



Florida Medical Freedom Guide for Parents & Citizens Your Rights in Florida: What You Need to Know

As a Florida parent or citizen, you have choices when it comes to vaccinations for yourself and your children. This guide explains your rights, the exemption process, and helpful additional resources.

I. Vaccination Exemption Types: An Overview¹

- Medical Exemption: When a licensed physician determines a vaccine may be medically harmful.
- Religious Exemption: When vaccination conflicts with your, religious beliefs.
- Full Vaccination: When one follows the state-required immunization schedule.

Note: Florida law provides only medical and religious exemptions for school and child-care immunization requirements. There is no separate philosophical or conscientious exemption.

II. Medical Exemptions in Florida²

A. When to Use This Option

- You may request a medical exemption if a licensed physician determines that a vaccine may pose a medical risk to your child.

B. Requirements

According to [Florida Law](#), a medical exemption must:

- Be documented on the state's official Florida Certification Immunization ([Form DH 680](#)).

¹National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). (2026). [State Non-Medical Exemptions From School Immunization Requirements](#).

²Florida Department of Health. [Immunization Exemptions](#); [Florida Statute §1003.22](#); and [Fla. Admin. Code r. 64D-3.046](#).

- Be issued by a licensed Florida physician, advanced practice registered nurse (APRN), or county health department.
- Clearly state whether the exemption is temporary (with an expiration date) or permanent and explain the medical basis.
- Schools and child-care facilities are required to accept a valid medical exemption documented on [Form DH 680](#).

Important Note: Children with exemptions may be excluded from school or child-care during an outbreak or public health emergency.

III. Religious Exemptions in Florida³

A. When to Use This Option

- You may request a religious exemption if vaccination conflicts with your religious beliefs.

B. Florida Law

- Clearly state whether the exemption is temporary (with an expiration date) or permanent and explain the medical basis.
- Schools and child-care facilities are required to accept a valid medical exemption documented on [Form DH 680](#).
- Florida requires parents or guardians to obtain the Religious Exemption From Immunization ([Form DH 681](#)) issued exclusively by a county health department.
- The form is issued when immunizations conflict with the religious tenets or practices of the child's parent or guardian.
- No membership in an organized religion is required.
- The exemption does not expire and does not need to be renewed.
- The county health department issues Form DH 681 upon request. This exemption is administrative in nature and is not subject to evaluation of religious doctrine, church membership, theological consistency, or sincerity of belief.

³Florida Health and Human Services. [Florida Immunization Exemptions](#).

C. Step-by-Step Process

- 1) Contact or visit your local county health department (Florida Department of Health) to request the exemption.
- 2) Appear in person and bring your child's birth certificate and your photo ID as the parent/guardian.
- 3) Sign the official Form DH 681 affirming that the required immunizations conflict with your religious tenets or practices.
- 4) Receive the completed Form DH 681 on the spot.
- 5) Submit the original Form DH 681 to your child's school or child-care provider prior to entry, attendance, or transfer.
- 6) County health departments do not investigate the validity, sincerity, or legitimacy of a parent's religious beliefs. The form is issued once the required attestation is completed.

Important Note: During declared public health emergencies, epidemics, or threatened epidemics involving a disease for which immunization is required by the Florida Department of Health, vaccination requirements may be enforced for school or child-care attendance. Under Florida law, children who are not immunized, including those with medical or religious exemptions, may be excluded from school or child-care until they are immunized (unless they provide valid evidence of prior disease) or until the public health threat no longer poses a significant danger.

IV. **School Immunization Requirements by Grade Level⁴**

Florida requires students to provide proof of immunization or a valid exemption. Key vaccine requirements include:

- Childcare & Pre-K
 - DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)
 - Polio (IPV)
 - Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type b)
 - Pneumococcal Conjugate (PCV)
 - MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
 - Hepatitis B

⁴Florida Health and Human Services. [Requirements: Requirements by Grade-Level.](#)

- Varicella (or documented history of chickenpox)
- Kindergarten through 6th Grade
 - DTaP/DTP (4-5 Doses)
 - Polio (IPV) (3-5 Doses)
 - MMR (2 Doses)
 - Pneumococcal Conjugate (PCV)
 - Hepatitis B (3 Doses)
 - Varicella (or documented history of chickenpox)
- 7th Grade
 - All of the Above, plus
 - Tdap booster (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis)
- College Students
 - Florida does not have a statewide college vaccine mandate. Colleges and universities set their own immunization requirements. These can apply to specific programs, housing, athletics, or clinical placements such as nursing or medical rotations.
- Homeschool & Private Schools
 - Students in home education programs are not required to submit immunization records.
 - However, homeschooled students participating in public school extracurricular activities, athletics, or interscholastic programs must meet the same immunization requirements as enrolled public-school students.

V. Constitutional, Federal, and Employment Protections

A. Constitutional Protections

- The [First Amendment](#) guarantees your right to religious exercise. Courts have consistently held that government policies cannot favor secular motivations over religious ones.

B. Federal Civil Rights & Employment Protections

- Under [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act](#), employers must consider requests for religious accommodation related to vaccination.

- An employer must grant an accommodation unless doing so would create an undue hardship on the business.
- The [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission \(EEOC\)](#) enforces these protections.

C. State Specific Protection

- Florida is an employment-at-will state, which means that the employee or the employer can terminate the employment for almost any reason that is not “wrongful.” There will be little state protection for employees seeking accommodation for religious beliefs in at-will states.

D. Florida Workplace Vaccine Requirements

- Under [Florida Statute 381.00317](#), when a private employer requires COVID-19 vaccination, employees must be given the option to opt out if they qualify under certain categories. These include medical reasons, including pregnancy or expected pregnancy, religious reasons, documented immunity, agreement to regular testing, or agreement to use employer provided PPE.
- If an employee provides documentation that fits one of these categories, the employer must allow the exemption under Florida law.
- If the employee chooses the testing option, the employer is responsible for paying for all required testing.

E. Key Legal Principles

- Your belief must be sincerely held and religious in nature.
- You may need to explain how your beliefs conflict with a vaccination requirement.
- Employers must evaluate each request individually; blanket or automatic denials are not permitted.
- An employer may deny a request only if it can demonstrate undue hardship.

VI. Tips for Parents & Citizens

A. Documentation

- Keep copies (digital and printed) of all exemption forms (Form DH 680 and/or Form DH 681).
- Photograph or scan forms before submitting them.
- Ask the school for a dated receipt or confirmation of submission.

B. Working With Schools

- Present your documentation clearly and respectfully.
- Understand that some staff may be unfamiliar with exemption rules; you may need to reference Florida Department of Health guidance.
- If necessary, request to speak with an administrator.

C. Obtaining Exception Form

- Medical exemptions are completed by a licensed physician, APRN, or county health department on Form DH 680.
- Religious exemptions (Form DH 681) must be obtained in person at your local county health department.

D. Reporting Issues

- If you experience any adverse effects from vaccines, report to [VAERS \(Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System\)](#). Document any pressure, coercion, or discrimination related to vaccine status.

VII. Frequently Asked Questions⁵

1. Can I pick and choose which vaccines to exempt?

Yes. You may exempt your child from specific vaccines while receiving others. You are not required to take an “all or nothing” approach.

2. Do I need to belong to a specific religion to claim a religious exemption?

No. Florida law does not require membership in an organized religion. You must have a sincerely held religious belief that conflicts with immunization.

⁵This document is for general education only and not legal or medical advice. Always consult a qualified healthcare provider for medical decisions and a licensed attorney for legal questions. Verify all laws and agency policies before acting.

3. How long does the exemption process take?

Religious exemptions are typically issued on the same day if you visit your local county health department with proper identification and your child's birth certificate. For medical exemptions, processing time varies and depends on your physician's availability.

4. Can schools reject my exemption?

No. Schools and child-care facilities must accept valid, properly completed Form DH 680 (medical) or Form DH 681 (religious). If you encounter difficulties, contact the Florida Department of Health or seek legal assistance.

5. What happens if we move to another school in Florida?

Your exemption generally transfers with your child's school records. Provide a copy of the valid Forms to the new school.

6. Can my child be provisionally enrolled?

Yes. Florida allows a temporary 30-school-day period for new or transfer students while completing immunization records or exemption forms.

VIII. Helpful Resources & Websites⁶

- **Official Florida Resources**

- [Florida Department of Health. Immunization Requirements.](#)
- [Florida Department of Health. Child Immunizations.](#)
- [Florida Certification of Immunization. Department of Health Form DH 680 Immunization Record.](#)
- [Florida Statute 381.00317. 381.00317 Private employer COVID-19 vaccination mandates prohibited.](#)
- [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Religious Accommodation Guidance.](#)

- **Advocacy Organizations**

- [National Vaccine Information Center](#)
- [Children's Health Defense](#)
- [The Network for Public Health Law](#)
- [Health Freedom Florida](#)

⁶The inclusion of outside resources should not imply endorsement and instead are exclusively provided for informational purposes.

- [America's Frontline Doctors](#)
- [The Healthy American](#)
- [Stand For Health Freedom](#)
- **Federal Government Resources**
 - [CDC Vaccine Information](#)
 - [VAERS](#)
 - [Family and Education Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\) and Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment \(PPRA\)](#)
 - [U.S. Department of Education. Protecting Student Privacy.](#)