123	215-825-8220
Project Home-Hub of Hope	1404 Arch St, subconcourse	19102	215-309-5225
Y-HEP Health Center	1207 Chestnut St, 5th Floor	19107	215-344-1632

**EVERY DAY
COUNTS START
TO FINISH**

SCHOOL

STUDENT

DATE

ABSENCE EXCUSE NOTE

Grade/Room

Number of Days Absent

Dates Absent

REASON FOR ABSENCE(S)

PARENTS: Don't forget you have three days from your child's absence to submit an excuse note. You need to submit a doctor's note, too, for absences of three or more days in a row.

We're here to help. Let your school know if you are moving or have a change of address or phone number.

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA

