

North Carolina School Health Program Manual

Section B, Coordinated School Health, Chapter 3, Health Office

Health Office Suite

An essential part of providing quality health services is having a properly designed and equipped health office area. Whether planning a new school with a health office suite or remodeling an old space, the school nurse is an effective asset in the planning process. Often considered a safe space for students, the health office should be located in a quiet location that supports privacy, allows enough room for the delivery of safe and effective care, it should be clean, sanitary, and free from clutter. Centering the health office near administration and/or Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP) increases the support and collaboration of student centered care.

The name(s), licensure, credentials(s) and schedule of those responsible for the provision of health care services should be clearly posted in and outside the health office.

Health Office Facilities

Variables that may impact the needs of an efficient health office include the number of student encounters, the grade levels being served, medical acuity, system policies and procedures, local, state, and federal laws, and community factors such as economic instability and access to health care. The square footage of the health offices should be congruent with the student population and support a dedicated space if isolation for contagious illness is indicated.

All school health offices should be spaces that are designated for health-related services only. Ideally, they should include access to:

- A private conference space where health counseling can be done in a confidential manner
- Networked, privacy protected, up-to-date computer with internet access and printer
- District provided phone
- Desk with lockable drawers and adequate work area
- General desk necessities (stapler, pens, paper, desk supplies, access to a photocopier, etc.)
- Lockable file cabinets for storage of student records
- Secured area with locked storage for medications including controlled substances, supplies, and equipment
- An area for maintaining professional reference books and manuals, as well as health education materials for school nurses, staff, students, and families
- A dedicated bathroom meeting ADA requirements with a grab bar next to the toilet, a sink (with hot and cold water), and good ventilation
- A sink outside the bathroom in the assessment and treatment area for hand washing
- All sinks equipped with liquid soap, and paper towel dispensers
- Pedal-controlled, covered waste receptacles with disposable liners
- Area for assessments/treatments, first aid, and medication administration
- Area for health-related screenings
- Private, yet visible, area for short rest periods or observation when necessary
- Area for triage and waiting (to be seen or to go home after being seen)
- Easily cleanable countertops, floors, and walls (to facilitate disinfection of soiled areas)
- A refrigerator of adequate size for securely storing medications and cold packs
 - Storage of food items in refrigerators with medications should be avoided
 - Refrigerator temperature should be monitored regularly according to

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manufacturer instructions

- Adequate ventilation to support infection control
- Secure, emergency “go” box
- Sharps container

Health Office Equipment and Supplies

Various resources exist for school health office inventory needs. If one is needed contact your school health nurse consultant. Maintain ongoing supply list/inventory with expiration dates and reorder as needed.

Classroom First Aid Kit

To minimize loss of pupil time from class, at the beginning of the school year each teacher should be provided with a re-sealable plastic bag or box containing soap, hand sanitizer, adhesive bandages, paper towels (if necessary), and instructions for the student on how to manage their own cuts and scratches. Instructions (written or verbal) given to teachers should include information that is consistent with the school’s OSHA Infection Control policies concerning the provision of first aid to students. First aid supplies should be available to students on the playground and field trips. At the end of the school year, teachers should return all unused supplies.

Reference

McClanahan, R., & Hiltz, C. (2025). Chapter 30/Managing the School Health Office. In *School Nursing A Comprehensive Text* (4th ed., pp. 738–740). essay, F.A.Davis Company.