

## Dear Parent/Guardian:

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

In early 2015, Michigan instituted an administrative rule change on nonmedical waivers for childhood immunizations. Parents/guardians seeking to obtain a nonmedical immunization waiver on behalf of 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 up to 12.5% (that is, more than 12% of school-age students in these places have not received all vaccinations) and individual school buildings reporting even higher waiver rates

#### Key Points

- The rule applies to parents seeking an immunization waiver on behalf of their children enrolled in a 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 now available at your county health department and cannot be found at schools/child-care centers.
- 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 with the county health department staff. The staff will present evidence-based information regarding the risks of vaccine-preventable diseases and the benefits/risks (mostly moderate side-effects) of vaccination.
  3. If, at the end of the visit, you request a nonmedical waiver for your child, you will receive a copy of the current, certified (stamped and signed) State of Michigan Nonmedical Waiver Form.
    - Schools/childcare centers will only accept the current, official State of Michigan form (Current date: January 1, 2016).
    - Forms cannot be altered in any way (such as crossing information out).
  4. Take current, certified waiver form to your child's school or childcare center.
- 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 (not the county health department).
- Based on the public health code, a child without either an up-to-date immunization record, a certified nonmedical waiver form, or a physician-signed medical waiver form can be excluded from school/childcare.

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