



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

### Immunization Requirements for Child Care and School – Effective July 2016

#### FAQ for Medical Practices

#### **How do changes in child care and school immunization rules affect medical practices?**

Effective July 1, 2016, parents no longer have the option to choose to exempt their children from child care or school required vaccines for philosophic reasons. The three options for families, who have previously used or intended to use, the philosophic exemption are:

- **Vaccinate.** Follow the CDC recommended catch up schedule to become up-to-date with required immunizations. Alternative or delayed schedules are not acceptable. While in the process of catching up (for a maximum of six months), health care providers must sign a Provisional Admittance Request. This form must be provided to the child care or school by the parent/guardian in lieu of a complete immunization record. The Provisional Admittance Request is incorporated into the [Notice of Missing Immunizations form](#) and [Notice of Exclusion form](#)

Child care programs and schools may only accept unaltered Health Department forms from medical providers.

- **Medical Exemption.** This [exemption form](#) can only be signed by a health care practitioner authorized to prescribe vaccines. This exemption may be used:
  1. when vaccine(s) is medically contraindicated, or
  2. when vaccine(s) is or may be detrimental to health

The Medical Exemption may not be used:

1. When vaccine is not indicated due to immunity (e.g. a positive titer to measles, mumps and rubella, or history of chickenpox disease). Instead, in place of vaccination dates, submit documentation of laboratory results, except for chickenpox where [parent report of disease](#) is acceptable, or history of disease as documented in the Registry, or
2. To exempt students from recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for additional immunizations when minimum age, and/or intervals between vaccine doses, have not been met.

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- **Religious Exemption.** The [Religious Exemption form](#) must be signed and submitted to the child care program or school annually. A parent/guardian signature is required after reading the [Required Parent Education for Religious Exemption](#). No action or signature is needed from a health care provider. Information on religious exemptions can be found in the [Vaccinate Vermont](#) newsletter.

### **How are immunization records assessed for compliance with immunization rules?**

The document, [Assessing Immunization Records](#), has been developed to assist school nurses and administrators in assessing immunization documentation for individual students.

School nurses and administrators, as well as child care providers are encouraged to apply for read only access to the VT Immunization Registry (IMR). The IMR includes a simple tool for child care providers to assess records for compliance with recommendations. Vermont's immunization rule, the IMR and many school health software programs recognize and allow for [CDC's "4 day grace period"](#) before minimum age and between minimum intervals of vaccine doses. Doses of vaccine administered outside the 4 day grace period are not appropriate for medical exemption and should be repeated.

### **When is a titer recommended instead of additional doses of vaccine?**

If records cannot be located or are not available due to the child's circumstance, children without adequate documentation must be considered susceptible and should receive age-appropriate vaccination. Alternatively, serologic testing for immunity may be an alternative to vaccination for certain antigens. Tests for other required vaccines have limited availability or do not have an acceptable immunity test.

### **Are specific forms required for exemptions or provisional admittance?**

Yes. Only current, unaltered State provided forms posted on the Health Department webpage can be accepted by child care programs and schools. Notes or letters from medical providers cannot be substituted for either the medical exemption or provisional admittance form.

### **When can school year 2016-17 forms be signed and submitted to child care programs and schools?**

The new forms may be signed beginning July 1, 2016. They should be submitted to child care programs and schools upon entry.

### **Who can sign forms?**

Provisional admittance forms may be signed by medical practice staff. The Medical Exemption form can only be signed by a health care practitioner licensed to prescribe vaccines.