

Information on Non-Medical Immunization Waivers in Michigan

Michigan recently modified the administrative rules that change how non-medical waivers for immunizations will be processed for school/childcare programs. The new rule went into effect on January 1, 2015.

With Michigan having one of the highest waiver rates in the country, a proactive approach has been established to help inform everyone regarding the benefits of vaccinations and the risks of disease. Some school buildings in Benzie and Leelanau Counties have between 20%-32% of students who have waived vaccines. This puts those schools at high risk of a vaccine preventable disease outbreak. The hope is that the new rule will help answer any questions/concerns one may have regarding immunizations.

Key Points

- 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.
- The new rule does not take away your right to obtain a non-medical waiver.
- Non-medical waivers (religious or philosophical (other) objections) will need to be obtained from a county health department; the schools/childcare centers will not have them.
- Parents/Guardians must follow these steps when requesting a non-medical waiver:
 - Contact your county health department for an appointment to schedule an immunization waiver appointment.
 - Benzie or Leelanau County: 256-0210
 - Grand Traverse County: 995-6111
 - During the visit, there will be an opportunity to have a discussion about immunizations with the county health department staff about your specific concerns regarding vaccinations.
 - If at the end of the visit, you request a non-medical waiver for your child, you will receive a copy of the certified (stamped and signed) State of Michigan form.
 - Only the State of Michigan Immunization Waiver Form is accepted and the form cannot be altered in any way (such as crossing information out).
- Take the completed, certified waiver form to your child's school or childcare center.
- If your child has a medical reason (true contraindication or precaution) for not receiving a vaccine, your physician must sign the State of Michigan Medical Contraindication form; This form should be available at your doctor's office or you may request a copy from the county health department to give to your doctor. The form must be filled out completely to be approved. An in-person appointment at the health department is not necessary for a Medical Contraindication vaccine waiver.
- Based on the public health code, the child without either an up-to-date immunization record, a certified non-medical waiver form or a physician signed medical waiver form can be excluded from school/childcare.

For more information, please visit www.michigan.gov/immunize then click on local health departments-Immunization waiver information.