

# Protecting Michigan Children & Educating Parents: Strengthening Michigan's Immunization Requirements

## Protect Our Children

### Let's keep them healthy.

Childhood immunizations protect our kids from dangerous infectious diseases like measles, mumps, rubella and more.

Because of their developing immune systems and exposure in settings like school and daycare, children and infants are especially vulnerable to vaccine-preventable diseases.

## Protect Michigan

### Time to reduce outbreaks.

Michigan's high non-medical exemption rates mean the state could risk outbreaks in diseases like diphtheria, measles, mumps, pertussis, polio, rubella, smallpox and more.

In just one Traverse City school this fall, over **150 children** have contracted pertussis. The outbreak was attributable to the fact that 17% of the school's kindergartners were not immunized --more than **3 times the state average.**

# Educate Parents

## Knowledge is power.

On December 11, 2014, the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules approved a change to Michigan's childhood immunization standards.

The change requires parents of school-aged children who seek a "philosophical exemption" to immunization requirements to have their waiver certified by their local health department.

While individuals may still choose and obtain a waiver for any reason, the new rule will lead to better education about the safety and effectiveness of immunizations, encouraging informed decisions.

## By the Numbers

### Michigan parents are among the most likely in the nation to avoid getting their children immunized.

Michigan has the **4th** highest non-medical exemption rate in the nation, with **5.3%** of parents simply choosing not to immunize their children.

Michigan is **one of only 4** states in the nation with a non-medical exemption rate over **5%**. Only Idaho, Vermont and Oregon have higher non-medical exemption rates.

Waiver rates vary widely by county in Michigan from **1.3% - 30.7%**.

**10** counties had policies in place last year where informed consent was used as a tool to educate individuals. The average exemption rate for those counties was **3.3%**.

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