

Specific Immunization Requirements:

The Oklahoma State Board of Health determines which vaccines are required, the number of doses required for each vaccine, the minimum age for the first dose of each vaccine, and the minimum time between doses of multi-dose vaccines. The minimum ages and intervals must be observed for the vaccine doses to be effective and to be counted as valid doses for school attendance. The State Board of Health currently requires children attending school in Oklahoma to be immunized against the following diseases:

- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Pertussis
- Poliomyelitis
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis A
- Varicella (chickenpox)

The following table lists the common abbreviations of the required vaccines.

ABBREVIATIONS FOR VACCINES REQUIRED FOR SCHOOL

Common Abbreviations Vaccine/Vaccines

DTP Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis vaccine

DTaP Diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis vaccine

HepB Hepatitis B vaccine

HepA Hepatitis A vaccine

IPV Inactivated polio vaccine

MMR Measles, mumps, rubella vaccine

MMRV Measles, mumps, rubella, varicella vaccine

OPV Oral polio vaccine (No longer used in the U.S.)

Td Tetanus, diphtheria vaccine

Tdap Tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis vaccine

VAR, VZV Varicella vaccine

It is the intent of the law that all students, regardless of circumstances, meet the requirements for their grade level. All children transferring from other school districts, all students in a grade due to retention, and all students in transitional levels between these grades are required to have the doses indicated as required for their grade level.

EVIDENCE OF ADEQUATE IMMUNIZATION

Acceptable evidence of adequate immunization is a record provided by a licensed physician, public health authority, or a clinic that clearly indicates which immunizations have been received,

the dates they were administered, and the signature or stamp of the physician or clinic that administered the vaccines or recorded the child's immunization history.

EXEMPTIONS FROM THE IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Exemptions from the immunization requirements are authorized by law for medical, religious, and personal reasons. Exemptions are not intended for students who are immune to a particular disease because they have had the disease. Students who are immune to a disease from having had the disease, for example, chickenpox, do not need exemption certificates. The date or approximate date the child had the disease should be recorded on the child's immunization record in place of the immunization date. Below is a summary of information concerning exemptions including procedures for their authorization.

Types of Exemptions

Medical

In Section 1210.193 the law states that any minor child, through his parent or guardian, may submit to the health authority charged with the enforcement of the required immunization program, a certificate (record) signed by a licensed physician stating that the physical condition of the child is such that the immunization would endanger the life or health of the child and thus be exempted from the immunization requirements.

Religious

Exemptions based on religious objections to immunizations are also allowed. The parent/guardian or religious leader must present a signed written statement summarizing their objections to immunizations.

Personal

Exemptions may also be authorized for children who parents or guardians object to immunizations for personal reasons or on philosophical grounds but are not necessarily members of a church or group that subscribes to religious beliefs contrary to the practice of immunizations. The parent or guardian must present a brief written statement summarizing his or her objections to immunizations. Lost or unobtainable immunization records are not a valid reason for a personal exemption.

Exemption Procedures

Parents are required to submit a waiver request for immunization exemptions in writing. The Immunization Service provides Certificate of Exemption forms (Oklahoma Department of Health Form #216A) for use in recording exemptions. These forms may be ordered by calling the Immunization Service at (405) 271-4073. Schools should maintain a small supply of Certificate of Exemption forms for parents and guardians claiming an exemption from the immunization requirements for their children. The Immunization Service does not routinely distribute exemption forms to parents as this tends to increase the possibility the parent will not return the form to the school. Parents are referred to schools to obtain the forms.

It is the parent or guardian's responsibility to complete and sign the form for personal exemptions. Either a parent or the religious leader may sign religious exemptions. A physician must sign medical exemptions. Parents should then return the entire form to the school. School officials must review the form to ensure that it has been properly completed, is legible, and signed. A copy of the form or statement must be kept on file in the student's cumulative record and a copy must be sent to the Immunization Service for approval. Parents should be informed that their child might be excluded from school in the event of an outbreak of a disease for which their child is exempted.

Each exemption submitted to the Immunization Service is reviewed for validity and accuracy. If the exemption is determined to be invalid, the form or statement will be returned to the school along with a letter explaining the reason why the exemption is invalid. If the exemption is valid the form is returned to the school marked with an approval stamp. The Immunization Service does not keep a copy of the exemption certificate.

Oklahoma's immunization law does not require a new exemption form to be filed every year. It is the policy of the Immunization Service to accept exemption forms filed when the child entered the school system. Exemption forms should accompany children when they transfer between schools. Schools should not keep the exemption form of a transferring student. If a student transfers into Oklahoma schools from another state, an exemption form must be completed to comply with Oklahoma law. If an exemption form has been misplaced, a new form should be completed, but if an exemption form is on file, an additional form is not needed unless vaccine requirements change for the grade level of the child, such as when new vaccines are added for students entering the 7th grade to which the students does not have a previous exemption.

Oklahoma

The Immunization Service distributes exemption forms to schools and childcare providers. Parents who ask for exemption forms at a clinic or county health department will be referred to the school to obtain a form. This process assures that schools are not bypassed.

If a parent needs a copy of a previously filed exemption form, they must obtain it from the school. If a copy of the original exemption is not available, the parent must complete a new form. The Immunization Service does not provide copies of previously filed exemption forms for parents.

Exemptions: The parent or guardian of any child may request an exemption from any or all immunizations for medical, religious, or personal reasons. In such cases, a written statement from the parent, guardian, or physician must be on file with the school. Exemption forms are provided to parents by the school. Forms may be requested from the Oklahoma State Department of Health Immunization Service by calling (405) 271- 4073.