

**Dear Parent/Guardian:**



**Key Points Related to Claiming a Nonmedical Immunization Waiver for Children Attending Michigan Schools and Licensed Child-Care Programs**

In early 2015, Michigan instituted an administrative rule change on nonmedical waivers for childhood immunizations. Parents/guardians seeking to obtain a nonmedical immunization waiver for their child/children who are enrolled in school or licensed child-care programs are required to attend an educational session, where they are provided with information about vaccine-preventable diseases and vaccinations.

- Michigan has one of the highest immunization waiver rates in the country, with select counties reporting waiver rates over 10% (that is 1 out of 10 school aged students that have not received all school required vaccinations)<sup>1</sup>. In addition, individual school buildings have reported even higher waiver rates.

**Key Points**

- The rule applies to parents/guardians seeking an immunization waiver for their children enrolled in public or private:
  - Licensed childcare, preschool, and Head Start programs
  - Kindergarten, 7th grade, and any newly enrolled student into the school district
- This rule preserves your ability to obtain a nonmedical waiver.
- Nonmedical waivers (religious or philosophical/other objections) are available at your county health department and cannot be found at schools/child-care programs or physician offices.
- Parents/Guardians are required to follow these steps when seeking a nonmedical waiver:
  1. Contact your county health department for an appointment to speak with a health educator.
  2. During the visit, immunization-related questions and concerns of the parents/guardians can be brought up for discussion. The staff will present evidence-based information regarding the risks of vaccine-preventable diseases and the benefits/potential risks (risks consisting mostly moderate side-effects) of vaccination.
  3. Schools/childcare programs will only accept the current, un-altered, official State of Michigan form (current date: January 1, 2018.)
    - A county health department will not issue a waiver without both signatures as it would be considered an incomplete and invalid waiver.
    - Forms cannot be altered in any way (this includes crossing information out.)
  4. Take the current, certified waiver form to your child's school or childcare program.
- If your child has a medical reason (that is, a true contraindication or precaution) for not receiving a vaccine, a physician must sign the State of Michigan Medical Contraindication Form, available at your doctor's office.
- Based on the public health code, a child without an up-to-date immunization record, a certified nonmedical waiver form, **or** a physician-signed medical waiver can be excluded from school/childcare.

For more information, please visit [www.michigan.gov/immunize](http://www.michigan.gov/immunize) > click on *Local Health Departments* > click on *Immunization Waiver Information*. This website will provide you with a link to all the county health departments, along with their addresses and phone numbers.

<sup>1</sup> MDHHS unpublished data

\*County Health Department includes the City of Detroit