



Colorado Parent/Guardian FAQ

Medical and Non-medical Vaccine Exemption

Background

The Colorado Board of Health amended [Rule 6 CCR 1009-2](#) in April 2015. The updated rule requires parents/guardians exempting their children from school-required vaccines for non-medical reasons (religious or personal belief) to submit documentation of these exemptions more frequently. Starting July 2016, parents/guardians seeking non-medical exemptions for pre-kindergarten children attending a licensed child care facility must submit non-medical exemption forms at each age when required vaccines are typically due: 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 12 months and 18 months of age. Parents/guardians seeking non-medical exemptions for students in kindergarten through 12th grade must submit non-medical exemption forms annually. Parents/guardians of students with medical exemptions only need to submit a medical exemption once.

Why did the Board of Health Rule change?

In 2014, House Bill 14-1288 required the Board of Health to develop rules regarding the frequency of submitting vaccine exemption forms. Previous versions of Rule 6 CCR 1009-2 required that parents/guardians submit signed statements of exemption for school entry but was silent as to the frequency of submission. Increasing the frequency aligns the efforts of parents/guardians claiming non-medical exemptions with the efforts immunizing parents undertake to provide adequate evidence of immunization. This also provides schools, child cares, and public health with current and accurate exemption information for decision-making during school outbreaks. Per Colorado law, students with exemptions may be excluded from school/child care during an outbreak.

When does this change take effect?

Beginning July 1, 2016, parents/guardians seeking medical and non-medical exemptions for school entry will access the appropriate forms at www.colorado.gov/vaccineexemption.

Who does it affect?

This rule change affects parents/guardians seeking medical and non-medical (religious and personal belief) exemptions for children aged six weeks through 12th grade attending a Colorado school or licensed child care facility. This rule change also affects schools, licensed child care facilities and the state health department as the responsibility to collect exemption forms will transition to CDPHE.

Did the vaccine exemption form change?

Yes. Vaccine exemptions will no longer be recorded on the official Certificate of Immunization. Beginning July 1, 2016, separate medical and non-medical vaccine exemption forms will be available online at www.colorado.gov/vaccineexemption.

- For a medical exemption, the parent/guardian will download the form, take it to their healthcare provider for signature and return the form to CDPHE via fax or mail.
- For a non-medical exemption, the parent/guardian will complete the form online. Once submitted, the non-medical exemption form can be printed for the parent/guardian's records. The non-medical exemption form will be available in a mobile-friendly format.
- Both medical and non-medical exemption forms will be available in multiple languages.

- If a family does not have access to the internet, medical and non-medical exemption forms can be obtained by calling the Colorado Immunization Branch at 303-692-2700 or emailing CDPHE_vaccineexemption@state.co.us.

How do I submit a non-medical exemption form for my child?

- Visit the secure site www.colorado.gov/vaccineexemption on a computer or mobile device with internet access.
- Click on ‘*Click here to submit a non-medical exemption form for school-required vaccines.*’
- Complete and submit the online form.
- Upon submission, you will have the option to print the completed form for your records.
- Non-medical exemptions will be transferred to the Colorado Immunization Information System (CIIS) for viewing by the appropriate school or child care, unless the parent/guardian opts the student out of CIIS.
- If a student is opted out of CIIS, the parent/guardian is responsible for providing a copy of an official non-medical exemption form to the school or child care or may authorize CDPHE to send the information to the school or child care.

How do I submit a medical exemption form for my child?

- Visit www.colorado.gov/vaccineexemption on a computer or mobile device with internet access.
- Click on ‘*Click here to print a medical exemption form for school-required vaccines.*’
- Take the form to an advanced practice nurse or physician licensed to practice medicine or osteopathic medicine for completion. All information on the form must be completed. Incomplete forms will not be accepted.
- Return the form to CDPHE via:
 - Fax: 303.758.3640 Attn: Colorado Immunization Branch - Medical Exemption
 - Mail: Colorado Immunization Branch, Attn: Medical Exemption
4300 Cherry Creek Dr. S., Denver, CO 80246
- Medical exemptions will be transferred to CIIS for viewing by the appropriate school or child care, unless the parent/guardian opts the student out of CIIS.
- If a student is opted out of CIIS, the parent/guardian is responsible for providing a copy of an official medical exemption form to the school or child care or may authorize CDPHE to send the information to the school or child care.

What safeguards are in place to ensure the information I submit is kept secure?

Great care and consideration are put into ensuring the security of information submitted to and maintained by CDPHE. The online non-medical exemption form is maintained by the Colorado Governor’s Office of Information Technology. Information submitted via this form is encrypted and resides behind a firewall that limits access to only authorized users.

The CIIS database resides on a server housed in a secure location monitored 24/7. All sites that participate in CIIS agree to comply with security and confidentiality requirements. Access to data within CIIS is password-protected, and every CIIS user is only able to view the information necessary to perform his/her job. All web page accesses and data updates are logged for audit tracking purposes. CIIS security policies and procedures comply with the security standards defined by the following agencies: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, International Organization for Standardization, American National Standards Institute, National Institute of Standards and Technology, and National Infrastructure Protection Center.

I don't have access to the internet; how can I access the exemption forms?

The online non-medical exemption form and downloadable medical exemption form are available 24/7. You may use a computer, smartphone or tablet with internet access or go to a public library, your child's school library, a community center, faith center, etc., to access the forms. If none of these options are available to you, please contact the Colorado Immunization Branch at 303-692-2700 or emailing CDPHE_vaccineexemption@state.co.us for assistance.

My child already has a non-medical exemption on file. Can't I use that one?

No. Beginning July 1, 2016, parents/guardians seeking non-medical exemptions for school entry should use the online non-medical exemption form located at www.colorado.gov/vaccineexemption. All previously-submitted non-medical exemptions will expire June 30, 2016.

My child already has a medical exemption on file. Can't I use that one?

Maybe. Parents/guardians of students with a previously submitted medical exemption do not need to submit a new medical exemption if none of their information has changed. A new medical exemption will need to be submitted if any of the following has occurred:

- The student has changed schools;
- The student's name, address, phone number, etc. has changed;
- The student's reason for claiming a medical exemption has changed; or
- The student is claiming a medical exemption from additional vaccines.

What happens if I plan to claim an exemption but don't submit an exemption form for my child?

To be compliant with Colorado school immunization law, a child must either have received all required immunizations, have a written plan on file to obtain the required immunizations (in-process), or have a medical or non-medical exemption on file. According to Colorado school immunization law, schools and child cares are required to exclude non-compliant students from their facilities.

What is CIIS?

CIIS stands for Colorado Immunization Information System. CIIS is a secure online database of immunization records for Colorado residents of all ages. CIIS allows healthcare providers, schools and child care providers to access immunization records to ensure children are fully immunized. Exemptions from school-required immunizations are also documented in CIIS. Parents/guardians have the right to opt-out, or keep a child's immunization information out of the CIIS database. For more information about the CIIS opt-out procedure, parents/guardians should visit www.ColoradoIIS.com.