

Previous Requirements for Personal Beliefs Exemptions (PBEs)

1. Between January 2014 and December 2015, what were the legal requirements for personal beliefs exemptions (PBE) to immunizations required for school or child care?

In the recent past, parents who wanted to exempt their child from one or more required immunizations because of their personal beliefs must have provided to the school or child care facility:

A one-page form developed by the California Department of Public Health, which must be used and contains the following requirements:

- An affidavit or letter requesting an exemption that states that the required immunization(s) are contrary to their beliefs, and
- A statement signed and dated by a health care practitioner and parent indicating that the practitioner has provided, and the parent has received, information about the benefits and risks of immunizations and the risks of vaccine-preventable diseases. These sections of the form must have been signed no more than 6 months before a student became subject to a new immunization requirement.

Most children with exemptions have received some of their required vaccines. In addition to the vaccines for which an exemption is being requested, parents must show the school or child care facility a valid record of which of the immunizations required for school or child care that their child has received. This will help schools know right away which students have and haven't been immunized when a vaccine-preventable disease may be spreading at school.

2. In 2014 and 2015, who was allowed to sign the personal beliefs exemption form or other personal beliefs exemption documentation?

The following types of health care practitioners were authorized by law to sign personal beliefs exemption documentation if they are licensed or credentialed in California:

- Medical Doctor (MD)
- Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO)
- Nurse practitioner (NP) authorized to furnish drugs
- Physician assistant (PA) authorized to administer or provide medication
- Naturopathic doctor authorized to furnish or order drugs under a physician and surgeon's supervision
- Credentialed school nurse (a *Preliminary* or *Clear* credential from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing).

The parent, legal guardian, or emancipated minor must have also signed the documentation required to obtain a personal beliefs exemption.

In contrast, only a licensed MD or DO may provide a **medical exemption** to a required immunization.

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3. Did a “Personal Beliefs Exemption to Required Immunization” (CDPH 8262) form filed before 2016 require notarization?

No, the form did not need to be notarized.

4. Are child care and school staff required to verify the credentials of an authorized health care provider or the family’s religious affiliation in the case of a previously filed religious exemption (e.g., name of church or clergy person)?

No.

Existing Documentation

5. Are children who do not provide documentation of either receipt or exemption to a required immunization for which they are due subject to exclusion from school or child care until the requirement is met?

Yes.

6. By when must previously filed PBE documentation be submitted?

- The previously filed PBE form and documentation of any required immunizations received by the student must be submitted to a school or child care facility prior to the first day of entry. Alternatively, when records and previously filed exemptions cannot be obtained from the parent, transfer students may be given up to 30 school days of attendance while waiting for their cumulative folders to arrive.
- The “Personal Beliefs Exemption to Required Immunization” (CDPH 8262) form must have been signed within 6 months prior to when a student became subject to a new immunization requirement.
- The previously filed PBE must have been filed before January 1, 2016 at a California school or child care.
- There is no grace period for submitting PBE documentation.

7. A child entering school was required to receive a vaccine. The parents submitted a PBE form for that vaccine signed more than 6 months before the student’s first day of school. Was the form valid?

PBEs were only valid when the parent and authorized health care practitioner sign Sections A. and B.I. of the CDPH 8262 form **no earlier than six months** before the first day of school. Similarly, PBEs signed in 2015 are not valid for entry into school in the fall of 2016.

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School and Child Care Documentation Recordkeeping

8. May the previously filed “Personal Beliefs Exemption to Required Immunization” (CDPH 8262) form be attached to “California School Immunization Record” (Form 286, aka “Blue Card”)?

School staff may attach the two forms, but this is not required.

9. Did the form have to be printed on blue paper?

No. Schools, child care facilities, and others may have printed the form on light blue paper to help match it with other immunization forms, but the form, wherever printed, is not required to be on blue paper.

10. If a student has had chicken pox in the past, what documentation does the parent need to provide to get an exemption?

A written statement from a physician is required for the student to be exempted for medical reasons. A documented history from a physician of chickenpox disease would be required in this situation.

Health Care Practitioner

11. Who may have signed the personal beliefs exemption form or other personal beliefs exemption documentation?

The following types of health care practitioners were previously authorized by law to sign personal beliefs exemption documentation if they are licensed or credentialed in California:

- Medical Doctor (MD)
- Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO)
- Nurse practitioner (NP) authorized to furnish drugs
- Physician assistant (PA) authorized to administer or provide medication
- Naturopathic doctor authorized to furnish or order drugs under a physician and surgeon’s supervision
- Credentialed school nurse (a *Preliminary* or *Clear* credential from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing).

The parent, legal guardian, or emancipated minor must also sign the documentation required to obtain a personal beliefs exemption.

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12. What is a Naturopathic Doctor (ND)?

A Naturopathic Doctor is a distinct category of health care practitioner. Naturopathic doctors must meet specific criteria to be licensed in California, including graduating from an approved naturopathic medical school and passing a board examination. Some, but not all licensed naturopathic doctors, are authorized to furnish or order drugs under a licensed physician and surgeon's supervision. For additional information about naturopathic doctors, please see: www.naturopathic.ca.gov.

13. Do chiropractors meet the definition of an authorized health care practitioner who could have signed the personal beliefs exemptions form?

No, unless they have also met the separate, additional qualifications of one of the categories of authorized health care practitioner [see question #11], they are not authorized health care practitioners.

14. Were pharmacists, registered nurses (who are not credentialed school nurses), or other practitioners not on the list of authorized health care practitioners able to sign the personal beliefs exemption form?

No, unless they have also met the separate, additional qualifications of one of the categories of authorized health care practitioner [see question #11], they were not authorized health care practitioners.

15. Where can I find additional information about recommended immunizations and vaccine-preventable diseases?

- Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [immunization website](#) for parents.
- [Vaccine Information Statements](#) contain useful information about immunizations and the diseases they prevent.
- Additional resources on vaccine safety are available from the:
 - ◆ [California Department of Public Health, Immunization Branch](#)
 - ◆ [California Immunization Coalition](#)
 - ◆ [Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Vaccine Education Center](#)
 - ◆ [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

16. I don't have a primary care provider. Where can I find a low cost clinic?

The California Primary Care Association has a [list of clinics](#) in your city. You may also wish to contact your [local health department](#) for additional medical resources.

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Transitional Kindergarten

17. Where can I find information about requirements for transitional kindergarten?

Click on [this link](#) for additional information on transitional kindergarten.

These FAQs were last updated on 1/19/16. See www.shotsforschool.org/laws/sb277faq/ for current information. This content is considered current until any future update is made