

## **New Immunization Exemption Law**

During the 2019 legislative session, the legislature passed and the Governor signed into law [EHB 1638](#). The bill removed the personal and philosophical option to exempt children from the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine required for school and child care entry. The bill takes effect July 28, 2019 and applies to all public and private schools and licensed child cares.

The law does not change existing religious and medical exemption options. Children who have one of these types of exemptions on file are not affected by the new law and do not need to take any further action. It also does not change personal and philosophical exemptions for other required vaccines. Children who have an existing personal or philosophical exemption for MMR will need to provide updated immunization compliance paperwork on or before the first day of the 2019-2020 school year.

The new law also requires staff and volunteers at licensed child care facilities to provide an immunization record showing they received the MMR vaccine, proof of immunity through documentation of laboratory evidence of antibody titer, a health care provider's attestation of the person's history of measles, or a written certification signed by a health care practitioner stating that the MMR vaccine is not advisable for the person. This portion of the law is under the authority of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), meaning they are implementing this part of the new law. The Department is working collaboratively with DCYF on messaging and resources, including MMR vaccine supply for uninsured and underinsured adults through the Adult Vaccine Program (CVP).

More information and resources, including a regularly updated frequently asked questions (FAQ), regarding the new law and implementation can be found on the department webpages at:

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Schools/Immunization/ExemptionLawChange>

## **Newly Updated Certificate of Exemption Form**

The Certificate of Exemption (COE) for documenting a child's immunization exemption status for school and child care entry was updated to reflect the new exemption law (EHB 1638) concerning the removal of the option to exempt a child from the measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine for personal or philosophical reasons. The revised COE will be available in Spanish, Korean, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Somali, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. The updated form can be found on the department's webpages at:

[https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/348-106\\_CertificateofExemption.pdf](https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/348-106_CertificateofExemption.pdf)

Materials and Frequently Asked Questions can be found at:

[www.doh.wa.gov/MMRexemption](http://www.doh.wa.gov/MMRexemption)

## **School and Child Care Immunization Compliance Rulemaking**

As a part of the work currently underway to update chapter 246-105 WAC, Board and Department staff briefed the State Board of Health (Board) members at the June 12, 2019 meeting on the proposed rule language changes and next steps in the rulemaking process.

The proposed new rule includes:

- New definitions for child care health consultant, medically verified immunization record, out-of-compliance, school nurse, Washington Immunization Information System (WAIS), and WAIS School Module.
- Establishing requirements for the use of medically verified immunization records. Washington State is currently only one of three states that do not require medically verified immunization records for school and child care entry. This proposed change will help ensure that data is accurate and will also support the implementation of the Washington State Immunization Information System (WAIS) School Module. More information about the WAIS School module can be found on our webpages at: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/348-569-IIS-SchoolModuleFactSheet.pdf>
- Updated reference to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) guidelines and recommendations.
- Clarified language regarding the department's authority to align ages with grade level for required immunizations.
- Clarified language regarding conditional status. Many schools and school districts have interpreted the existing rule to mean that all students have 30 days from the first day of attendance to turn in required paperwork for immunizations. The proposed rule clarifies that students are required to provide documentation on or before the first day of school that they are either a) fully immunized, b) have started the vaccine series, or c) have an exemption (per RCW 28A.210-080). Under the updated rule, the parent must sign an acknowledgement of their child's attendance under conditional status, which includes progress towards full immunization consistent with the schedule.
- A new section that implements the new law regarding personal and philosophical exemptions for MMR.
- Updated language that would remove the need for parents to identify the name of the church or religious body on the Certificate of Exemption form regarding religious membership exemptions. This information is not collected or used. It is not the role of the school, health care providers, or the department to assess religious beliefs.

The proposed rule is open until July 24, 2019 for formal public comment. The hearing to adopt the rule is scheduled for the August 14, 2019 State Board of Health meeting. If adopted, parts of the rule (new exemption law and the update to the ACIP schedule) will become effective 30 days after filing the adopted rule with the Code Reviser, likely in November of 2019. The remainder of the rule will go into effect for the 2020 – 2021 school year.

The Board uses an interested parties email distribution list to keep stakeholders updated and to share information about opportunities to be engaged in immunization rulemaking. For those who would like to be added to this distribution list, please email Alexandra Montano ([Alexandra.montano@sboh.wa.gov](mailto:Alexandra.montano@sboh.wa.gov)).

Visit the State Board of Health website for more details about comment opportunities and meeting dates and locations: <https://sboh.wa.gov/>

## **2019 Washington Immunization Summit**

Register Today For the 2019 Washington Immunization Summit! Please join WithinReach for our second Washington State Immunization Summit on October 8, 2019 at the Lynnwood Convention Center. This one-day event will include topics on the measles outbreak, vaccination schedule updates, communicating about vaccines, working with special & at-risk populations, and the WA State Immunization Information System. The cost to register for this all-day event is just \$150 (including free parking and complimentary meals!) at the early bird rate! Early bird tickets are on sale until July 26<sup>th</sup> or until tickets are sold out. Scholarships are available too!

Various forms of continuing education credits will be offered. Register today at:  
<https://waimmzsummit.eventbrite.com>

## Vaccine Management

**2019- 2020 Influenza:** The total number of doses pre-booked for the 2019-2020 Flu season is 645,000 doses. The following products will be offered through the Childhood Vaccine Program (CVP) for the 2019-2020 Flu Season:

- FluMist, FluLaval 0.5mL pre-filled syringe,
- Fluzone 0.5mL pre-filled syringe,
- Fluzone MDV, and
- Flucelvax 0.5mL pre-filled syringe (small quantity for a pilot project).

**Childhood Vaccine Program Webpage Updates:** The Childhood Vaccine Program webpage is in the process of being updated, and **you can now view previous Vaccine Blurbs newsletters!** If you have feedback about our webpage, please let us know.

(<https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/PublicHealthSystemResourcesandServices/Immunization/ChildhoodVaccineProgram>)

**2019 Provider Agreement Renewals:** All 2019 Childhood Vaccine Program provider agreement renewals are now complete. We ended the annual renewals with a 99 percent completion rate. X number of provider sites are enrolled in the program.

**New Adult Vaccine Program Contact:** We now have a new email contact for providers in the Adult Vaccine Program: [WAAAdultVaccines@doh.wa.gov](mailto:WAAAdultVaccines@doh.wa.gov). The program provides vaccine for adults 19 years of age and older who are uninsured or underinsured..

## Clinical and Quality Assurance

Since September 2018, 257 visits to healthcare provider offices occurred across Washington to provide immunization improvement strategies. Through mid-September follow-up assessments to the same providers are in progress to assess the impact of the initial visits.

## Awards



Dr. Alex Hamling of Pacific Medical Centers was recognized as Washington State's 2019 CDC Childhood Immunization Champion. Dr. Hamling has gone above and beyond to increase immunization rates among infants and encourage on time vaccination.

Dr. Hamling is a pediatrician who encourages immunizations for all his patients at his busy full-time practice. He's a regular expert on children's health and immunizations for a variety of news media, including local television. Over the last two years, his young patients have seen a huge increase in vaccination completion rates, protecting them from serious diseases.

Read about Dr. Hamling and the rest of this year's Champions on the CDC's website here: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niw/champions/profiles-2019.html>.

The Department will honor this year's nominees and present Dr. Hamling with his award at the July Immunization Action Coalition of Washington meeting.