

Bulletin

NUMBER

#17-68-06

DATE

March 9, 2017

OF INTEREST TO

County Directors

Social Services Supervisors and Staff

Changes to Child Care Assistance Program Immunization Requirements

TOPIC

Child Care Assistance Program implements immunization requirements for children receiving child care assistance.

PURPOSE

Provide information and instructions on how to implement immunization policy changes.

ACTION/DUE DATE

Please read information and prepare for implementation in March 2017.

EXPIRATION DATE

March 9, 2017

CONTACT

Contact your Child Care Assistance Program technical liaison or submit your question through PolicyQuest.

SIGNED

JAMES G. KOPPEL
Assistant Commissioner
Children and Family Services

TERMINOLOGY NOTICE

The terminology used to describe people we serve has changed over time. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the use of "People First" language.

I. Background

Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.15 allows children attending child care and school to be exempt from immunization requirements if their parent is a conscientious objector to immunizations. Minnesota law does not address the reason for the conscientious objection so families may be legally exempt from immunizations for either religious or personal beliefs. Federal regulation 45 C.F.R. § 98.41(a)(1) relates to children receiving subsidies from the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and only allows payment to limited kinds of providers when parents hold a conscientious objection that is not based on religious beliefs. To comply with federal regulations, the Child Care Assistance Program will limit provider options for children who are not age-appropriately immunized due to a non-religious conscientious objection.

II. Changes in Child Care Assistance Program Policy

Beginning in March 2017, families receiving child care assistance must provide information to the agency administering their Child Care Assistance Program case regarding the immunization status of any child receiving assistance.

A. Program impacts for families who report a non-religious, conscientious objection to immunizations

Parents whose children are not age-appropriately immunized due to a non-religious conscientious objection will have three options to continue to have child care authorized through the Child Care Assistance Program. Parents can:

- Select a registered, related, legal nonlicensed provider. Related means a grandparent, aunt, uncle, or sibling (if living in a separate residence), OR
- Request that care be provided in the children's home by a related or unrelated provider. In-home
 child care must be approved by the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Families must meet
 in-home child care requirements to be approved. Conscientious objection to immunizations on its
 own is not a reason for approval, OR
- Immunize their children according to the Minnesota Department of Health's immunization standards. When age-appropriately immunized, the Child Care Assistance Program can pay for child care with any registered provider.

B. Program impacts for families who do not report immunization status information

Families who do not report on their children's immunization status will have their child care assistance case suspended until information is provided.

C. Program impacts for families who report that children are immunized or who have a religious or medical exemption

Families who report that their children are immunized (or will be soon), or those that have a religious or medical exemption for immunizations are not impacted by this change. These families are able to have care authorized at the registered provider of their choice.

III. Implementation Plan

A. Enforcement timelines and notification

1. Current participants

Families eligible for the Child Care Assistance Program before March 2017 will have the new policy enforced upon their next redetermination. From March 2017 through September 2017, families receiving their redetermination packet will also receive a copy of Attachment A: Immunizations for Children Receiving Child Care Assistance (DHS-3777) to notify them of the policy change.

2. New applicants

Beginning March 2017, new applicants must report on their child's immunization status before a Service Authorization can be issued.

B. Methods of reporting children's immunization status

Parents can report their children's immunization status to their caseworkers in a number of ways including, but not limited to:

- Complete "Immunization Status" questions on an application form, redetermination form, combined application addendum form, or on ApplyMN.
- Complete an Attachment B: Immunization Status Follow-up (DHS-3777A) form.
- Submit a written statement of their child's immunization status.
- Verbally report to their caseworker their child's immunization status. Caseworkers must case note verbal reports.

1. Verification is not required

Parents do not need to verify their child's immunization status. Counties, tribes and other agencies administering the Child Care Assistance Program should not request verification of immunization status. If parents submit verification, workers should retain the verification in the family's case file.

2. Changes to existing forms and documents

The Department of Human Services will update several existing forms to ask families to report on their child's immunization status. These forms are:

- Child Care Assistance Program Application (DHS-3550)
- Child Care Assistance Program Redetermination Form (DHS-5274)
- Combined Application Child Care Addendum (DHS-5223D)

3. New forms and documents

The department created two new documents to implement this change. These forms are:

- Attachment B: <u>Immunizations for Children Receiving Child Care Assistance (DHS-3777A)</u> This is an information document for families which provides immunization resources and information about Child Care Assistance Program policy.
- <u>Immunization Status Follow-up (DHS-3777A)</u> This is a form families can use to report the immunization status of their children. This is form is optional.

C. County and tribal agency actions

Counties, tribes and agencies administering the Child Care Assistance Program are responsible for portions of the policy implementation. Some agency actions and processing procedures must change in March 2017 to implement this policy.

Processing applications and redeterminations that do not include "Immunization Status" question

If you receive application or redetermination materials on or after March 2017 that do not include the new "Immunization Status" question, you must:

- Process the application or redetermination following current Child Care Assistance Program
 processing guidelines. Do not delay processing or determining eligibility.
- Request immunization status information from the children's parents. Methods to request the information include, but are not limited to:
 - Send the family Attachment A: <u>Immunizations for Children Receiving Child Care</u>
 Assistance (DHS-3777) and Attachment B: <u>Immunization Status Follow-up</u> (DHS-3777A).
 - o Call the family directly.
 - Talk to the family in person if they visit your agency.
- Allow 15 days for a family to provide immunization status information. If information is not received, the case must be suspended.
 - If a Service Authorization has not been issued, do not issue a Service Authorization until information is reported.
 - If a Service Authorization has been issued and is still open, close the Service
 Authorization with a 15 day notice using the Close Reason "Care is no longer

- authorized." Include a comment on the Service Authorization to Family that care can be reauthorized when immunization status information is received. Do not include this comment on the provider Service Authorization.
- If a Service Authorization has been issued but is set to close for any reason, allow the Service Authorization to close and notify the family that the Service Authorization will remain closed until immunization status information is received.
- When the caseworker receives immunization status information from the parent, Service
 Authorizations can be issued. Refer to processing instructions below based on information
 provided.

2. Processing cases for children who are not immunized due to conscientious objection

If a parent reports on or after March 2017 that their child is not immunized due to a non-religious, conscientious objection, you must:

- Process the case following current Child Care Assistance Program processing guidelines. Do
 not delay processing or determining eligibility. You may authorize child care at the
 registered provider of the parent's choice.
- Notify the Department of Human Services Child Care Assistance Program by contacting your technical liaison. You will need to provide the participant's name and case number.
- Wait for the department to instruct you on further case actions. Do not terminate any Service Authorizations.

3. Processing cases for children who are immunized or not immunized for a religious or medical exemption

If a parent reports on or after March 2017 that their child is immunized or is not immunized due to a religious or medical exemption, you must:

- Process the case following current Child Care Assistance Program processing guidelines. Do
 not delay processing or determining eligibility. You may authorize child care at the
 registered provider of the parent's choice.
- Include the immunization status information reported by the parent in the case file and case notes.
- There are no additional actions to implement policy for these cases.

4. Update forms and documents

Review your agency's application and redetermination materials. You must:

 Ensure that all Child Care Assistance Program applications, redeterminations, and addendums provided to families are the new versions that include the "Immunization Status" questions. Add Attachment A: <u>Immunizations for Children Receiving Child Care Assistance (DHS-</u>
 3777) to all application, redetermination and addendum materials provided to families.

5. Respond to family questions

If families have questions regarding the policy change and potential impacts on their child's authorization, refer them to the department Child Care Assistance Program contact line 651-431-3809.

D. Department actions

The Department of Human Services will work directly with families if children are not immunized due to a parent's non-religious conscientious objection.

When a county, tribe or other agency administering child care assistance notifies the department that a family has reported that their child is not immunized due to a conscientious objection, the department will:

- Attempt to contact the family and confirm the child's immunization status and exemption reasons.
- Explain Child Care Assistance Program policy to families who are impacted.
- Provide resources, support and explain that there is a grace period for the family to consider their options.
- For families that confirm their commitment to conscientious objection, provide information and technical assistance to the family regarding the selection and registration process for related, legal nonlicensed providers.
- Notify counties, tribes and other agencies administering child care assistance when they should end
 Service Authorizations for families who report their children are not immunized due to a conscientious objection.

To implement this policy, the department will also:

- Update program materials including previously identified forms and documents and the Child Care
 Assistance Program policy manual.
- Provide technical assistance to agencies and families related to this policy change.

IV. Legal References

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 119B

Federal Child Care and Development Fund, 45 C.F.R. § 98.41(a)(1)(i)

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory

This information is available in accessible formats for people with disabilities by calling (651) 431-3809 (voice) or by using your preferred relay service. For other information on disability rights and protections, contact the agency's ADA coordinator.



Immunizations for children receiving child care assistance

Immunizations, sometimes called vaccinations or shots, are a way to protect children against potentially harmful diseases. A child gets their first vaccine at birth, and will continue to need vaccines throughout their lives. It's important to get shots at the right ages. Shots will protect best at these ages.

Child Care Assistance Program immunization policy

Does my child need to be immunized to receive child care assistance?

Children receiving child care assistance must either be immunized, or have medical or religious reasons for not being immunized. This rule is based on federal requirements, which do not allow for a conscientious objection. A conscientious objection for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) means a parent or guardian does not want their child to be immunized due to personal beliefs.

Minnesota is now implementing this requirement. If you are a conscientious objector and/or your child is not up to date on their immunizations and you want to continue receiving child care assistance, you have three options.

- Get the child up to date on their immunizations.
- Find care with a related, legal nonlicensed provider. Related means a grandparent, aunt, uncle or sibling (if living in a separate residence).
- Request care be provided in the child's home. In-home child care must be approved by the Minnesota Department of Human Services. A lack of immunizations is not a reason for in-home child care to be approved.

How do I report my child's immunization status to the Child Care Assistance Program?

The Child Care Assistance Program application and redetermination will ask about your child's immunization status. If you do not answer, your child care assistance worker will contact you for the information. You do not need to send verification of immunizations to your child care assistance worker. Your child care provider may have already requested this information.

Immunization resources

How can I be sure my child is immunized?

The Minnesota Immunization Information Connection (MIIC) can help. MIIC is a statewide, confidential system for storing shot information all in one place. MIIC also helps your child's doctor know which shots are due and makes sure your child doesn't receive the same shot twice from different clinics. To request your child's MIIC record, call the MIIC Record Request Line at 651-201-3980. Facilities where vaccines were given, such as your primary care clinic, neighborhood clinics and local public health departments, may also have immunization records.

Where can I get free or low-cost immunizations for my child?

Children 18 years and younger who are American Indian or Alaska Native, uninsured, or enrolled in a Minnesota Health Care Program can receive free or low-cost shots from the Minnesota Vaccines for Children Program. Most local public health clinics and pediatric providers participate in this program. The vaccine is free. Clinics may charge a fee for giving the vaccine, but they cannot turn away patients if they can't afford to pay the fee. Some clinics may also charge for the office visit.

For information on how and where to get free or low-cost shots, call the Minnesota Immunization Hotline at 800-657-3970.

For more information

Who do I contact with questions?

If you have questions about immunizations, call the Minnesota Department of Health Immunization Program at 651-201-5503, toll-free at 800-657-3970 or visit health.state.mn.us/immunize.

If you have questions about your child care assistance case, contact your child care assistance worker.

Civil Rights Notice

Discrimination is against the law. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) does not discriminate on the basis of any of the following:

■ race ■ color ■ creed

■ religion

■ national origin

■ sexual orientation

■ public assistance status

■ marital status

■ age

disability

■ sex

political beliefs

Civil Rights Complaints

You have the right to file a discrimination complaint if you believe you were treated in a discriminatory way by a human services agency.

Contact DHS directly only if you have a discrimination complaint:

Civil Rights Coordinator Minnesota Department of Human Services Equal Opportunity and Access Division P.O. Box 64997 St. Paul, MN 55164-0997

651-431-3040 (voice) or use your preferred relay service

Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR)

- In Minnesota, you have the right to file a complaint with the MDHR if you believe you have been discriminated against because of any of the following:
- race
- color
- national origin
- religion
- creed

- sexual orientation
- marital status
- public assistance status
- disability

Contact the MDHR directly to file a complaint:

Minnesota Department of Human Rights Freeman Building, 625 North Robert Street St. Paul, MN 55155 651-539-1100 (voice) 800-657-3704 (toll free) 711 or 800-627-3529 (MN Relay) 651-296-9042 (fax) Info.MDHR@state.mn.us (email)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights (OCR)

You have the right to file a complaint with the OCR, a federal agency, if you believe you have been discriminated against because of any of the following:

- race
- color
- national origin

- disability
- sex
- religion

Contact the **OCR** directly to file a complaint: Director, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights 200 Independence Avenue SW, Room 509F **HHH** Building Washington, DC 20201

800-368-1019 (voice) 800-537-7697 (TDD) Complaint Portal: https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/ complaint filing cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- 1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- 2. fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- 3. email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

■ age

651-201-5503

Attention. If you need free help interpreting this document, call the above number.

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ا أر التحظين اعدة مجانية لترجمة هذه الوثيقة، اتصل على الرقم أعاله.

သတိ။ ဤစာရွက်စာတမ်းအားအခမဲ့ဘာသာပြန်ပေးခြင်း အကူအညီလိုအပ်ပါက၊ အထက်ပါဖုန်းနံပါတ်ကိုခေါ် ဆိုပါ။

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ဟ်သူဉ်ဟ်သးဘဉ်တက္။ ဖဲနမ္။်လိဉ်ဘဉ်တ၊မၤစၢၤကလီလ၊တ၊်ကကျိုးထံဝဲဇဉ်လံာ် တီလံာ်မီတခါအံၤန္ဉ်,ကိုးဘဉ်လီတဲစိနီ၊ဂ်ဴၢလ၊ထးအံၤန္ဉ်တက္။

알려드립니다. 이 문서에 대한 이해를 돕기 위해 무료로 제공되는 도움을 받으시려면 위의 전화번호로 연락하십시오.

້ ໂປຣດຊາບ. ຖ້າຫາກ ທ່ານຕ້ອງການການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອໃນການແປເອກະສານນີ້ຟຣີ, ຈົ່ງໂທຣໄປທີ່ໝາຍເລກຂ້າງເທີງນີ້.

Hubachiisa. Dokumentiin kun bilisa akka siif hiikamu gargaarsa hoo feete, lakkoobsa gubbatti kenname bibili.

Внимание: если вам нужна бесплатная помощь в устном переводе данного документа, позвоните по указанному выше телефону.

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CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Immunization status follow-up

IMPORTANT: If you are not able to complete this form online, click Print Blank Form to print the form and complete it by hand.

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If you have questions about immunizations, call the Minnesota Department of Health Immunization Program at 651-201-5503, toll-free at 800-657-3970 or visit health.state.mn.us/immunize.

If you have questions about your child care assistance case, contact your child care assistance worker.

CivilRightsNotice

Discrimination is against the law. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) does not discriminate on the basis of any of the following:

□ race□ creed□ color□ religion

■ national origin ■ sexual orientation

public assistance status

marital status

■ age

disability

sex

political beliefs

Civil Rights Complaints

You have the right to file a discrimination complaint if you believe you were treated in a discriminatory way by a human services agency.

Contact **DHS** directly only if you have a discrimination complaint:

Civil Rights Coordinator Minnesota Department of

Minnesota Department of Human Services Equal Opportunity and Access Division P.O. Box 64997

P.O. Box 64997 St. Paul, MN 55164-0997

651-431-3040 (voice) or use your preferred relay service

Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR)

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■ religion

• public assistance status

creed

disability

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Minnesota Department of Human Rights Freeman Building, 625 North Robert Street St. Paul, MN 55155 651-539-1100(voice) 800-657-3704 (toll free) 711 or 800-627-3529 (MN Relay) 651-296-9042(fax) Info.MDHR@state.mn.us (email)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights (OCR)

You have the right to file a complaint with the OCR, a federal agency, if you believe you have been discriminated against because of any of the following:

■ race

disability

color

■ sex

national origin

religion

■ age

Contact the **OCR** directly to file a complaint:

Director

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights

200 Independence Avenue SW

Room 509F HHH Building Washington, DC 20201 800-368-1019 (voice) 800-537-7697 (TDD)

Complaint Portal: https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/
portal/lobby.jsf

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or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the <u>USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form</u>, (AD-3027) found online at: <u>www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html</u>, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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