

# **Michigan School and Licensed Childcare Immunization Rule for Claiming a Nonmedical Waiver for Immunizations: How do these changes affect schools and childcare centers?**

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.

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

### **What does this new rule allow to happen?**

The new rule allows the parent/guardian the opportunity to have their concerns and questions about immunizations addressed. It allows scientific-based education and resources to be provided.

### **What does the 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.

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

A nonmedical waiver is a parent's/guardian's written statement indicating the religious or philosophical (other) objections to a particular vaccination(s).

### **How does this new rule affect Michigan's schools and childcare centers?**

- The new rule requires schools and child care centers to refer parents/guardians requesting a nonmedical waiver for immunizations to the county health department for immunization waiver education and waiver certification
- Schools and childcare centers will only be able to accept a certified State of Michigan Immunization Waiver Form

### **Who does this new 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

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

A certified, nonmedical waiver is the State of Michigan Immunization Waiver Form with a revision date of January 1, 2015, which has the county health department stamp and signature of the authorizing agent completing parent/guardian immunization education.

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

No, the certified nonmedical waiver can only be obtained at a county health department.

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

Based on the new rule, parents/guardians will no longer be able to submit an uncertified immunization waiver form to the school or childcare center. Parents/guardians will need to:

1. Contact their county health department to receive immunization waiver education and to obtain a certified State of Michigan Immunization Waiver Form.
2. Take the certified State of Michigan Immunization Waiver Form to their child's school or childcare.
3. Waiver forms that are altered cannot be accepted by schools or child care centers.

## **What documentation will parents/guardians submit to the school or childcare center?**

Parents/guardians will need to submit to the school or childcare center the completed, certified, nonmedical immunization waiver form and/or complete immunization record. Students who do not comply with having either a completed immunization record or a certified waiver form are to be excluded from school or childcare unless they are in the 'dose waiting' (provisional) period.

## **Will the schools/childcare centers need to document the certified, nonmedical waiver into the Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR) under the School Immunization Registry System (SIRS)?**

Yes, the school or childcare center will need to:

1. Record the nonmedical waiver into SIRS.
2. Send a copy of the nonmedical waiver to the county health department with the immunization report and waiver report.
3. Maintain the nonmedical waiver form on file with immunization records.

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

This new rule does not change the existing process for medical contraindications for vaccination. A current State of Michigan Medical Contraindication Form must be completed and signed by a physician and submitted to the school or childcare center.

## **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.