# Superintendent’s Memo #035-19


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: February 1, 2019

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT: Shortages of Auto-Injectable Epinephrine

The *Code of Virginia* [§ 22.1-274.2](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter14/section22.1-274.2/) requires schools to possess, train and administer epinephrine to any student believed to be having an anaphylactic reaction. Manufacturers of the free Epi-Pen program to supply schools with epinephrine for the treatment of life-threatening allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) are experiencing manufacturing and delivery delays. Auto-injectable epinephrine is currently on the [US Food and Drug Administration Shortages list](https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/drugshortages/dsp_ActiveIngredientDetails.cfm?AI=Epinephrine%20Injection,%20Auto-Injector&st=c&tab=tabs-1).

In order to comply with *Code of Virginia* [§ 22.1-274.2](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter14/section22.1-274.2/) requirements, school divisions should not rely solely on the free program to obtain needed medication. Whereas the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) recognizes the free program relieves the financial burden, all school divisions are encouraged to explore all other avenues, including purchasing from suppliers that require payment via procurement. Schools may purchase epinephrine through other suppliers or they may work with community partners such as fire, rescue, hospitals and health care providers to obtain needed doses. In addition, school divisions should check expiration dates of all epinephrine doses to ensure the quality of this product. The FDA indicates there are no plans to extend the expiration date of current supplies.

The Virginia Department of Education, Office of Student Services has been working diligently with the Virginia Department of Health to assist schools in this effort. Please contact VDOE if your school division requires support locating a provider. If you have questions, please contact Tracy White, School Health Specialist, Office of Student Services, by email at Tracy.White@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at 804-786-8671.

JFL/TLW