

Changes to School and Child Care Immunization Exemptions

On May 10, 2011, Governor Gregoire signed a bill that requires a licensed health care provider to sign the [Certificate of Exemption](#) for a parent or guardian to exempt their child from school and child care immunization requirements. The signature verifies that the provider gave the parent or guardian information about the benefits and risks of immunization. A parent or guardian can also turn in a signed letter from a health care provider stating the same information.

The law goes into effect on July 22, 2011. It only applies to exemptions requested after this date. A health care provider doesn't need to sign the form for parents or guardians who demonstrate membership in a church or religious group that does not allow a health care provider to provide medical treatment to a child.

¹ RCW 28A.210.080-090 states that before or on the first day of every child's attendance at any public and private school or licensed child care center in Washington State, the parent or guardian must present proof of either: (1) full immunization, (2) the initiation of and compliance with a schedule of immunization, as required by rules of the State Board of Health, or (3) a certificate of exemption, signed by a parent or guardian and a licensed health care provider.

² A letter may substitute for a signed 'Provider Statement' on this certificate. To be accepted, the letter must reference the child's name on this certificate, confirm that the child's parent or guardian got information on the risks and benefits of immunization to their child, and be signed by a licensed health care provider.