

Information for Healthcare Providers

Michigan School and Childcare Center Immunization Rules for Claiming Nonmedical or Medical Waivers for Immunizations:

In 2014, Michigan modified the administrative rules that changed how nonmedical waivers for immunizations will be processed for school and childcare programs. This rule will go into effect on January 1, 2015. The new rule does not affect the current process by which the healthcare provider completes the medical waiver.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is this rule change important?

Michigan has one of the highest waiver rates in the country. Some counties in Michigan have waiver rates as high as 20.7%; some school buildings have higher waiver rates. This leaves communities vulnerable to diseases such as measles, chickenpox, and pertussis (whooping cough). Immunizations are one of the most effective measures to protect children from harmful diseases and even death.

What is the difference between a medical and a nonmedical waiver?

- A medical waiver is a signed statement from the physician that the child cannot receive a certain vaccine due to a true contraindication or precaution to the vaccine or a vaccine component.
- A nonmedical waiver is a parent's/guardian's written statement indicating the religious or philosophical (other) objections to a particular vaccination(s).

What does the new nonmedical waiver rule allow to happen?

Under the old rule, a parent/guardian could fill out a nonmedical waiver at their child's daycare or school. The new rule allows the parent/guardian the opportunity to speak to a health educator about their immunization concerns and questions prior to the waiver being signed. It allows for scientific-based education and resources to be provided.

What does this new rule change?

The new rule requires parents/guardians who want to claim a nonmedical waiver to receive education from a county health department about the benefits of vaccination and the risks of vaccine-preventable diseases before claiming the waiver.

Why does the new rule for claiming a nonmedical waiver remove the healthcare provider from issuing the nonmedical waiver to the parent/guardian?

The new rule is not intended to diminish the role of healthcare providers in educating parents and families on the importance of immunization. A strong provider recommendation is recognized as a powerful motivator for parents to comply with immunization recommendations.

The new rule forms a partnership between public health and private healthcare providers in a joint effort to decrease the number of school and daycare waivers in Michigan. The hope is by having providers educate the parent/guardian on true medical contraindications and precautions to vaccination and having the county health department work on the education process for the philosophical and religious waivers, the State of Michigan will begin to see an increase in immunization rates.

Who does this new nonmedical waiver rule apply to?

The new rule applies to all children who are enrolled in a public or private:

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

How does the healthcare provider handle a request from the parent/guardian to receive a nonmedical waiver form?

Healthcare providers are expected to:

1. Educate the parent/guardian about the risks of disease and benefits of vaccination.
2. Document refusals to vaccinate by having the parent/guardian fill out a Refusal to Consent to Vaccination form found at: www.michigan.gov/immunize > click on *Local Health Departments* > click on *Immunization Waiver Information*.
3. Refer all nonmedical waiver requests to the county health department in order for the parent/guardian to receive a certified nonmedical waiver form.
 - a. The nonmedical waiver form needs to be a certified State of Michigan, Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) Immunization Waiver Form.

How does the healthcare provider handle a medical contraindication to a vaccine?

A current State of Michigan Medical Contraindication Form must be completed and signed by a physician.

Healthcare providers will need to:

1. Determine if there is a true medical contraindication or precaution to a vaccine.
 - a. A good resource is the Guide to Contraindications and Precautions to Commonly Used Vaccines, which is posted online at: www.michigan.gov/immunize > click on *Local Health Departments* > click on *Immunization Waiver Information*.
2. If a true contraindication or precaution to a vaccine is present, complete the current State of Michigan Medical Contraindication Form.
 - a. The Medical Contraindication form is posted online at: www.michigan.gov/immunize > click on *Local Health Departments* > click on *Immunization Waiver Information*.
3. Give the Medical Contraindication Form to the parent/guardian to be turned into the school or childcare center. (Keep a copy for your files)

Note: If the child is in the dose waiting (provisional) period a medical waiver is not necessary.

Ensuring all vaccines given are entered into MCIR will be sufficient evidence of this occurrence.

Will the healthcare provider need to document the non-administered vaccine into the Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR)?

Yes, the healthcare provider will need to:

1. Record the non-administered vaccine into MCIR indicating medical as the reason.
2. Maintain the Medical Contraindication form on file in the medical record system being used in the provider's office.

What happens if these specific waiver forms (listed above) are not used?

Waiver forms other than the current versions of the State of Michigan Medical or Nonmedical Waiver forms or forms that have been altered in any way cannot be accepted by schools or childcare centers. Students who do not comply with submitting proper forms are to be excluded from school or childcare unless they are in the dose waiting (provisional) period.