

# Oak Grove School

## Current Immunization Requirements as of 2019

Dear Oak Grove Parents,

As you may be aware, in 2016 Governor Brown signed into law a bill, SB 277, that requires California school children to be fully vaccinated. SB 277 eliminates religious and personal beliefs exemptions for vaccinations. The bill applies to children enrolled in public or private daycares and preschools, public school districts, and private schools. Only students in a home-based private school and students enrolled in an independent study program who do not receive classroom-based instruction are exempt. The law took effect January 1, 2016 and its provisions were implemented beginning July 1, 2016. **In 2019, California immunization law was amended to include increased vaccine requirements, with changes going into effect July 1, 2019.**

In accordance with this bill, **Oak Grove School cannot unconditionally admit any student unless immunization requirements have been fulfilled as required by SB 277, or unless one of the following exceptions applies:** (1) a student has a valid personal beliefs affidavit (PBE) that was submitted prior to January 1, 2016, and therefore may continue attending public or private school until they enroll in the next “grade span” (*see question #3*); (2) a student has a valid temporary or permanent medical exemption (*see questions #15-19*).

**California State law also requires public and private schools to maintain current immunization documentation for all enrolled students.** Documentation that meets state requirements are (1) a current immunization record of all vaccines received from birth to the present; (2) a catch-up vaccine schedule that meets all criteria for conditional status (*see section titled “Conditional Admission” for details*); and/or (3) a temporary or permanent medical exemption. Oak Grove School is obliged to share this information with the California Public Health Department when asked to do so. (*See question #4 for specific vaccine requirements at each age/grade level.*)

**The following section is intended to answer your questions regarding state immunization law, and includes links to the most official, up-to-date information provided by the State of California.** Further questions may be sent via email to Jaymie Arquilevich, Registrar, at registrar@oakgroveschool.org.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

- 1. Where can I review SB 277?** The language of Senate Bill 277 is available at: [http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201520160SB277](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB277)
- 2. Where can I review 2019 changes to California vaccine requirements?**  
Information on new vaccine requirements is available at: <https://www.shotsforschool.org/laws/regs2019/#Q6>
- 3. What is the definition of a “grade span?”** “Grade span” is defined as (A) birth to preschool; (B) kindergarten (including transitional kindergarten) and grades 1 through 6; and (C) grades 7 through 12.
- 4. Which vaccines are required to enter daycare or school in California?**  
Depending on the student’s age, the diseases for which immunizations shall be documented include (1) Diphtheria, (2) Haemophilus Influenzae Type B, (3) Measles, (4) Mumps, (5) Pertussis (whooping cough), (6) Poliomyelitis, (7) Rubella, (8) Tetanus, (9) Hepatitis B, and (10) Varicella (chickenpox).
  - a. For daycare and preschool, see <http://www.shotsforschool.org/child-care/>
  - b. For kindergarten, see <http://www.shotsforschool.org/k-12/>
  - c. For 7th grade, see <http://www.shotsforschool.org/7th-grade/>
  - d. For students entering or transferring into California schools at other grade levels, see <http://www.shotsforschool.org/k-12/>
  - e. This document contains a helpful immunization guide: <http://eziz.org/assets/docs/IMM-222School.pdf>
- 5. To meet the chickenpox immunization requirement for TK/K-12 admission or for advancement into 7th grade, may a school accept an immunization record that indicates a "history of chickenpox disease"?** No, this is not sufficient documentation to meet school requirements. Medical exemption documentation may be used for a child who had chickenpox disease that was documented by a physician. For more information on medical exemption documentation requirements, see questions above.
- 6. Do homeopathic vaccines fulfill SB 277 immunization requirements?**  
No. According to SB 277 and the California Health and Safety Code, vaccines are “subject to the condition that the immunization be performed in accordance with the regulations of the department.” In addition, SB 277 refers to the “immunizing agents that may be utilized,” as specified by the Department of Health and Human Services. Immunizing agents that are utilized need to have

been approved by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Hence, homeopathic vaccinations do not qualify as immunizing agents.

## **PERSONAL BELIEFS EXEMPTIONS**

**7. Are personal beliefs exemptions filed in California during or after 2016 still valid?** No. As of January 1, 2016, personal beliefs exemptions cannot be applied to vaccines currently required for preschool and K-12 enrollment by the state of California.

**8. Are personal beliefs exemptions filed in California before 2016 still valid?** Personal beliefs exemptions filed at a school or childcare facility before January 1, 2016 will remain valid until the student reaches the next immunization checkpoint or grade span:

a. For a child in a childcare facility, a previously-filed personal beliefs exemption will be valid until the start of kindergarten (including transitional kindergarten).

b. For students in grades 1-6, a previously-filed personal beliefs exemption will be valid until the start of 7th grade.

c. For students in grades 8-12, a previously-filed personal beliefs exemption will continue to be valid.

**9. Is a personal beliefs exemption still valid if a student transfers between childcare facilities or schools within California after 2015?** Yes, a personal beliefs exemption filed with a childcare facility or school before January 1, 2016 is valid until the next immunization checkpoint or grade span (kindergarten or 7th grade). Personal beliefs exemptions can be transferred between child care facilities and schools in California, both within and across school districts.

However, if personal beliefs exemption documentation from the prior child care facility or school is not available, students must (1) meet all age-appropriate immunization requirements for admission into preschool or grades K-12 (*see question #4*); (2) be enrolled in an independent study program with no classroom-based instruction; or (3) be enrolled in a home-based private school.

**10. Is a personal beliefs exemption from another state or country valid if a student transfers to a California school?** No.

**11. What will happen in future years when children with a prior personal beliefs exemption reach their next immunization checkpoint or grade span (kindergarten**

**or 7th grade)?** Children with a valid personal beliefs exemption filed before 2016 will have to meet all age-appropriate immunization requirements for admission into kindergarten or 7th grade (see question #4). Otherwise, they would need to be enrolled in either an independent study program with no classroom-based instruction or a home-based private school. (In some cases, a student may qualify for conditional status and attend school while getting caught up on vaccines. See question #20 for details.)

**12. My child was admitted to kindergarten in 2015 with a valid personal beliefs exemption for one or more of the required vaccines. How long will her exemption remain valid?** A personal beliefs exemption filed in 2015 at entry into kindergarten will remain valid until the completion of 6th grade.

**13. What if a student with a valid California personal beliefs exemption enrolls at a new school? For example, what if an 8th grade student from California starts at a new high school in 9th grade?** An 8th grade student from California starting at a new high school in 9th grade would not be starting a new grade span and would still be covered by a valid personal beliefs exemption through 12th grade.

However, students who transfer to or start at a new school at a time that coincides with a change in grade span must be fully immunized prior to the beginning of the school year. For example, a personal beliefs exemption for a 6th grade student will no longer be valid when the student transfers to a school for 7th grade; the student will need to be fully immunized prior to admission to 7th grade. (In some cases, a student may qualify for conditional status and attend school while getting caught up on vaccines. See question #20 for details.)

**14. What if additional vaccines become required for child care or school?** Personal beliefs exemptions will be allowed for any new immunization requirements initiated by the California Department of Public Health.

## **MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS**

**15. For admissions on or after July 1, 2019, what is required for a medical exemption to a required immunization?** Starting July 1, 2019, a parent or guardian must submit a signed, written statement from a physician (MD or DO) licensed in California which states:

- a. The specific nature of the physical condition or medical circumstance of the child for which a licensed physician does not recommend immunization.
- b. Each specific required vaccine that is being exempted.

- c. Whether the medical exemption is temporary or permanent
- d. If the exemption is temporary, an expiration date no more than 12 calendar months from the date of signing.

**16. Does a medical exemption filed for a child attending before July 1, 2019, need to meet the new requirements?** In some cases. A medical exemption filed previously remains valid until the earliest of:

- a. When the child is next considered to be an admission at a school or pre-kindergarten facility (applies to both temporary and permanent medical exemptions), at which time staff will need to confirm if the previously filed medical exemption meets the newer requirements, or
- b. The expiration date specified in the medical exemption (applies to temporary medical exemptions), or
- c. Advancement to 7th grade, for a medical exemption from varicella vaccine or Tdap

**17. Is there a standardized form for medical exemptions?** No, but the document must include all elements listed in question #15.

**18. Are medical exemptions considered valid when provided by other practitioners besides a licensed physician?** No, California only recognizes a medical exemption as valid when provided by a licensed M.D. or D.O.

**19. Are licensed physicians required to assist in requests for medical exemptions?** A licensed physician may provide a medical exemption but is not required to do so. Parents or guardians seeking medical exemptions should check with physicians in advance for clarification of their policies and criteria.

## **CONDITIONAL ADMISSION**

**20. What is conditional admission?** In very limited circumstances, children who have not yet received all of the required vaccines in a series may attend preschool or grades K-12 while they catch up on remaining doses. Criteria for conditional admission are strict and specific. For further information, see <http://www.shotsforschool.org/laws/conditional-admission/>.

Conditional admission status applies in the following cases:

- a. A student has commenced receiving doses of all vaccines required for their age or grade and is not currently due for any doses at the start of school

- b. A student has a temporary medical exemption from one or more vaccines

Additionally, the child must (1) receive at least one dose of each required vaccine series before the first day of school; (2) submit documentation to the school of doses received; (3) provide a catch-up schedule to the school of forthcoming doses; and (4), if applicable, provide a temporary medical exemption to the school that states the following: exempted vaccines, reason for delay, and duration of delay.

## **CURRENT STATE LAW REGARDING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

**21. What if a student has not been vaccinated and the school believes he or she has been exposed to a disease covered by California immunization laws?** A school may temporarily exclude a student from school until the local health officer is satisfied that he or she is no longer at risk of developing or transmitting the disease.

**22. What if a student with conditional status fails to follow the catch-up schedule they have on file with the school?** Any student admitted conditionally who fails to obtain the required vaccines within time limits allowed by CDPH and agreed upon by the school shall be prohibited from further attendance until the situation is resolved. For more information on immunizations and school attendance, see <http://eziz.org/assets/docs/IMM-1080.pdf>.