Schools and Childcare Providers: Medical Exemption Requirements

California Department of Public Health
Immunization Branch

April 2021
Webinar Tech Tips!

1. Listen to today’s webinar through the computer audio.

2. If you cannot connect through the computer audio, have WebEx call you.
Today's Webinar . . .

• The slides from this presentation will be available on the ShotsForSchool.org website in the next couple weeks (April 2021).
• This webinar is intended for schools and child care providers.
• During the webinar, please submit comments/questions via the Q&A panel.

1. Open the Q&A panel
2. Select All Panelists
3. Enter text, and click SEND
Webinar Topics

• What’s new with medical exemption requirements
• How to use the CAIR Medical Exemption (CAIR-ME) website
• Answers to frequently asked questions
• Medical exemption resources
What’s New with Medical Exemptions:

Effective January 1, 2021, all new medical exemptions (MEs) must be issued through the CAIR-ME web site.

Existing MEs issued before 2021 are:
• Not included in the CAIR-ME website
• Valid for continuing and transfer students until the earliest of the following:
  • The child enrolls in the next grade span (TK/K-6th grade or 7th-12th grade).
  • The expiration date specified in a temporary medical exemption.
  • Revocation of the exemption when the issuing physician has been subject to disciplinary action from the physician’s licensing entity.
What’s New with Medical Exemptions:

CAIR-ME benefits include:

✓ Allowing CDPH to monitor exemptions when:
  • Child care/school sites report immunization rates <95% or don’t report
  • Physicians submit 5 or more MEs in a calendar year
  • Review is necessary to protect public health

✓ Allowing CDPH to revoke exemptions and parents to appeal the revocation

✓ Preventing physicians from issuing MEs if they are on probation/have a pending accusation for immunization-related practices, or are deemed a public health risk

✓ Providing important communications to parents, physicians, schools/childcare facilities and health departments regarding the status of exemptions
Medical Exemptions: What’s New

CDPH will review exemptions in CAIR-ME when:

• Child care/school sites report immunization rates <95% or do not report
• Physicians submit 5 or more MEs in a calendar year
• Review is deemed necessary to protect public health

Allows CDPH to revoke exemptions issued in CAIR-ME and parents to appeal the revocation

Prevents physicians from submitting new MEs if they are on probation or have a pending accusation for immunization-related practices or are deemed a public health risk.
CAIR-ME Reviewer Team will be responsible for identifying MEs that are not consistent with the relevant standard of care or do not meet applicable criteria from:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
Overview of the Process for Issuing a ME

1. **Physician registers and creates a CAIR-ME account.**
2. **Parent registers and creates a CAIR-ME account.**
3. **Parent logs in to CAIR-ME and requests ME.**
4. **CAIR-ME generates an ME request number for the parent to give the physician.**
5. **Parent provides copy to school/childcare facility.**
6. **School/childcare facility requests access to CAIR-ME; then creates CAIR-ME account.**
7. **School/childcare facility logs in to view exemptions issued through CAIR-ME for their facility.**
8. **Physician logs in to CAIR-ME and searches by ME request number or child’s name.**
9. **Physician selects ME request and completes ME fields.**
10. **Physician issues ME and prints copy for parent.**
11. **Physician issues ME and prints copy for parent.**
12. **Parent provides copy to school/childcare facility.**

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**CDPH**

**CAIR**

**Medical Exemptions from Immunizations for School & Child Care**
Creating and Using a CAIR-ME Account
Facility receives a ME for a student issued using CAIR-ME

Staff emails medicalexemptions@cdph.ca.gov requesting access to CAIR-ME and providing the ME number, school ID & county

CAIR-ME emails staff with an access code

Staff goes to CAIR-ME and clicks register

Enters email address and verifies

Creates a password

Selects user role “School/Child care”

Creates user profile and adds facility using access code

Logs in and will see user dashboard
CAIR-ME Website Homepage: https://CAIR.cdph.ca.gov/exemptions

TIPS:
• Recommended browsers: Google Chrome OR Microsoft Edge
• Enable pop-ups for CAIR-ME site
• Website does not work with Internet Explorer
California Immunization Registry Medical Exemption Web Site User Access Agreement

CAIR Medical Exemption Web Site User Terms & Conditions

The California Immunization Registry (CAIR) is a secure, computerized online information system developed to assist medical providers and other approved agencies to track and review immunization information and to test results for individuals, assess immunization needs and remind/recall patients, avoid unnecessary or redundant immunizations, and control disease outbreaks. As part of the California Immunization Registry, the Medical Exemption (CAIR-ME) web site allows medical providers to enter medical exemptions from immunizations for school and child care and permits other approved agencies to track the status of these exemptions. Information in CAIR is only available to authorized users. Based on the access level approved, this Agreement will allow the User to access, view, add, or modify medical exemption information in CAIR-ME via the web interface.

California Health and Safety Code Section 120440 limits access to the California Immunization Registry (CAIR) to authorized users who require the information for the purpose of providing immunization services as specified.

As a condition of authorized access to the California Immunization Registry Medical Exemption web site, I agree:

- To comply with California Health and Safety Code Section 120440 regarding immunization registry use, as well as State and Federal laws and HIPAA regulations regarding maintaining the confidentiality of patient information.
- To access information in CAIR-ME only as needed to perform immunization/exemption-related activities for individuals presenting to my organization for services or enrollment for school/child care.
- To keep my user password confidential.
- To only use my own password to access CAIR-ME.
- To maintain the privacy and confidentiality of information in CAIR-ME.
- To ensure no misuse or wrongful disclosure of information in CAIR-ME.
- To report any activity that may compromise the protection and privacy of the information in CAIR-ME.
- To not communicate, publish, and/or otherwise provide or make public any information regarding persons enrolled in the registry and their immunization status, except:
  1. To patients who request their own immunization records,
  2. To individuals authorized by law to access immunization registry information, or
  3. When records are presented with no associated identifying information.

To assure appropriate usage of CAIR-ME, a permanent electronic record will be created that will log each User's access into any registry client record. Any unauthorized release of confidential information by a User may revoke the User's access to CAIR-ME.

STEP 1: Click the "I Agree to the User Agreement" button
**STEP 2:** Enter your email address and click "Send verification code." Do not close the window.

**STEP 3:** Check your email. Enter the 6-digit verification code from your email and click the "Verify Code" button.

**STEP 4:** Create a Password
- Must be a minimum of 8 characters
- Must contain at least 3 of the following:
  - Uppercase letter
  - Lowercase letter
  - Number
  - Symbol
Welcome! Select a User Role.

Your account has been created for the California Immunization Registry Medical Exemption website. Let's set up your user profile. Are you registering as a parent or guardian, a physician, or a school or child care facility user?

- Parent or Guardian
- Physician
- School or Child Care Facility

STEP 5: Click the "School or Child Care Facility" button
Step 6: Set Up Your User Profile

- Check to ensure your name, email address and phone number are correct.
- Click on "Add a School/Child Care Facility"
Step 7: Update Your Profile:

- Enter the access code you received from medicalexemptions@cdph.ca.gov
- Enter the Medical Exemption Number from the exemption you received from the parent
- Click "Submit"
Click here to update your profile and add facilities.

Click the dashboard button to return to this page.

Enter the child’s name or ME # to view an exemption.

Click the "I" button for information related to the webpage.
To search for a specific ME:
Enter the name or ME Number and click on the name when it appears to enter it in the search field. Then click "View Exemption"

To search MEs issued through CAIR-ME for your facility:
Select fields from the following:
- School/Child Care facility name and ID from drop down list
- Range of dates when MEs were issued
- MEs by status
Click the “Filter Search Results”
Search results for your facility:
- Listed at the bottom of the page
- Can be exported as an excel spreadsheet

NOTE: Report contains PHI so only download and keep what you need.
Information Displayed in CAIR-ME:

- The information on the form should match the information you see in CAIR-ME
- You won’t see the actual form displayed in CAIR-ME
- If your school/child care facility is different than what is on the form, the parent will need to log in to CAIR-ME, update the facility information and show proof of the change. You will then be able to see the ME listed for your facility.
To add school/child care facilities to your profile:

- Click on the profile symbol at the top of your dashboard
- Click the “Add a School/Child Care Facility” button
- Enter the ME # and school ID from the child’s ME
- Click “Save” and you will then be able to see MEs for the new facility
Associated School/Child Care Facility

After adding the facility, it will appear in your list and you can search/view all exemptions for the facility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School/Child Care Facility</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>School/Child Care Facility ID</th>
<th>Remove</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th R - Phoebe Hearst</td>
<td>1410 60th Street, Sacramento, CA 95819</td>
<td></td>
<td>343604900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoebe A. Hearst Elementary</td>
<td>1410 60th St., Sacramento, CA 95819-4221</td>
<td>Sacramento City Unified</td>
<td>6034227</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Medical Exemption FAQs for Schools & Child Care
### What notifications are issued by CAIR-ME?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Notification Recipient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Request for medical exemption</td>
<td>Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical exemption issued</td>
<td>Parent, issuing physician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical exemption revoked by CDPH</td>
<td>Parent, issuing physician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal submitted/appeal upheld</td>
<td>Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical exemption permanently revoked (no appeal in 30 days or appeal denied)</td>
<td>Parent, issuing physician, LHD, school/child care facility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parents and physician receive email notification if ME revoked by CDPH. Within 30 days, parents have two options.

Option 1: Parents begin to vaccinate their child in accordance with conditional admission schedule.

Option 2: Parents request appeal in CAIR-ME and child continues in attendance during appeal process.

ME permanently revoked after 30 days. Parents, school/cc, LHD, & MD notified. School follows up until all required immunizations received.

Appeal is upheld. Medical exemption status set to “Issued”. No action required by school/cc.

Appeal is denied. ME permanently revoked. Parents, school/cc, MD, & LHD notified. Child must receive vaccines in accordance with conditional admission schedule.
What new resources have been added to ShotsForSchool.org in early 2021?

- Medical exemption FAQs and other FAQs
- Updated Pre-K and K-12 Guides
- CAIR-ME physician webinar
- Revised “Letter to Parents: Immunizations Needed”
- Coming soon: Detailed Parent Instructions
Need Help?

Assistance with Medical Exemptions:

Medicalexemptions@cdph.ca.gov

IT issues with the web site:

Medicalexemptions@cdph.ca.gov
CAIR-ME Help Desk: (844) 699-4225
Medical Exemption FAQs for Schools & Child Care

Can a doctor print a copy of the medical exemption form and complete it by hand?

No. The medical exemption form can only be completed, issued, and printed from CAIR-ME. Only the issuing physician can print a medical exemption.
Medical Exemption FAQs for Schools & Child Care

Parents are enrolling their child in 7th grade. They report having a medical exemption for the child but lost it. Can I look up the exemption in CAIR-ME and print it?

The parents must provide a copy of the 2-page exemption form to the facility. Schools and child care facilities with a CAIR-ME account can log in and view the information on ME forms for their facility. Schools and child care facilities cannot print a copy of the exemption from CAIR-ME at this time.
Medical Exemption FAQs for Schools & Child Care

A child is enrolling in TK at our school and has a medical exemption issued more than 12 months prior to the enrollment date. Can I accept the exemption?

No. A medical exemption may be issued in CAIR-ME no more than 12 months before a child first enters a grade span (grade spans are birth-preschool, TK/K-6th grade and 7th-12th grade).
Medical Exemption FAQs for Schools & Child Care

Can I use my CAIR2 login to access CAIR-ME?

No. Access to CAIR-ME requires a separate login. Medical exemptions issued in CAIR-ME are not visible in CAIR2 at this time. Notes entered in CAIR2 on a patient record, such as history of chickenpox, are not a valid medical exemption.
Medical Exemption FAQs for Schools & Child Care

The parents submitted a permanent medical exemption when the child enrolled at our center at 6 months of age. How long is the exemption good for?

A medical exemption filed at a pre-kindergarten facility or school remains valid until the earliest of:

• The child enrolling in the next grade span (TK/K-6th grade, 7th-12th grade)
• The expiration date specified in a temporary medical exemption
• Revocation of the exemption because the issuing physician has been subject to disciplinary action from the physician’s licensing entity.
A child at our facility has a temporary medical exemption. What type of follow up is required?

Children with temporary medical exemptions must be followed up to confirm that either:

- they have received exempted doses by the time the exemption expires, or that
- a new exemption has been issued using CAIR-ME by the time the TME expires.
Medical Exemption FAQs for Schools & Child Care

Where can I find more information about the requirements for exemptions written prior to January 1, 2021?

Medical Exemption FAQs for Schools & Child Care

Are medical exemptions issued before January 1, 2020 by physicians who have been disciplined by their medical licensing board valid?

No, these medical exemptions are no longer valid after:

• the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year for schools, or
• September 1, 2021 for child care facilities.

To find out if a physician has been disciplined, please look up an issuing physician’s name or medical license number on the list of disciplined physicians. Additional details in the letter to child care facilities and schools.
Medical Exemption FAQs for Schools & Child Care

Does a child with an existing medical exemption in CAIR-ME need a new exemption if the child enrolls in a new school or child care facility within the same grade span?

No. While a new medical exemption does not need to be issued, the school or child care facility information listed in CAIR-ME for the exemption must be the same as the new school or child care facility. Parents must log in to CAIR-ME, update the facility information, and show proof of the change to facility. Parents can print a copy of the changes and the facility can log in to CAIR-ME to confirm.
Medical Exemption FAQs for Schools & Child Care

Can we create one account for all of the staff at our school or district?

No. Each staff member at a school, child care facility or school district that will be accessing CAIR-ME must have their own account.
Medical Exemption FAQs for Schools & Child Care

What should I do if I have questions about an exemption?

If you receive an exemption that you have questions about, you may email your concerns to medicalexemptions@cdph.ca.gov.
Medical Exemption FAQs for Schools & Child Care

Are the immunization requirements in effect during the pandemic?
Yes, the immunization requirements remain in effect for distance learners and other students.
Medical Exemption FAQs for Schools & Child Care

What were the main changes Senate Bill (SB) 277 (Pan, 2015) made to the immunization requirements for children entering child care or school?

Since January 1, 2016:

• Parents or guardians of students in any school or child-care facility, whether public or private, are no longer allowed to submit a personal beliefs exemption to a currently-required vaccine.

• Students are no longer required to have immunizations for entry if they attend:
  – a home-based private school or
  – an independent study program and do not receive classroom-based instruction.

• Students who have an individualized education program (IEP) should continue to receive all necessary services identified in their IEP regardless of their vaccination status.

• However, parents or guardians must continue to provide immunization records for these students to their schools, and schools must continue to maintain and report records of immunizations that have been received for these students.
Questions and Answers