

Immunization Policy

Prior to entry, attendance or transfer to a Level 1 pre-school through high school in the Archdiocese of Seattle, students must present proof of having had the immunizations as required by Washington State law.

Every student enrolled in a Level 1 Catholic School in the Archdiocese of Seattle shall be immunized against vaccine preventable diseases caused by infectious agents in accordance with the immunization schedule adopted by the Washington State Department of Health Services. The only exception to the foregoing requirements for students in our Catholic schools is a medical exemption signed by a licensed physician (M.D. or D.O.) authorized to practice in the State of Washington, including the physicians license number.

Provisional enrollment timeline

Washington State law and guidelines require that students

- are fully vaccinated against the specified diseases;
- or have the acceptable Certificate of Exemption on file
- all immunizations/exemptions are completed by the first date of attendance;
- may be enrolled provisionally if the student has an immunization record that indicates the student has received at least one dose of each specified age/grade-appropriate vaccine (required by this rule);
- remain enrolled, students must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly as is medically feasible;
- provide acceptable evidence of vaccination to the school;
- a representative school nurse or school administrator shall review the immunization status of a provisionally enrolled student every 30 days to ensure continued compliance, and
- if, at the end of the 30-day period, have not received a subsequent dose of vaccine, and not in compliance, the school may exclude students from school attendance until the required dose is administered and proof of immunization has been provided to the school.

Limited exemptions

Beginning January 1, 2020, personal/philosophical/religious exemptions may not be used to exempt a student from any of the vaccines required by the State of Washington for admission and attendance in Archdiocese of Seattle Catholic schools.

There are generally recognized to be two types of exemptions as of July 2019 for the MMR vaccine only that remain under certain limited circumstances and sought from the schools' both public and private—religious and medical.

Religious exemptions: Beginning January 1, 2020, no religious exemptions will be allowed in our Level 1 Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Seattle. According to state law, an individual may be exempt from required vaccinations if he /she is an active member of a religious body whose beliefs and teachings precludes vaccination. This is not the case for Catholic institutions.

There is nothing in Catholic moral teachings, which would hold that the use of vaccines is immoral and/or sinful. Therefore, it is the policy of the Archdiocese of Seattle that all students must meet all vaccination requirements of the State of Washington as a condition for admission and attendance at our Catholic schools. Accordingly, requests for exemptions based on religious beliefs will not be considered in any Catholic schools of this diocese. Immunizations are not in conflict with the Catholic faith.

Resources:

Immunization Manual for schools, Preschools, and child Care centers

https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/348-124_ImmunizationSchoolManual.pdf

Pontifical Academy of Life

<http://www.academyforlife.va/content/pav/en/the-academy/activity-academy/note-vaccini.html>