

Certificates of Immunization: What Immunization Providers Need to Know

Green Certificate

The green Certificate of Immunization is not yet a legal requirement for entry into West Virginia schools. After the certificate becomes legally mandated for school entry, physicians will be required to certify children as compliant with the immunization requirements set forth in the WV Compulsory School Immunization Law (WV Code 16-3-4) and (WV Code 18-28-2) by completing the green certificate and affixing their signature in the designated space.

Children with a temporary medical exemption for any required immunizations (e.g., steroid therapy or chemotherapy) will need to have the Temporary Medical Exemption (VP-3 Part B) section completed on the reverse side of the green certificate. It is important to note that an expiration date is required when a temporary medical exemption is given. The expiration should be given as the date when the child is past due for a medically acceptable resumption of the immunization series, which was temporarily contraindicated. At that time, the physician will fill in the date(s) of additional vaccine administration, cross out or delete the old expiration date and add a new expiration date, if still needed. If there is any reason for which the physician still may not administer the vaccine(s), the physician may simply cross out or delete the old expiration date and fill in a new date. In any case that a new expiration date is needed, it should be provided by the physician.

A child who cannot be fully immunized for medical reasons may be issued a Permanent Medical Exemption (VP-3 Part C). If this exemption is issued, the physician must state in writing the specific medical reason(s) based upon valid clinical reasoning or evidence demonstrating the need for a permanent exemption. The required doses for which exemption(s) is being issued must be listed in VP-3 Part C with the specific medical reason(s) that immunization is contraindicated for **each** immunization that is being exempted.

Yellow Certificate

The yellow Certificate of Immunization is appropriate for use in pre-kindergarten institutions including day care centers and head start programs. Just as with K-12 school entry requirements, the immunization requirements for pre-K programs in West Virginia do not (yet) mandate that the Certificate of Immunization be used as documentation of required immunizations. The requirements for temporary or permanent medical exemptions are the same as described above for the green certificate for K-12 school enterers.

General Information

Each immunization provider who issues a Certificate of Immunization must exercise professional judgment in determining the immunization history provided by the parent/guardian. A written documentation on physician or clinic letterhead should be provided to constitute a reliable history of immunization and the parent/provider should make every effort to secure records from the providers of prior immunization when needed.

Immunization providers who participate in the West Virginia Statewide Immunization Information System (WVSIIS) can use this immunization registry to produce a Certificate of Immunization, provided that WVSIIS contains the child's complete immunization history.