



Frequently Asked Questions

Certificate of Immunization Status (CIS) and Certificate of Exemption (COE)

Q Does a student without any exemptions need a copy of a COE in her or his file?

A No. Students must have the COE completed and filed in their record only if she or he has an exemption. If the student has more than one exemption, record all the exemptions on one COE.

Q Can I get the CIS through the Washington State Immunization Information System?

A Yes. Print the CIS, dated January 2010, through our state's immunization information system (formerly Child Profile Immunization Registry).

Q Can I get the COE through the Immunization Information System?

A No. Download the COE, dated May 2011, at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/Immunize/forms/default.htm>.

Q On the back of the CIS, I see a list of vaccine trade names. Do I need to record the trade name of the vaccine the child received on the CIS?

A No. The list of vaccine trade names was only included as a reference. This can be helpful when an immunization record has the vaccine trade name listed instead of the generic vaccine name (for example, Infanrix instead of DTaP or TriHibit instead of DTaP and Hib). With this table, parents and school personnel can identify where to record the vaccine trade name on the CIS.

Q Does a health care provider need to sign the CIS?

A Maybe. Washington State Administrative Code allows for parents/guardians to self-report vaccines. However, a health care provider must sign page one of the CIS under these two conditions:

1. If the health care provider verifies that the student has had varicella (chickenpox) disease.
2. If the health care provider documents immunity by blood test to one of the vaccine-preventable diseases.

Q Does a health care provider need to sign the COE?

A In most cases, yes. A licensed health care provider must sign the COE for any medical exemption. In addition, as of July 22, 2011, parents or guardians wanting a medical, philosophical, or religious exemption must have a provider sign a statement on the COE confirming the parent or guardian received information on the benefits and risks of immunization. A provider may also write and sign a letter saying the same thing instead of signing the COE.

Providers do not need to sign the COE if the parent claims a specific religious exemption stating their beliefs do not allow medical treatment from a health care provider. For more information on signature requirements, go to: <http://doh.wa.gov/cfh/immunize/schools/exemption-FAQ.htm>

Q All of the vaccines are listed on the CIS, not just the ones required for school attendance. Must schools have all of the vaccine records on the CIS, even if the vaccine is not required for school attendance?

A No. All the routinely recommended childhood vaccines are included on the CIS to minimize the need for major revisions to the CIS if and when new vaccines become required in our state. The vaccines marked with ♦ are required for school and child care/preschool attendance. The vaccines marked



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with ● are required for child care/preschool attendance only. Unmarked vaccines are not currently required for school or child care/preschool attendance but are recommended. Access the current Recommended Childhood Immunization Schedule at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/schedules/default.htm.

Q I find the “Verification of varicella disease history” section (bottom middle and right on the CIS) confusing. Can you explain these boxes?

A Verification of varicella disease can happen in four ways for a student:

1. **First option:** Disease Verified by Printout from Registry. This box (if applicable) will get marked automatically if you print the CIS from the immunization information system (Child Profile Immunization Registry). You cannot mark this box by hand. No other action is needed to document varicella if this box is automatically marked at printout.
2. **Second option:** Disease verified by Health Care Provider (HCP). If this box is checked, you must either mark the “Signed note from HCP attached” checkbox or “HCP signature here and print name below” checkbox. If “HCP signature here” is marked, make sure a licensed health care provider signs and prints his or her name in the spaces provided.
3. **Third option:** Disease verified by school staff from the Registry. Mark this checkbox if school staff finds verification of varicella disease in the immunization information system (Child Profile Immunization Registry) without printing the CIS. Then, school staff must initial (in the space below) that staff informed the parent that this box was checked by school staff.
4. **Fourth option:** Disease verified by parent. Parents or guardians mark this checkbox *only* if their child entered 4th to 6th grade during the 2011-2012 school year.

Q If I print the CIS from the Child Profile Immunization Registry and it marks that the student had varicella (chickenpox), does a health care provider need to sign the CIS?

A No. If the CIS printed from the Registry includes marking of the “Chickenpox disease verified by printout from Child Profile Immunization Registry” checkbox, verification has already happened by the health care provider. No signature (or further action) is needed by the health care provider.

Q Can you explain the space (in the upper right) for staff signature on the CIS?

A We included a space for staff signature (on the upper right of the CIS) because:

1. Many school nurses wanted to document that they reviewed the CIS.
2. The staff person reviewing the CIS needs to check to see if a COE is on file. Since the COE and CIS are separate documents, we added a checkbox for staff to indicate that Yes or No, a “Signed Cert. of Exemption on file?” We put the checkbox near the staff signature box to flag the staff person’s attention to look for a COE.

Q In the past, schools ordered hard copies of the CIS from the Department of Printing Fulfillment Center (warehouse). How do schools get the form now?

A In order to save funds and reduce paper waste, DOH cannot make the CIS available on demand from the Department of Printing and will no longer send the CIS to school districts, Head Start/ECEAP programs, or child care licensors. Schools and child cares must get the copies they



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need. Please also consider these options and tips:

- **Use the most current CIS, dated January 2010, for new students only.**
- Print the CIS directly from the Child Profile Immunization Registry. Health care providers or schools may print an automatically-populated CIS from the Registry.
- Use legible copies of the CIS.
 - Print it from the Department of Health Web site at www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/immunize/forms/default.htm.
 - Make copies and distribute it to parents.
 - Encourage parents to download, print, and complete the form by hand. Downloaded the CIS from the address above.

Q If an immunization record gets stapled to the CIS, does the CIS still need to be filled out?

A Yes. All children must have a completed CIS on file to attend school or child care in Washington State. An immunization record cannot replace a completed CIS.

Q How can I get copies of the COE?

A The COE is only available online. Download it at: www.doh.gov/cfh/immunize/forms/default.htm.

Q Do I need to use the most current CIS for students each year they are enrolled?

A No. It's not necessary to have a new CIS every year. We encourage schools to use the existing CIS for already enrolled students and use the newest CIS for new students only. For in-state transfer students, get the CIS from that student's former school.

Q Can I still use the old CIS for new students if I have enough?

A No. Revisions to the CIS have been significant enough to require that schools use the most updated CIS, dated January 2010.

Q How can schools get copies of the CIS and COE in other languages?

A We have translated the CIS into 20 languages and the COE into Spanish. Any school or child care can download these at: www.doh.gov/cfh/immunize/forms/default.htm.