



MEMO

To: School Administrators & Local Health Jurisdictions
From: Montana Immunization Program
Date: August 30, 2023
Re: Updates to School Immunization Documentation Requirements

The 2023 legislative session brought some important changes that impact communication and exemptions related to school immunizations arising from passage of House Bill (HB) 715. Below is a summary of recent changes and current requirements under HB 715.

Notice of Exemptions Required

HB 715 provides that any communication from a school, including communication through websites or social media, regarding statutorily required immunizations must include information about religious and medical exemptions available under [MCA 20-5-405](#) and copies of, or links to, the department's immunization exemption forms.

Exemptions – Religious

The documentation required for religious exemptions has changed. Individuals enrolled or seeking enrollment in a K-12 school may attend school without obtaining a required immunization if the individual files an affidavit on a form developed by the department, [HES 113 Montana Schools](#), stating that immunization is contrary to the religious tenets and practices of the person. This form no longer needs to be notarized and it does not need to be renewed annually.

Exemptions – Medical

Medical exemptions have not changed. A person enrolled or seeking enrollment may attend school without obtaining a required immunization if a written medical exemption statement meeting the requirements of MCA 20-5-405 is filed with the governing authority. No specific form must be used, but [HES 101A](#) is available for use. Under the statute, any medical exemption statement must:

1. attest that the physical condition or medical circumstances relating to the person enrolled or seeking enrollment indicate that some or all of the required immunizations are not considered safe;
2. Indicate the specific nature and probable duration of the medical condition or circumstances that contraindicate immunization, -AND
3. Be signed by a qualified health care provider as described under [MCA 20-5-405\(2\)\(c\)](#).



Oversite

Immunization recordkeeping requirements for K-12 schools have not changed. Schools need to continue to obtain and keep adequate documentation of immunization records, including any exemptions or conditional enrollment plans, for all students enrolled or seeking enrollment.

Additional Information

Immunization exemption forms, tools, and resources can be found on our immunization website at Immunization.mt.gov under the Child Care and School Resources section.

A copy of the school immunization rules is located at:

[Subchapter Home: - Administrative Rules of the State of Montana \(mt.gov\)](http://Subchapter Home: - Administrative Rules of the State of Montana (mt.gov))

A copy of the school immunization statute is located at:

[Part 4. Health - Table of Contents, Title 20, Chapter 5, MCA \(mt.gov\)](http://Part 4. Health - Table of Contents, Title 20, Chapter 5, MCA (mt.gov))

For any additional questions regarding school immunization requirements, please reach out to the Montana Immunization Program at 406-444-5580.

Have a wonderful and safe school year!