



# Colorado School/Child Care FAQ

## Medical and Non-medical Vaccine Exemptions

### *What's new?*

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 beliefs) to submit documentation of these exemptions more frequently. Starting in 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 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 promulgate 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, licensed child care facilities, and state and local 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 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](http://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](http://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](mailto:CDPHE_vaccineexemption@state.co.us).

*How do I submit an exemption form for a student or child in my school/childcare?*

You don't. CDPHE will provide you with an instruction sheet to provide to parents/guardians with instructions for claiming a medical or non-medical exemption through [www.colorado.gov/vaccineexemption](http://www.colorado.gov/vaccineexemption) on a computer or mobile device.

*How can I tell if an exemption has been submitted for a student or child in my school/childcare?*

Information from both the medical and non-medical exemption forms will be transferred to the Colorado Immunization Information System (CIIS) for viewing by the school or childcare, unless the parent/guardian chooses to exclude their information from CIIS. In this case, information from the exemption forms will be housed in a separate, internal CDPHE database. Parents/guardians will then be responsible for ensuring a copy of the medical or non-medical exemption form is submitted to the school or childcare. If you don't already have access to CIIS, please contact CIIS School Coordinator Megan Berry for more information at [megan.berry@state.co.us](mailto:megan.berry@state.co.us) or (303) 692-2736.

*What happens if a parent says he/she plans to claim an exemption but does not submit an exemption form for his/her 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 care centers 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. Parents/guardians have the right to opt-out, or keep a child's immunization records out of the CIIS database. For more information about the CIIS opt-out procedure, parents/guardians should visit [www.ColoradoIIS.com](http://www.ColoradoIIS.com).