



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

ELIZABETH HERTEL  
DIRECTOR

May 17, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians:

As many Michigan schools are working hard with concluding the current school year, they are also preparing for the return of students for the 2021-2022 school year. The Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS), Division of Immunization wishes to remind you that Michigan schools are required to report immunization information regardless of their mode of instruction (in-person, virtual, and combinations of both). Any student who fails to meet the school immunization requirements shall not be admitted, or able to participate in school classes and activities.

Although you are probably juggling a lot of responsibilities right now, making sure your children are up to date on their shots is one of the best things you can do to protect them against several serious but preventable diseases. Michigan has seen a sharp drop in vaccinations since the start of the pandemic, which is a frightening trend. When children are not vaccinated, they are at risk of getting diseases like measles, chicken pox, and hepatitis A. Falling vaccination rates can lead to new outbreaks of dangerous diseases. The enclosed document lists all vaccines required in Michigan for school entry.

If your child is not fully vaccinated, please reach out to your child's primary care provider to schedule an immunization appointment. Healthcare providers have taken steps to assure their offices are safe for visits and are available to answer any questions that you have. If your family does not have a primary care provider, or if you are not able to get an appointment for vaccines, many [local county health departments](http://www.Michigan.gov/LHDMAP) ([www.Michigan.gov/LHDMAP](http://www.Michigan.gov/LHDMAP)) and some pharmacies are offering vaccine appointments.

Thank you for assuring your children are current on all immunizations. This protects not only them from vaccine preventable diseases, but also their classmates, teachers, and the community.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Terri Adams".

Terri Adams, RN, BSN, MM  
Interim Director  
Division of Immunization

TA:ss

Attachment

**Dear Parent/Guardian:**

**Key Points Related to Claiming a Nonmedical Immunization Waiver for Children  
Attending Michigan Schools and Licensed Childcare 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 childcare programs are required to attend an educational session, where they are provided with information about vaccine-preventable diseases and vaccinations.

**Key Points**

- The rule applies to parents/guardians seeking a nonmedical immunization waiver for their child/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/childcare 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 (Any new waivers issued should have the revision date of January 10, 2021.)
    - 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 medical contraindication or precaution) for not receiving a vaccine, a physician (MD/DO) must sign the State of Michigan Medical Contraindication Form.
- Based on the public health code, a child without an up-to-date immunization record, a certified nonmedical waiver form, **or** a physician (MD/DO)-signed medical waiver shall 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.

## **Nonmedical Waiver Rule for Childhood Immunizations in School and Licensed Childcare Programs: Information for Parents/Guardians**

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 childcare programs are required to attend an educational session, where they are provided with information about vaccine-preventable diseases and vaccinations.

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

#### **Why is this rule important?**

High nonmedical waiver rates can leave communities susceptible to diseases such as measles, chickenpox, and pertussis (whooping cough) by undermining community or “herd” immunity. Herd immunity protects vulnerable children who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons and children with compromised immune systems. Herd immunity can also slow the spread of disease if a high proportion of individuals in that community are immune to the disease. Immunization is one of the most effective ways to protect children from serious diseases and even death.

#### **Who does this rule apply to?**

The rule applies to parents/guardians seeking a nonmedical immunization waiver for their child/children who are enrolling in public or private:

- Licensed childcare, preschool, and Head Start programs
- Kindergarten, 7th grade, and any newly enrolled student into the school district

#### **How does this rule affect parents/guardians?**

Parents/guardians seeking to claim a nonmedical waiver are required to participate in an immunization-focused discussion with county health department staff. During the discussion, parents/guardians can bring up any immunization-related questions and concerns they may have. The staff will present evidence-based information regarding the risks of vaccine-preventable diseases and the benefits/potential risks (risks consisting mostly of moderate side effects) of vaccination. This rule preserves the ability of parents/guardians to obtain a nonmedical waiver following the completion of this required educational session.

#### **What is a nonmedical immunization waiver?**

A nonmedical waiver is a written statement by parents/guardians describing their religious or philosophical (other) objections to specific vaccine/vaccines. An official State of Michigan Nonmedical Waiver Form will be provided by the county health department.

## **Will the County Health Department make a copy of the waiver?**

The county health department may make a copy of the waiver for their records and provide the parent/guardian with the original. Making a copy of the form is not a violation of the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA), because the waiver education is conducted at the county health department before the parent/guardian provides the certified State of Michigan Immunization Waiver Form to the school. This form is an official State of Michigan Department of Health and Human Services document that records the waiver visit for the county health department.

## **What is considered a certified nonmedical waiver?**

A certified nonmedical waiver is the State of Michigan Immunization Waiver Form. Any new waivers issued should have the revision date of January 10, 2021. A certified nonmedical waiver will:

- Display the county health department's information/stamp.
- Include the child's: name, date of birth, address, name of school/childcare program, telephone number (optional), vaccines being waived with the reason, signed date, as well as signatures of the parent/guardian, and of the county health department authorizing agent completing the immunization education.

A county health department will not issue a waiver without both signatures, as it would be considered an incomplete and invalid waiver.

Waiver forms that are altered in any fashion (including information on the form that may be crossed out) or forms that are not an official MDHHS certified waiver form cannot be accepted by schools/childcare programs.

## **Can a parent/guardian obtain a certified nonmedical waiver form from a school, childcare program, or healthcare provider?**

No, a certified nonmedical State of Michigan waiver can only be obtained at a county health department.

## **How does a parent/guardian obtain a certified nonmedical waiver?**

Parents/guardians are required to contact their county health department to receive immunization waiver education and a current certified State of Michigan Immunization Waiver Form.

## **What if my child has a medical contraindication to a vaccine?**

If your child has a medical reason (that is, a true medical contraindication or precaution) for not receiving a vaccine, a physician (MD/DO) must sign the State of Michigan Medical Contraindication Form.

## **What documentation are parents/guardians required to submit to their school or childcare program?**

1. Parents/guardians are required to submit one of the following documents:

- A complete immunization record **or**
- A physician (MD/DO)-signed State of Michigan Medical Contraindication Form **or**
- A current, certified State of Michigan Nonmedical Immunization Waiver Form

2. If one of the above forms is not submitted, students can be excluded from school or childcare based on the public health code, unless students are in a provisional category. (Children in the provisional category are defined as those who have received 1 or more doses of vaccine but need to wait the recommended time to receive the next dose.)

### **Where can I find more information?**

For more information, please visit [www.michigan.gov/immunize](http://www.michigan.gov/immunize) > click on *Local Health Departments* > click on *Immunization Waiver Information*.

- The above website provides a complete list of county health departments in Michigan, including phone numbers and addresses.
- The link below is to the MDHHS Communicable Disease Administrative Rules where much of the information referenced in this document can be found.
  - [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/1472\\_2014-073CH\\_AdminCode\\_1\\_676105\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/1472_2014-073CH_AdminCode_1_676105_7.pdf)

# PARENTS

# VACCINES REQUIRED FOR SCHOOL ENTRY IN MICHIGAN

Whenever children are brought into group settings, there is a chance for diseases to spread. Children must follow state vaccine laws to attend school. These laws are the minimum standard to help prevent disease outbreaks in school settings. The best way to protect your child from other serious diseases is to follow the recommended vaccination schedule at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines). Talk to your health care provider to make sure your child is fully protected.



	All Kindergarteners and 4-6 year old transfer students	All 7th Graders and 7-18 year old transfer students
<b>Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (DTP, DTaP, Tdap)</b>	4 doses DTP or DTaP 1 dose must be at or after 4 years of age	4 doses diphtheria and tetanus or 3 doses if 1st dose given at or after 1 year of age 1 dose Tdap at 11 years of age or older upon entry into 7th grade or higher
<b>Polio</b>	4 doses 3 doses if dose 3 was given at or after 4 years of age	
<b>Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)*</b>	2 doses at or after 12 months of age	
<b>Hepatitis B*</b>	3 doses	
<b>Meningococcal Conjugate (MenACWY)</b>	None	1 dose at 11 years of age or older upon entry into 7th grade or higher
<b>Varicella (Chickenpox)*</b>	2 doses at or after 12 months of age or Current lab immunity or History of varicella disease	

During disease outbreaks, incompletely vaccinated students may be excluded from school. Parents and guardians choosing to decline vaccines must obtain a certified non-medical waiver from a local health department. Read more about waivers at [www.Michigan.gov/Immunize](http://www.Michigan.gov/Immunize).

\*If the child has not received these vaccines, documented immunity is required.

All doses of vaccines must be valid (correct spacing and ages) for school entry purposes.



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