

Ref.: C.L.20.2016

Entry into force of an amendment to the International Health Regulations (2005), and publication of the Third Edition of the International Health Regulations (2005) booklet

... The Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) presents her compliments to States Parties to the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR (2005)) and has the honour to refer to resolution WHA67.13 (copy enclosed) by which the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly adopted an amendment to update Annex 7 of the IHR (2005), and to inform States Parties of the pending publication of the revised Third Edition of the IHR (2005) booklet to include this amended text.

... The amended Annex 7 of IHR (2005) (copy enclosed) shall enter into force and be legally binding upon all States Parties on 11 July 2016. No State Party submitted a rejection or reservation to the amendment within the required period for such submissions, which expired in January 2016.

In the context of international travel, the amended Annex 7 extends the period of validity of an IHR (2005) international certificate of vaccination against yellow fever, and the protection provided by vaccination against yellow fever infection, from ten years, beginning ten days after the date of vaccination, to the life of the person (traveller) vaccinated. Accordingly, following entry into force of the amendment on 11 July 2016, for both existing or new certificates, revaccination or a booster dose of yellow fever vaccine cannot be required of international travellers as a condition of entry into a State Party, regardless of the date that their international certificate of vaccination was initially issued.

As the entry into force of the amendment approaches, the Director-General takes this opportunity to bring to the attention of States Parties the need to ensure that all relevant personnel are informed and prepared, and that all necessary updating of related regulations, procedures and policies is carried out so that the new requirements can be implemented fully on the date that they enter into force.

Guidance on implementation is available on the WHO website at <http://www.who.int/ith/en/>. The revised Third Edition of the IHR (2005) will be published and made available to Member States.

The Director-General takes this opportunity to renew to States Parties to the International Health Regulations (2005) the assurance of her highest consideration.

GENEVA, 16 May 2016

... ENCLS: (2)

Text of the updated Annex 7 of the International Health Regulations (2005)¹

[A67/35 – 2 May 2014]

REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING VACCINATION OR PROPHYLAXIS FOR SPECIFIC DISEASES

1. In addition to any recommendation concerning vaccination or prophylaxis, the following diseases are those specifically designated under these Regulations for which proof of vaccination or prophylaxis may be required for travellers as a condition of entry to a State Party:

Vaccination against yellow fever.

2. Recommendations and requirements for vaccination against yellow fever:

(a) For the purpose of this Annex:

(i) the incubation period of yellow fever is six days;

(ii) yellow fever vaccines approved by WHO provide protection against infection starting 10 days following the administration of the vaccine;

(iii) this protection continues for the life of the person vaccinated; and

(iv) the validity of a certificate of vaccination against yellow fever shall extend for the life of the person vaccinated, beginning 10 days after the date of vaccination.

(b) Vaccination against yellow fever may be required of any traveller leaving an area where the Organization has determined that a risk of yellow fever transmission is present.

(c) If a traveller is in possession of a certificate of vaccination against yellow fever which is not yet valid, the traveller may be permitted to depart, but the provisions of paragraph 2(h) of this Annex may be applied on arrival.

(d) A traveller in possession of a valid certificate of vaccination against yellow fever shall not be treated as suspect, even if coming from an area where the Organization has determined that a risk of yellow fever transmission is present.

(e) In accordance with paragraph 1 of Annex 6 the yellow fever vaccine used must be approved by the Organization.

(f) States Parties shall designate specific yellow fever vaccination centres within their territories in order to ensure the quality and safety of the procedures and materials employed.

¹ See resolution WHA67.13.

(g) Every person employed at a point of entry in an area where the Organization has determined that a risk of yellow fever transmission is present, and every member of the crew of a conveyance using any such point of entry, shall be in possession of a valid certificate of vaccination against yellow fever.

(h) A State Party, in whose territory vectors of yellow fever are present, may require a traveller from an area where the Organization has determined that a risk of yellow fever transmission is present, who is unable to produce a valid certificate of vaccination against yellow fever, to be quarantined until the certificate becomes valid, or until a period of not more than six days, reckoned from the date of last possible exposure to infection, has elapsed, whichever occurs first.

(i) Travellers who possess an exemption from yellow fever vaccination, signed by an authorized medical officer or an authorized health worker, may nevertheless be allowed entry, subject to the provisions of the foregoing paragraph of this Annex and to being provided with information regarding protection from yellow fever vectors. Should the travellers not be quarantined, they may be required to report any feverish or other symptoms to the competent authority and be placed under surveillance.

WHA67.13 Implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)

The Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005);¹

Recalling the recent meeting and report of the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on immunization,² which completed its scientific review and analysis of evidence on issues concerning vaccination against yellow fever and concluded that a single dose of yellow fever vaccine is sufficient to confer sustained immunity and life-long protection against yellow fever disease, and that a booster dose of yellow fever vaccine is not needed;

Noting that in its report the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on immunization recommended that WHO should revisit the provisions in the International Health Regulations (2005) relating to the period of validity for international certificates for vaccination against yellow fever,

ADOPTS, in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 55 of the International Health Regulations (2005), the updated Annex 7 of the International Health Regulations (2005).

(Ninth plenary meeting, 24 May 2014 –
Committee A, sixth report)

¹ Document A67/35.

² Meeting of the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on immunization, April 2013 – conclusions and recommendations. Weekly epidemiological record. 2013;88(20):201–216.