

Policy Guide 3231INS
Standards for Issuing and Filing Certificates of Immunization
[Form 3231 (Rev. December 2017)]
For Georgia Facilities and Schools

Who is required to have the Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231)?

Children attending any childcare facility, pre-kindergarten, Head Start program, nursery, or school are required to have this form on file. This includes public and private operations and all enterprises, educational programs and institutions involved in the care, supervision or instruction of children. Certificates are required for all children through grade 12.

Who may issue certificates?

Only a **licensed Georgia physician, Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, Physician Assistant** or qualified employee of a local Board of Health or the State Immunization Office may issue this certificate. The physician, **APRN, PA** or health department is responsible for interpretation of and compliance with the requirements set forth in Chapter 511-2-2 of the *Rules of the Department of Public Health*.

How to file and maintain the certificates:

1. **A valid certificate for all children** must have the following information legibly completed:
 - Child's Name
 - Birth date
 - Name, address, and phone number of a Physician or Health Department
 - Certified by Signature
 - Date of Issue
 - Dates (month, date and year) in the vaccine history (dates vaccines administered) section and/or 4-digit year in the "diagnosed", "serology +", "history" or "medical exemption" boxes.
2. **A valid certificate for children under 4 years of age must have:**
 - All of the information in item #1 and a "Date of Expiration" noted in the appropriate space.
3. **A valid certificate for a child age 4 through 10 years must have:**
 - All of the information in item #1
 - If **complete** for "K through 6th grade" requirements an "X" will be displayed in the "Complete for K through 6th Grade" box with no date of expiration
 - If **not** complete for K through 6th grade requirements an expiration date will display only.
4. **A valid certificate for a child age 10 years and older must have:**
 - All of the information in item #1
 - If **not** complete for "K through 6th grade" requirements an expiration date will display only
 - If **complete** for "K through 6th grade" requirements an "X" will display in the "Complete for K through 6th Grade" box with an expiration date
 - If **complete** for "7th grade requirements" an "X" will display in both the "Complete for K through 6th Grade" and "Complete for 7th Grade or higher" box. Valid certificates marked "Complete for 7th Grade or higher" do not expire.
5. **The certificate becomes invalid on the expiration date indicated. If a current certificate has not been submitted within 30 days after the expiration date, the child must be excluded from attendance until a current certificate is obtained.**
6. A school/facility official is responsible for keeping track of certificates with expiration dates and for notifying a parent/guardian of an upcoming expiration date and requesting that an up-to-date certificate be submitted.
7. A valid certificate of immunization must be kept on file by the school/facility and be available for inspection by health officials. The school/facility is **not** responsible for the accuracy of immunization information filled in by the certifying authority.
8. If a child attends more than one school/facility, a photocopy of this form must be on file at the second school/facility.
9. If a child leaves **or** transfers to another school/facility, this certificate should be given to a parent/guardian **or** sent to the new school/facility.
10. Any school/facility official who does not enforce the requirements and any parent/guardian who intentionally does not comply with the requirements shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. See *Official Code of Georgia Annotated, § 20-2-771(h)*

Instructions for completing certificates:

1. **ALL** dates **must** include month, day and year.
2. The “Child’s Name” and “Birthdate” **must** be filled in.
3. The “**Date of Expiration**” is the date the child’s next immunization is due **or** the date a review of the medical exemption is due.
 - This date **must** be filled in when a child is in the process of receiving the required number of vaccine doses appropriate for age as set forth in *Policy Guide 3231REQ, Vaccine Requirements for Attending Facilities and Schools in Georgia*.
 - The date filled in **is** the date a review of the medical exemption for a vaccine is due.
 - The “Date of Expiration” **must** be filled in if neither “Complete for School Attendance” box is marked or if there is an “X” in the “Complete for K through 6th Grade” box and the child is 10 years or older and has **not** met the vaccine requirements for seventh grade.
4. Put an “X” in the “Complete for K through 6th Grade” box **if** a child who is **four years of age or older** has completed all the immunization requirements for first time attendance in a **school** in Georgia as set forth in *Policy Guide 3231REQ, Vaccine Requirements for Attending Facilities and Schools in Georgia*. Note that requirements for kindergarten (age 5 years) **include** doses indicated by the ACIP for 4-6 years. The “Complete for K through 6th Grade” box **must** be filled in with an “X”.
5. Put an “X” in the “Complete For 7th Grade or higher” box and the “Complete for K through 6th Grade” box if a child born on or after January 1, 2002 entering or transferring into 7th grade and any “new entrant” 8th through 12th grade has met all requirements for K through 6th grade and have proof of an adolescent pertussis (whooping cough) booster vaccination (called “Tdap”) and an adolescent meningococcal vaccination (MCV4) as set forth in *Policy Guide 3231 REQ, Vaccine Requirements for Attending Facilities and Schools in Georgia*. Valid certificates marked “Complete for 7th Grade or higher” do not expire.
6. The Georgia Department of Public Health establishes the requirements for immunization for school/facility attendance in accord with the *Recommended Childhood Immunization Schedule, United States*, developed and approved annually by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP). See *Policy Guide 3231REQ Vaccine Requirements for Attending Facilities and Schools in Georgia* for requirements for doses for age, minimum ages, and minimum intervals between doses for children who are behind schedule.
7. Hib and PCV13 vaccine are not required on or after the 5th birthday. The number of doses for both vaccines is dependent on age at first dose and/or the brand(s) of vaccine administered. If the “Complete for K through 6th Grade” box is marked for a child who **is** 4 years of age, dates for Hib and PCV13 vaccine must be filled in.
8. The Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella vaccine requirements may be waived with serologic proof of immunity. Filling in a 4-digit year is required for each requirement waived.
9. For varicella vaccine, the dates for each dose given must be entered **or** the 4-digit year in **one** of the columns indicating “diagnosed” of disease, “serology” (serologic evidence of immunity), “history” of disease or “medical exemption” must be filled in. The Varicella vaccine requirement may be waived with: (a) a physician’s diagnosis of disease; or (b) a health care provider’s interpretation that a parent/guardian description of chickenpox disease history is indicative of past infection. Filling in a 4-digit year for the year of infection is required.
10. In the interest of having a more complete record, providers are requested to fill in dates of Recommended Vaccines the child has received, but are not required to do so.
11. The certificate is **not** valid without a printed, typed or stamped name, address, and phone number of the certifying authority in the certification section in the lower right corner. There **must** be a written or stamped licensed physician’s signature, **APRN, PA** or a signature of a qualified employee of a local Board of Health or State Immunization Office on the “Certified by” signature line. **A stamp of a physician, APRN, or PA’s signature with official title is permissible when cosigned by an office staff.**
12. The “Date of Issue” is the date a child’s immunization status was reviewed and the certificate was issued. It **must** be filled in.
13. During times when vaccine shortages may necessitate deferral of doses of specific vaccines, the GA Immunization Program will follow the recommendations made by the ACIP and will send providers the interim plans for issuing certificates based on these temporary recommendations.

Exemptions:

The Official Code of Georgia provides for only two types of exemptions from immunization requirements:

1. **Medical:** Medical exemption for a vaccine should be filled in only when there is a physical disability or condition that contraindicates immunization for that particular vaccine. There must be an annual review of medical exemptions, and certificates must be reissued with or without indication of exemption.
O.C.G.A. §20-2-771(d)
2. **Religious:** For a child to be exempt from immunizations on religious grounds, the parent or guardian must furnish the school/facility with a notarized **Affidavit of Religious Objection to Immunization (DPH Form 2208)**. The school/facility must keep the affidavit on file and available for inspection by health officials in lieu of the Georgia Immunization Certificate (Form 3231). The affidavit does not expire. *O.C.G.A. §20-2-771(e)*
Religious exemption paperwork on file prior to August 2015 is acceptable and does not need to be replaced.

Certificate ordering and computer-generated facsimiles:

1. Certificates of Immunization (Form 3231) can be downloaded from the Georgia Registry of Immunization Transactions and Services website at <https://dph.georgia.gov/georgia-immunization-registry-grits>. To gain access to GRITS and enrollment information email the GRITS Help Desk at dph-immreg@dph.ga.gov.
2. Computerized versions of the Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231) must contain all the information included in the current form provided by the Georgia Department of Public Health and must be approved by the Georgia Immunization Office prior to use. References: Official Code of Georgia Annotated, § 20-2-771 and Rules of the **Department of Public Health**, Chapter 511-2-2.