

Orientation-Level Training

For School Employees Who
Administer Oral Medications to
Students

This manual is:

- A resource.
- Not a substitute for delegation, training, and supervision by a school nurse.
- Be sure you understand your district's policies and procedures.

What are oral medications?

- Oral medications are those taken by mouth.
- For guidance on administering inhaled medication, consult the school nurse supervising a particular student's care.

The paraeducator is a school employee who:

- Provides instructional and other direct services to children and youth.
- Works under the supervision of a certificated/licensed staff member.

Assumptions:

- Delegation, training, and supervision are required.
- Certificated/licensed staff are responsible and accountable for the management of programs.
- Nurses and O.T./P.T. have additional laws and regulations due to licenses.

Assumptions (Cont.):

- Clear expectations.
- Established routines.
- Ongoing communication needed.

What can I do?

Chain of command.

- Paraeducators cannot train another person to perform health related tasks.
- Paraeducators may not take orders from a physician.

Supervision

- Oral Medication Law
- The oral medication law (RCW 28A.210.260) requires that paraeducators be trained and supervised by a registered nurse (R.N.) or a physician (M.D.).
- Paraeducators must be trained and supervised in the administration of oral medications.


Levels of supervision—nurses

- Immediate supervision
- Direct supervision
- Indirect supervision
- Most often, supervision is indirect.

Confidentiality and release of information:

- Why must confidentiality be maintained?

 It's the law!

 Federal laws, state statutes and regulations, and local school district policies require it.

- Health care providers may share health care information with teachers and paraeducators to the extent that they need to know.

Confidentiality (Cont.):

- Generally, health care information cannot be disclosed to anyone without the consent of a parent or a student who is 18 years of age or older.


Who may have access?

- The law permits those with signed consent to have access to health care information (Chapter 70.02 RCW).
- The health care provider determines who needs information and how much information is needed to provide safe health care.

The “Five Rights:”

 Right Child

 Right Medication

 Right Dosage

 Right Time

 Right Route

Parent/guardian responsibilities:

- Bring sufficient medication in appropriate container.
- Bring Authorization for Administration of Oral Medication form with written instructions.
- Form is valid for one school year.

School nurse or delegated staff responsibilities:

- Make sure appropriate forms are filled out and proper directions supplied.
- Give medication at proper time; make sure log is filled out and initialed.
- Report any difficulties to school nurse.
- If an error occurs, fill out Medication Error Report.

District responsibilities:

- Develop policies in alignment with state guidelines.

Medication administration records:

- Parent permission form.
- Authorization for Administration of Oral Medication at School.
- Receipt for Medication.
- Medication Administration Log.
- Medication Error Report.

Accepting medication at school:

- Medication must come to school in original container and must be accompanied by the proper authorization.
- School district policy may require a count of medication when brought to school.

Administration of medication:

- Correct student name.
- Correct medication name.
- Correct dosage.
- Watch student take medication at the right time via the right route.
- Fill out and initial child's Medication Administration Log.

Medication errors:

- A medication error is a violation of any of the “Five Rights.”
- Report errors immediately to supervising nurse.
- Fill out Medication Error Report.
- Observe student for serious and/or life-threatening symptoms.
- If student is developing serious and/or life-threatening symptoms, follow building/district emergency procedures.

Changes in medication:

- A paraeducator may never change a student's medication prescription unless verified and directed by the school nurse.

Over-the-counter medications:

- The same procedures apply to both prescription drugs and over the-counter (OTC) medications.
- Consult your school district/building policy.

Field Trips:

- Take permission slip from home.
- Take copies of Authorization for Administration of Oral Medications at School form and Medication Administration Log.
- Keep medication in a secure location.
- Return medication to locked area when returning to school.

Advocating for oneself:

- What should you do if your supervisor directs you to administer medication or to perform health care procedures or other tasks/procedures you have not been trained to do, are not qualified to do, or are not legally allowed to perform?

Guidelines:


- You should be trained and supervised by a licensed health care professional.
- You should be trained in techniques for "universal precautions."
- You will need to be prepared to respond appropriately to student and/or building emergencies in the school setting.


Guidelines (Cont):


- You should be aware of your school district and/or personal liability insurance coverage.
- You should be aware of state laws or collective bargaining agreements.
- You should support the proactive development of IEPs and IHPs.

Steps to follow:




- If you are being directed to perform a task you are not qualified to do or which you believe is illegal:

 Explain to your supervisor that you believe it is not safe or it is illegal for you to perform the procedures.




 Call the school nurse or others to discuss what you are being directed to perform.

 If you are still being directed to perform a task, proceed to the next steps.

Steps to follow (Cont.):

-  Document what you are being asked to perform. Put your objections in writing. (For example, “You are asking me to perform a health care procedure I have not been trained to do and that could endanger the child.”)
-  Ask the supervisor to put the directive in writing.
-  Call your union representative.

Steps to follow (Cont.):

-  Ask to see the school district's liability insurance policy regarding coverage of educational employees complying with a directive of a supervisor.
-  Comply with the direct order unless you feel you will jeopardize the safety of the student.
-  It is necessary to follow the above steps only until the problem is resolved.