

Launch of www.ShotsForSchool.org Website

Announcing the launch of [ShotsForSchool.org](http://www.ShotsForSchool.org), your one-stop site for information on California school immunization laws, with special attention to the 2011 implementation of AB 354, the pertussis vaccination requirement for all 7th through 12th graders.

Featured for on-demand viewing! A recent webinar from CDPH and CDE with essential information about California's new immunization law.

Time is short to get incoming 7th through 12th graders vaccinated before next Fall. *If you are a school clerk, school nurse, or other school official assisting with student health records in a school, this program will help you prepare!*

[VIEW WEBINAR \(PC format\)](#) or [VIEW WEBINAR \(Mac format\)](#)

[Download FAQs](#), based on questions from your colleagues.

[Download PPT slides](#)

FAQs of the Day:

A) What exemptions are available under California law?

Many schools have recently received an email from the private 'National Vaccine Information Center' regarding its interpretation of procedures for immunization requirement exemptions in California. In contrast, here is authoritative information from the California Department of Public Health.

California law describes two exemptions to student immunization requirements:

- **Personal beliefs exemptions:** Parents or guardians may request an exemption for the children from immunization requirements if the immunization is contrary to their personal beliefs.

Parents or guardians seeking this exemption are directed to the student's school to review the Tdap requirement personal beliefs affidavit form (*available for schools via local public health departments in February 2010*), which briefly describes the consequences of declining immunization for the student and community. The parent or guardian requesting an exemption needs to sign the affidavit in the presence of school staff for verification; the form shouldn't be brought home by the student or mailed home for signing.

Parents or guardians

- **may request a personal beliefs exemption for the Tdap requirement even if their children have received other vaccines in the past.**

- **need to review and sign the Tdap personal belief exemption affidavit to verify their current request even if they requested exemptions to immunizations required for Kindergarten.**
- **Medical exemptions:** Physicians may grant in writing an exemption for students for whom immunizations are not medically indicated, which occurs infrequently.

California law does not allow students to receive exemptions simply because of convenience, such as when the immunization record is misplaced or time is running out to meet the requirement.

A student with a personal beliefs or medical exemption may be enrolled but cannot physically attend classes until the completed exemption statement has been filed with the student's school.

Schools should maintain an up-to-date list of students with exemptions, so they can be excluded quickly if an outbreak occurs.

B) What should schools do with the previous copies of Blue Cards when retaining a new copy printed in the California Immunization Registry (CAIR) for the Tdap requirement?

Compare the records. If all information on previous copies of the Blue Card is found on the new CAIR Blue Card, old copies may be destroyed. If not, or if you are unsure, keep the old copies as well in the permanent record.