

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION

WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

Immunizations are the best protection against serious diseases. Vaccines are safe and effective and were developed to protect individuals from dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

Choosing not to immunize a child greatly increases the risk of getting serious diseases like pertussis, measles, mumps and chickenpox that can cause severe complications such as heart failure; difficulty breathing and swallowing; brain damage; and deafness.

Children who are not immunized can transmit vaccine-preventable diseases throughout the community to babies who are too young to be fully immunized or to others who cannot be immunized for medical reasons. Exposure to any vaccine-preventable disease could be life threatening.

Actively choosing not to immunize a child by claiming a religious exemption is a parent's right; however, it carries significant responsibility. To protect inadequately vaccinated individuals and the entire community, unimmunized children could be excluded from school during disease outbreaks. Exclusion from care can cause a hardship for the child and parent, however no exceptions are made, regardless of the circumstances.

Claiming a religious exemption represents a parent or guardian's belief that the family's religious preference does not support immunizing against vaccine-preventable diseases.

A religious exemption can be filed for selected required vaccines or for all required vaccines. Parents and guardians should indicate which required vaccines are being exempted from on the Religious Immunization Exemption form. A Religious Immunization Exemption form can be obtained for printing by clicking the button below. The exemption must be completed, signed by the parent or guardian and placed on file with the school immunization health record.

It is unlawful for any child to attend school unless the child has been adequately immunized or unless the parent or guardian has signed and filed a Religious Immunization Exemption form.

IMMUNIZATIONS MAY SAVE YOUR CHILD'S LIFE!

CLICK HERE
to continue to the
exemption form



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH &
SENIOR SERVICES**

Bureau of Immunizations