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!

JOPLIN
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH &
SENIOR SERVICES
Bureau of Immunizations

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER
Services provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.
Hearing- and speech-impaired citizens can dial 711

Rev. 12-22

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES

RELIGIOUS IMMUNIZATION EXEMPTION

Required under the Missouri State immunization law (Section 167.181, RSMo) of children attending public, private, and parochial or parish schools.

We strongly encourage you to immunize your child, but ultimately the decision is yours. Please discuss any concerns you have with a trusted healthcare provider or call the immunization coordinator at your local or state health department. Your final decision affects not only the health of your child, but also the rest of your family, the health of your child's friends and their families, classmates, neighbors, and community.

Unimmunized children have a greater risk of contracting and spreading vaccine-preventable diseases to babies who are too young to be fully immunized and those who cannot be immunized due to medical conditions. In the event of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease within a particular facility, children who are not fully immunized or do not have documented laboratory evidence of immunity shall not be allowed to attend school or day care until the local health authority declares the designated outbreak or health emergency has ended.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT	NAME OF CHILD (PRINT OR TYPE)

SHOULD BE EXEMPTED FROM RECEIVING THE FOLLOWING CHECKED IMMUNIZATION(S) BECAUSE IMMUNIZATIONS VIOLATE MY RELIGIOUS BELIEFS:

☐ DIPHTHERIA ☐ HEPATITIS B ☐ MMR ☐ PERTUSSIS ☐ POLIO

☐ TETANUS ☐ VARICELLA ☐ OTHER _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME (PRINT OR TYPE)	PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE	DATE