



SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS Table

Religious and Philosophical Exemptions from School Immunization Requirements

As of June 2017

This table provides information on statutory and regulatory provisions regarding school immunization requirements for the 11 states of the Western Region of the Network for Public Health Law. Each state abbreviation links to the applicable immunization program website. Information for each state is also provided in the following categories:

- I. **School Immunization Law** lists legal provisions establishing immunization requirements for primary (K-12) school enrollment.
- II. **Religious Exemption** catalogues provisions permitting exemption on the basis of religious belief (currently permitted in 10 of these states) and links to relevant forms where available.
- III. **Philosophical Exemption** lists exemptions available on the basis of philosophical, personal belief, or conscience objection (currently permitted in 6 of these states) and links to relevant forms where available.
- IV. **Signed Statement** denotes whether a written statement signed by the parent, guardian, or adult/emancipated child must accompany requests for religious or philosophical exemptions either as part of a standard form or as a separate document.
- V. **Risk/Benefit Information** lists whether information regarding the risks and benefits of immunization and vaccine-preventable diseases must be communicated to the person requesting the exemption via printed documents, online education, or consultation with a health care practitioner.
- VI. **Other** provides additional requirements and details regarding exemptions. Unless otherwise noted, additional requirements apply to religious and philosophical exemptions permitted in the state. Note that medical exemptions are available in all states.

State	I. School Immunization Law	II. Religious Exemption	III. Philosophical Exemption	IV. Signed Statement	V. Risk/Benefit Information	VI. Other
<u>AK</u>	<u>ALASKA STAT. § 14.30.125; ALASKA ADMIN. CODE tit. 4, § 06.055</u>	<u>ALASKA ADMIN. CODE TIT. 4, § 06.055(B)(3)</u> Form available here	None	Yes	No	Districts and private schools may require notarization
<u>AZ</u> ¹	<u>ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 15-872</u>	<u>ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 15-873(1)</u> ² Form available here	<u>ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 15-873(1)</u> Form available here	Yes	Yes ³	“Statement of understanding” required but no provider signature
<u>CA</u>	<u>CAL. HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 120335</u>	None	None	No	No	Statements filed prior to 1/1/16 may exempt the student until enrollment in the next grade span
<u>CO</u>	<u>COLO. REV. STAT. § 25-4-902</u>	<u>COLO. REV. STAT. § 25-4-903(2)(b)</u> Form available here ⁴	<u>COLO. REV. STAT. § 25-4-903(2)(b)</u> Form available here	Yes	No	N/A
<u>HI</u>	<u>HAW. REV. STAT. § 302A-1154</u>	<u>HAW. REV. STAT. § 302A-1156(2)</u> Additional information available here	None ⁵	Yes	No	N/A
<u>NV</u> ⁶	<u>NEV. REV. STAT. §§ 392.435, 394.192</u>	<u>NEV. REV. STAT. §§ 392.437, 394.193</u> Additional information available here	None	Yes	No	N/A
<u>NM</u>	<u>N.M. STAT. ANN. § 24-5-1</u>	<u>N.M. STAT. ANN. § 24-5-3</u> Form available here	None ⁷	Yes ⁸	No	Exemption valid for 9 months; notarization required

State	I. School Immunization Law	II. Religious Exemption	III. Philosophical Exemption	IV. Signed Statement	V. Risk/Benefit Information	VI. Other
<u>OR</u>	<u>OR. REV. STAT. §§ 433.267, 433.273</u>	<u>OR. REV. STAT. § 433.267(1)(c)(A)</u> Form available here	<u>OR. REV. STAT. § 433.267(1)(c)(A); OR. ADMIN. R. 333-050-0010(24)</u> Form available here	Yes	Yes	Health care practitioner's signature or certification of parent's completion of educational module ⁹
<u>TX</u>	<u>TEX. ADMIN. CODE §§ 97.61, 40 Tex. Reg. 319 (Jan. 16, 2015)</u>	<u>TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 97.62(2)</u> Form available here	<u>TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 97.62(2)¹⁰</u> Form available here	Yes	No ¹¹	Exemption valid for 2 years; notarization required ¹²
<u>UT</u>	<u>UTAH CODE ANN. § 53A-11-301</u>	<u>UTAH CODE ANN. § 53A-11-302(3)(c)</u> Additional information available here	<u>UTAH CODE ANN. § 53A-11-302.5(3)(b)</u> Additional information available here	Yes	No ¹³	Witnessed and signed by local health official
<u>WA</u>	<u>WASH. REV. CODE ANN. § 28A.210.080</u>	<u>WASH. REV. CODE ANN. § 28A.210.090(1)(b)</u> Form available here	<u>Wash Rev. Code Ann. § 28A.210.090(1)(c)</u> Form available here	Yes	Yes ¹⁴	Signed by licensed health care provider (philosophical only)
Total:	11	10	6	10	3	

SUPPORTERS



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¹ In 2017, a failed proposed legislation in Arizona would have required school websites to post vaccination rates for enrolled students. [SB 1509, 53rd Legislature First Regular Sess. \(Ariz. 2017\)](#).

² Arizona has a separate religious exemption for Childcare, Pre-school, and Headstart programs. For K-12 schools, those seeking exemption on religious grounds would use the personal beliefs form. [Ariz. Admin. Code § R9-6-706 \(2013\)](#).

³ The exemption request includes a statement of understanding the risks and possible outcomes of lack of vaccination. However, the request does not require the signature of a health care practitioner attesting to having provided this information.

⁴ A failed proposed bill that would have clarified that a written letter is sufficient and no official form is necessary to apply for an exemption. [SB 17-250, 71st General Assembly First Regular Sess. \(Colo. 2017\)](#).

⁵ In 2017, an unsuccessful proposed bill would have allowed a philosophical exemption. [H.B. 779, 29th Legislature \(Haw. 2017\)](#).

⁶ A failed 2017 bill would have required schools and other facilities to notify the parent or guardian of a child of whether another admitted child is exempt from immunization requirements. [A.B. 200, 79th Legislative Sess. \(Nev. 2017\)](#).

⁷ Several sources indicate that New Mexico provides for a philosophical exemption, but the state's Immunization Program explicitly asserts that it does not. See <http://www.immunizenm.org/schoolreq.shtml>. Other sources have relied on interpretations of the religious belief exemption, which applies to individually-held beliefs as well as those of established religious denominations. However, non-religious personal beliefs are not accepted as grounds for exemption under New Mexico law.

⁸ The signed statement may be from either the parent/guardian or from an officer of a recognized religious denomination.

⁹ The parent must either have the signature of a health care practitioner verifying that the health care practitioner has reviewed with the parent the risks and benefits of immunization consistent with [OR. REV. STAT. ANN. § 433.273 \(West 2015\)](#), or a certificate verifying that the parent completed a vaccine educational module approved under [OR. REV. STAT. ANN. § 433.273 \(West 2015\)](#). See also Oregon Health Authority [non-medical vaccine exemptions](#).

¹⁰ 2017 proposed bill would replace language referring to *conscience* and *religious belief* with *non-medical*. [H.B. 120, 85th Legislative Sess. \(Tex. 2017\)](#). (in committee as of June 6, 2017).

¹¹ 2017 proposed bill requiring completion of an education module and approving a fee for any exemption. [H.B. 126, 85th Legislative Sess. \(Tex. 2017\)](#). (in committee as of June 6, 2017); 2017 proposed bill requiring health care practitioner counseling for any person seeking a non-medical exemption. [H.B. 241, 85th Legislative Sess. \(Tex. 2017\)](#). (in committee as of June 6, 2017).

¹² See <http://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school/exemption-faq.aspx>.

¹³ 2017 legislation passed that requires completion of an educational module for exemption forms not completed at a local health department. [H.B. 308, General Sess. of the 62nd Legislature \(Utah 2017\)](#).

¹⁴ A parent/guardian claiming exemption on the basis of religious objection only to vaccination must still complete a form that is signed by a health care practitioner stating that the parent has been provided with information on the risks and benefits of immunizations. However, a parent who "demonstrates membership in a religious body or a church in which the religious beliefs or teachings . . . preclude a health care practitioner from providing medical treatment to the child" is not required to obtain a health care practitioner's signature on this form. [WASH. REV. CODE. ANN. § 28A.210.090\(2\)\(c\)\(emphasis added\)](#).