



**SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH**



This is an official
DPH Health Update

On July 1, 2024, the S.C. Department of Health & Environmental Control (DHEC) became two separate agencies: the S.C. Department of Environmental Services (SCDES) and the S.C. Department of Public Health (DPH).

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10602-DHU-10-07-2025-Lead

**Change in DPH Threshold for Initiating Childhood Lead Risk
Assessments from 10 mcg/dL to 8 mcg/dL**

Summary

Starting October 15, 2025, the SC Department of Public Health (SC DPH) Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP) will be dropping the threshold for investigations and environmental lead risk assessments from the current confirmed level of 10 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood (10 mcg/dL) to 8 mcg/dL, in children under six years of age at the time of testing. This level only applies to results from venous specimens.

Background

South Carolina's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Act (§44-53-1310, *et seq.*) requires DPH to make certain referrals and to conduct a lead-based hazard investigation upon notification of a lead poisoning case in a child. Within the Act, a "child" is defined as a person under six years of age. "Lead poisoning" means "a blood lead level at an elevation hazardous to health as established by the Department of [Public Health]."

While no safe level of lead in a child's blood has been determined, the Department has used a confirmed/venous threshold of 10 mcg/dL since 2017 for initiation of investigations and environmental lead risk assessments. This level, while above the reference values of 5 mcg/dL and now 3.5 mcg/dL as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, was based upon DHEC/DPH staffing capacity. With new positions, the program is now able to increase the numbers of children and families served.

What to Expect

Qualifying results of lead analyses are any venous level of 8 mcg/dL or greater in a child under six years of age at the time of testing. When these results are received by the CLPPP team, staff will reach out to the provider office that initiated the testing. Our team will verify the specimen type and collect contact information for the child and child's family so that we can begin working with you to help identify and address sources of lead in the child's environment.

For "cases of lead poisoning", the Act further states that "the department shall examine or refer for examination within thirty days all other children under six years of age, and other children as the department finds advisable to examine, residing or recently residing in the household of the victim or in all other dwelling units in the dwelling of the victim or in a childcare facility occupied by the victim..." CLPPP staff will identify any other persons for whom testing is recommended during the initial contact with the child's healthcare team at the time that the case is identified.

Resources for Additional Information

The DPH Childhood Lead Prevention Program has a hotline open to providers, families, and community members with questions regarding lead exposure or hazards: 1-866-4NO-LEAD (866-466-5323)

The CLPPP team can also provide linkages to childhood lead medical experts; the CLPPP does not provide case-specific medical consultation.

DPH CLPPP staff can provide lead in-service education to medical office staff as needed. DPH's CLPPP can also supply printed lead educational materials, such as brochures for patient/family and community education on lead hazards, materials on occupational lead exposure, and information on measures that families can take to prevent lead exposure in the home.

DPH contact information for reportable diseases and reporting requirements Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

Reporting of blood lead testing results is required by SC Statute requiring the reporting of diseases and conditions to the public health department. See SC Code of Laws §44-53-1310 *et seq.* and the DPH 2025 List of Reportable Conditions available at: https://dph.sc.gov/sites/scdph/files/Library/00167-ENG-CR_2025.pdf.

- All non-elevated blood lead results are reportable within 30 days, regardless of test type, test result, or age of patient. Lead test reports must specify a specimen source as venous or capillary.
- Any elevated results (3.5 mcg/dL or greater) are reportable within 7 days.

Federal HIPAA legislation allows disclosure of protected health information, without consent of the individual, to public health authorities to collect and receive such information for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease. (HIPAA 45 CFR §164.512).

Blood Lead Test Reporting

**Mail, Fax, Email, or Send via secure FTP all blood lead testing results to
Lead Surveillance / DPH Bureau of Maternal and Child Health.**

Reporting

- Mail to:
Lead Surveillance/MCH Bureau
PO Box 2046
Cayce, SC 29171
- Fax lead reports to: (803) 898-3236
- Email: scionlead@dhec.sc.gov to establish electronic reporting
- Submit electronically via SCIONx

For further information, contact:

DPH / Bureau of Maternal and Child Health
Children's Health and Perinatal Services Section

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

Toll-Free Phone:
1-866-4NO-LEAD (866-466-5323)
CHPS Section Main Number: (803) 898-0767

For further information on reportable conditions, see <https://dph.sc.gov/professionals/health-professionals/sc-list-reportable-conditions>

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert	Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.
Health Advisory	Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.
Health Update	Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.
Info Service	Provides general information that is not necessarily considered to be of an emergent nature.