

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

### **What are the immunization requirements for children enrolled in child care centers, preschools, kindergartens, or grade schools?**

Child care centers, public and private preschools, kindergartens, grade schools (grades 1-12) and licensed child care facilities that regularly provide care to a group of 13 or more children must establish, in accordance with Washington law, requirements for full immunization of attending children.<sup>1</sup>

Full immunization requires vaccination in accordance with schedules and immunizing agents approved by the Department of Health for:<sup>2</sup>

- Diphtheria.
- Tetanus.
- Pertussis ( whooping cough).
- Poliomyelitis
- Measles (rubeola).
- Mumps.
- Rubella.
- Hepatitis B.
- Hemophilus influenzae type B disease.
- Varicella.
- Pneumococcus.

### **What are the exemptions to the full immunization requirements?**

A child may attend child care, preschool, kindergarten, or grade school without proof of full immunization only if proof of one of the following is provided:<sup>3</sup>

- Proof of conditional immunization status (CIS), which must include all of the following:

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<sup>1</sup> RCW 28A.210.080; WAC 246-105-030.

<sup>2</sup> 246-105-030.

<sup>3</sup> RCW 28A.210.090; WAC 246-105-050.

- Name of child or student.
  - Birth date.
  - Type of vaccine(s) administered.
  - Month, day, and year of each dose of vaccine received.
  - A section to indicate whether an accompanying Certificate of Exemption (COE) form has been provided.
  - A section to document serologic proof of immunity which must be signed by a licensed health care provider and include a copy of a lab report.
  - Parent signature and date.
- Proof of a medical exemption which requires the signature of a licensed physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner on a Certificate of Exemption (COE) certifying the medical reasons to defer one or more immunizations on a Certificate of Immunization Status (CIS) form;
  - Proof of a parental exemption, which requires the child's parent, guardian, or adult in loco parentis to sign and note on the CIS form that the child is exempt from the required immunization for religious, philosophical, or personal objections.

The form signed by the physician (or PA, ARNP, or ND) must be signed prior to enrollment in a school or licensed day care, and must include a statement that he or she provided the parent or guardian with information about the benefits and risks of immunization to the child. A parent or legal guardian who exempts the child due to religious beliefs is not required to have the exemption form signed by a physician if the parent or guardian demonstrates membership in a religious body or a church in which the religious beliefs or teachings of the church preclude a health care practitioner from providing medical treatment to the child.

**Are physicians who sign an exemption from immunization form protected from being sued?**

A physician, PA, ARNP, or ND who, signs an exemption form for immunizations in good faith are immune from civil liability for providing the signature.<sup>4</sup>

**What must be included in a Certificate of Exemption (COE)?**

A COE form must be approved by the Department of Health and signed and dated by a parent. A COE form must include:<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> RCW 28A.210.090(2)(b).

- Name of child or student.
- Birth date.
- A section to indicate a medical exemption for one or more vaccines which must be signed by a licensed health care provider.
- A section to indicate a religious exemption for one or more vaccines.
- A section to indicate a personal or philosophical exemption for one or more vaccines.
- Notice to parents that if an outbreak of vaccine-preventable disease for which the child is exempted occurs, the child may be excluded from the school or child care center for the duration of the outbreak.

**Is a physician required to provide a record of immunization?**

Yes. Persons or organizations administering immunizations must furnish each person immunized, or his or her parent, with a written record of immunization containing the information required by the Department of Health.<sup>6</sup>

**Are there diseases about which schools are required to provide information to parents and guardians?**

Yes. Beginning with entry into 6th grade, all schools, at the beginning of every school year, must provide parents and guardians with information about meningococcal disease and its vaccine including information about the causes and symptoms of meningococcal disease, the manner in which it spreads, current CDC recommendations for receipt of the vaccine, where it can be obtained, and where parents can obtain additional information.<sup>7</sup> Vaccination for meningococcal disease is not required by law.

Beginning with entry into 6th grade, all schools, at the beginning of every school year, must provide parents and guardians with information about human papilloma virus (HPV) and its vaccine at the beginning of every school year. This information must include its causes and symptoms, how HPV is spread, places where parents and guardians can obtain more information, the current CDC recommendations for receipt of the vaccine, and where it can be received.<sup>8</sup> Vaccination for HPV is not required by law.

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<sup>5</sup> WAC 246-105-050.

<sup>6</sup> WAC 246-105-070.

<sup>7</sup> RCW 28A.210.080(2).

<sup>8</sup> RCW 28A.210.080(3).