# Western Australian Immunisation Requirements

**Guidelines for persons in charge of child care services, community kindergartens and schools** 



#### **Produced by**

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Sections of these Guidelines may be removed and replaced with updated information as necessary.

#### **Disclaimer**

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# **Definitions**

A list of definitions is included below to help child care services, community kindergartens and schools understand key terms used in these Guidelines.

#### **Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)**

The national register under the Australian Immunisation Register Act 2015 that records all vaccines given to all people in Australia. Recognised immunisation providers can send immunisation information to the AIR.

#### **AIR immunisation history statement**

A statement from the AIR produced for each person that indicates their immunisation status (up-to-date, or not up-to-date), all immunisations received, any immunisations due or overdue, whether the person is on a catch-up schedule, and if a valid medical exemption is recorded.

#### **Child care services**

An education and care service as defined in the Education and Care Services National Law (Western Australia) s.5(1), or a child care service as defined in the Child Care Services Act 2007 s.4.

- Includes: long day care and family day care services.
- **Does not include:** occasional care, mobile services or any outside schools hours care service or school holiday services etc.

#### **Community kindergarten**

A kindergarten registered under the School Education Act 1999 that is supported by the Department of Education, and is not located at a school, but is linked to a school. The principal of the linked school is responsible for the enrolment process.

#### **Enrolment**

The formal process of offering and accepting a place for a child in a specific child care service, community kindergarten or school and knowing when the child will start to attend. A child is enrolled when a parent/guardian provides the required documentation (e.g. birth certificate, proof of address, AIR immunisation history statement) and the enrolment form is completed, in some cases, with payment of a deposit. Applying for a place or being on a waitlist for a place means the child is not yet enrolled at the child care service, community kindergarten or school.

#### **Recognised immunisation provider**

A recognised vaccination provider as defined in the Australian Immunisation Register Act 2015. For example, this is a qualified health provider who can administer immunisations and record them on the AIR in the following settings (not exclusive to): general practice (GPs), local council immunisation services, Aboriginal Medical Services (AMSs), hospitals, school based immunisation programs, travel medicine clinics and community health centres.

#### **Kindergarten programs**

Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten are non-compulsory education programs, primarily provided through community kindergartens, schools, and some child care services.

#### **Public health unit (PHU)**

Public health unit staff are responsible for preventing, identifying, and minimising public health risks to the community, including working with early childhood services to manage disease outbreaks.

#### **School**

A government school (public), or a non-government school, as defined in the School Education Act 1999.

# Quick guide to WA's immunisation requirements

#### What you need to do

#### 1. Request, obtain, and assess an immunisation certificate for each child applying to enrol

Only acceptable documentation:

- Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) immunisation history statement, no more than two months old
- a valid immunisation certificate issued or declared by the Chief Health Officer.

#### 2. For child care service, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten enrolments, ensure each child meets immunisation requirements for enrolment

Only enrol a child:

- whose AIR immunisation history statement is up-to-date,
- who is following an approved catch-up schedule as indicated on the child's AIR immunisation history statement:
- who has a valid immunisation certificate issued or declared by the Chief Health Officer, or
- if you are satisfied the child is exempt because of particular family circumstances.

#### 3. Report under-vaccinated children

When directed to, report any child who is enrolled in a child care service, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten with an immunisation status that is not up-to-date. This includes where:

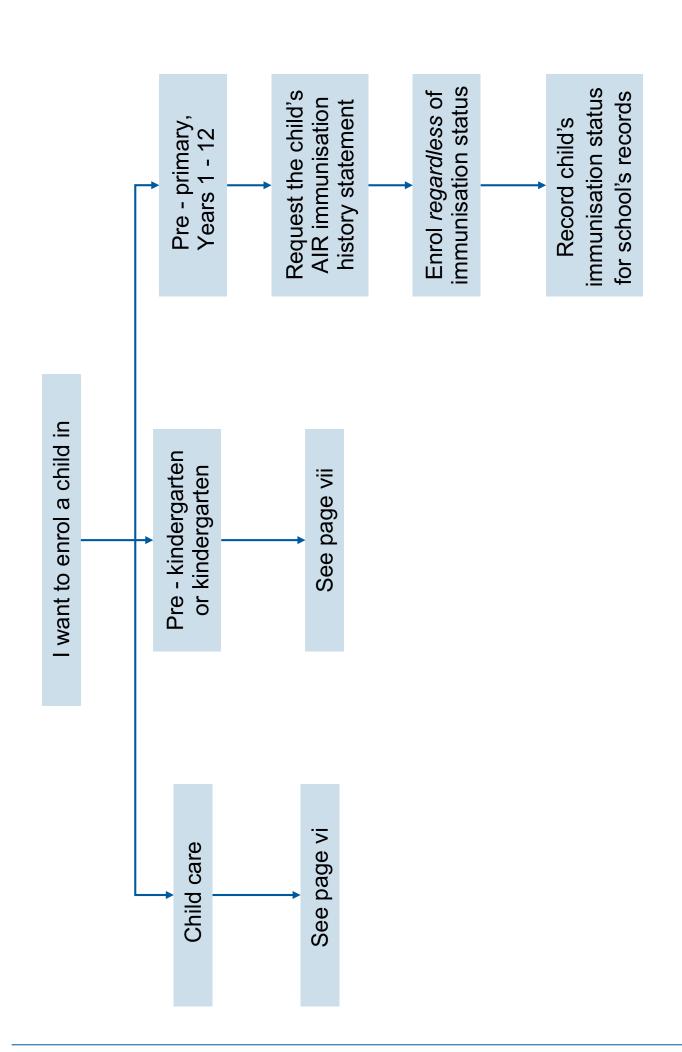
- the child has an immunisation certificate issued or declared by the Chief Health Officer;
- the child is following a catch-up schedule for missing vaccinations, as prescribed by the regulations; and
- the child is exempt because of particular family circumstances.

#### 4. Where required, provide parents/guardians with relevant information

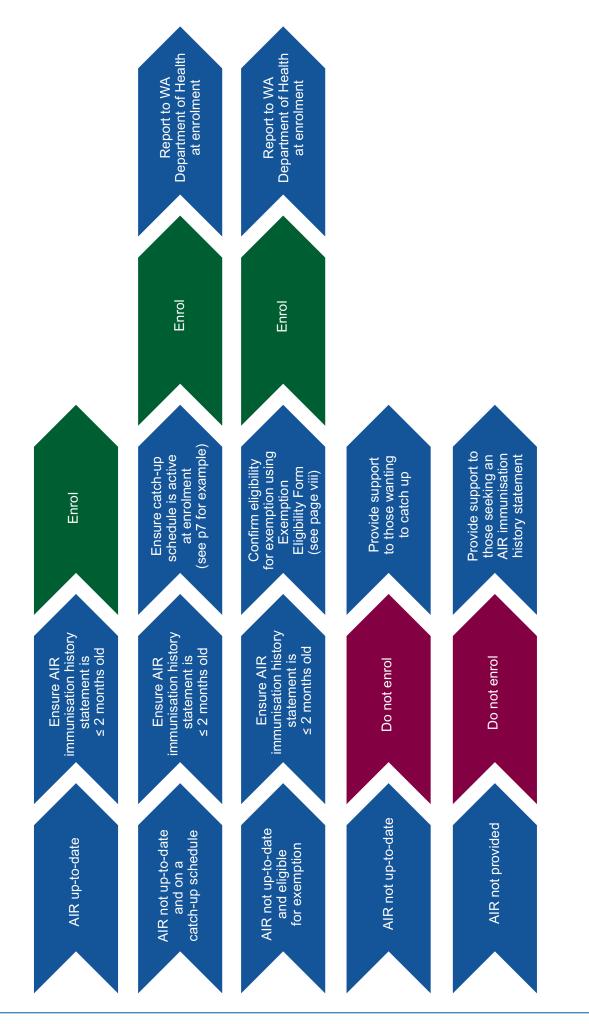
- immunisation requirements for enrolment
- for resources, see <u>Sections 7</u> and <u>9</u>.

#### What you don't need to do

- You do not need to know the National Immunisation Program Childhood Immunisation Schedule.
- You do not need to provide medical or immunisation advice to parents/guardians.
- You do not need to stop children already enrolled from attending your service.
- You do not need to maintain an ongoing record of each enrolled child's immunisation status. This is highly desirable to enable you to manage infectious disease exposures but not required by legislation, which only applies at the point of enrolment. However, under the legislation, the Chief Medical Officer can, at any time in the future, ask for the immunisation status of children enrolled at your service.

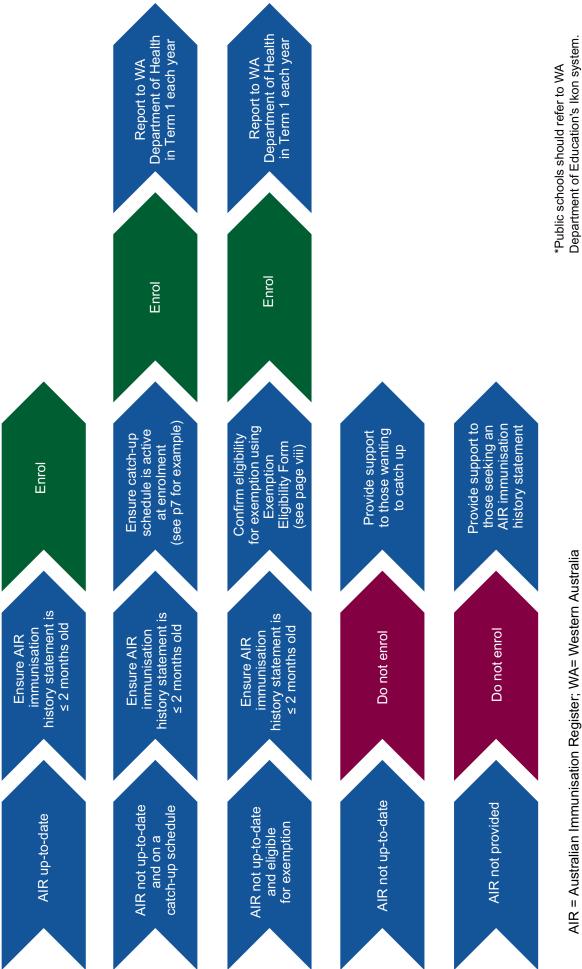


# Flowchart for child care services



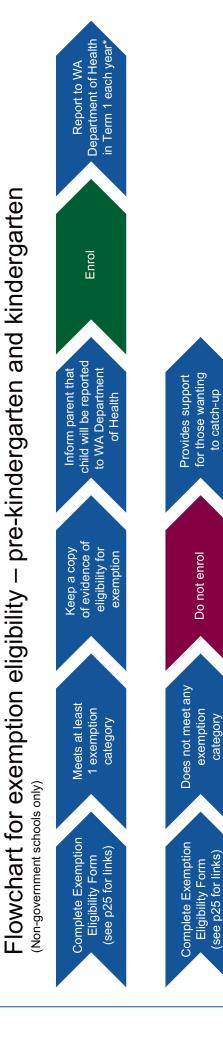
AIR = Australian Immunisation Register; WA= Western Australia

# Flowchart for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten (non-government schools only)\*



Department of Education's Ikon system.

# Department of Health Report to WA at enrolment Enrol Flowchart for exemption eligibility – child care services child will be reported to WA Department Inform parent that for those wanting Provides support to catch-up of Health Keep a copy of evidence of Do not enrol eligibility for exemption Does not meet any Meets at least 1 exemption exemption category category Complete Exemption Complete Exemption (see p25 for links) (see p25 for links) Eligibility Form **Eligibility Form**



will compile reports on behalf of public schools. \*WA Department of Education

# 1. Introduction

The Western Australian Government has amended the *Public Health Act 2016* (WA) and the *School Education* Act 1999 (WA) to introduce immunisation requirements for enrolment into child care services, community kindergartens and schools.

These changes will assist to better protect young and vulnerable children and the wider community in Western Australia (WA) from vaccine-preventable diseases.

These Guidelines have been developed to support persons in charge of child care services, community kindergartens and schools to comply with their legal responsibilities in relation to the immunisation status of children.

#### 1.1 Overview of WA's immunisation requirements

Under the Public Health Act 2016 (WA) and the School Education Act 1999 (WA), persons in charge of child care services, community kindergartens and schools have legal responsibilities in relation to the immunisation status of children, as outlined below.

#### For child care services, community kindergartens and schools

- Collect immunisation status information at the time of a child's enrolment in child care services, community kindergartens and schools.
- Report the immunisation status of enrolled children to the Chief Health Officer, when directed to do so.
- **Report a child** who has or is reasonably suspected to have contracted a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease to the Chief Health Officer, when directed to do so.
- Not permit a child to attend or participate in an educational programme of the child care service, community kindergarten or school, if the child has not been immunised against a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease, when directed to do so by the Chief Health Officer.
- Close whole or part of the child care service, community kindergarten or school in order to limit or prevent the spread of a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease, when directed to do so by the Chief Health Officer.

#### Additional legal requirement for child care services, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, only

#### Effective 22 July 2019

- Only enrol a child:
  - whose AIR immunisation history statement is dated no more than two months old and is up-to-date; or
  - who is following an approved catch-up schedule as indicated on the child's AIR immunisation statement that is dated no more than two months old and with a catch-up schedule that is active at enrolment; or
  - who has a valid immunisation certificate issued or declared by the Chief Health Officer; or
  - if you are satisfied the child is exempt because of particular family circumstances.

# 2. Collect immunisation status of all children

At enrolment, the parent/guardian of the child is required to give the immunisation status of the child to the person in charge of the child care service, community kindergarten or school.

The only acceptable documentation is:

- an AIR immunisation history statement no more than two months old; or
- a valid immunisation certificate issued or declared by the Chief Health Officer.

Persons in charge of child care services, community kindergartens and schools must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the parent/guardian for the child provides the immunisation status of the child. Penalty \$1,000.

This requirement applies whenever a child enrols into:

- a child care service (long day care and family day care, only)
- a pre-kindergarten or kindergarten program
- pre-primary
- a secondary school
- a new child care service, community kindergarten or school.

#### 2.1 AIR immunisation history statement

A child's current AIR immunisation history statement can be accessed at any time by the parent/guardian through:

- MyGov, by logging in to their Medicare online account
- Medicare Express Plus App, by logging into their Medicare account
- Visiting a Medicare or Centrelink office, or
- Calling the AIR General Enquiries Line on 1800 653 809 to request a copy to be posted.

Individuals that are not registered with Medicare can still have an AIR record. An immunisation provider is able to assist in registering a child on AIR, as well as commence a child on a catch-up schedule for any missing vaccinations.

If parents/guardians have had their child fully vaccinated but the child's AIR immunisation history statement is not up-to-date, they are advised to contact their immunisation provider and ask them to update the information on the AIR.

Alternatively, parents/guardians can email a photo of their child's vaccination records along with their child's Medicare number and date of birth to their local public health unit (Healthy WA) and the child's AIR records will be updated accordingly.

If any details such as name or date of birth are incorrect on the AIR, or if the family has recently changed their address, please call the Medicare general enquiries line anytime on 132 011 and ask to have these updated.

#### **Approved catch-up schedules**

Children following an approved catch-up schedule must provide an AIR immunisation history statement dated no more than two months old and with a catch-up schedule that is active at enrolment. Immunisation providers need to indicate on the child's online AIR record when they have commenced the child on a catch-up schedule for any overdue vaccines.

If the child's AIR immunisation history statement does not indicate they have commenced an approved catchup schedule, parents/guardians are advised to contact their immunisation provider and ask them to update the information on the child's AIR record.

#### Vaccine exemption due to medical reasons or natural immunity

If a child cannot receive one or more vaccines for certain medical reasons or the child has natural immunity, parents need to contact their GP in the first instance. If a vaccine exemption is warranted, the medical practitioner needs to advise the AIR online or by completing and submitting the AIR – Immunisation Medical Exemption Form.

Children who have a valid medical exemption to vaccination or natural immunity will have an immunisation status that is recorded as up-to-date on their AIR immunisation history statement.

#### **Example AIR immunisation history statement – up-to-date**



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#### Immunisation history statement

11 July 2019 As at:

BERNARD O LONG For:

Date of birth: 16 January 2016

up to date Immunisation status:

Child is up-to-date. Child meets immunisation requirements for enrolment and can be enrolled.

Schedule	Date given	Immunisation	Brand name given
2 months	16 Mar 2016	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hib Hepatitis B P Pneumococcal Rotavirus	Prevenar 13 Rotarix
4 months	16 May 2016	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hib Hepatitis B P Pneumococcal Rotavirus	Polio Infanrix Hexa Prevenar 13 Rotarix
6 months	16 Jul 2016	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hib Hepatitis B P Pneumococcal	Polio Infanrix Hexa Prevenar 13
12 months	16 Jan 2017	Measles Mumps Rubella Hib Meningococcal C	MMR II Meni <mark>t</mark> orix
18 months	16 Jul 2017	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Measles Mumps Rubella Varicella	Infanrix Priorix-Tetra
Other	03 Sep 2016 01 Apr 2018	Influenza Influenza Influenza Immunisations are listed he	Influenza Influvac Tetra
Next immu	nisation/s due		Date due
Polio			16 Jan 2020

#### Example AIR immunisation history statement - up-to-date and fully immunised



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#### Immunisation history statement

11 July 2019 As at:

POM CHEU AJAY For:

01 February 2016 ..... Date of birth:

up to date Immunisation status:

Child is up-to-date. Child meets immunisation requirements for enrolment and can be enrolled.

Schedule	Date given	Immunisation	Brand name given
2 months	01 Apr 2016	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hib Hepatitis B Polio	Infanrix Hexa
		Pneumococcal	Prevenar 13
		Rotavirus	Rotarix
1 months	01 Jun 2016	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hib Hepatitis B Polio	Infanrix Hexa
		Pneumococcal	Prevenar 13
		Rotavirus	Rotarix
6 months	01 Aug 2016	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hib Hepatitis B Polio	Infanrix Hexa
		Pneumococcal	Prevenar 13
		Rotavirus	Rotarix
12 months	01 Feb 2017	Measles Mumps Rubella	MMR II
		Hib Meningococcal C	Menitorix
18 months	01 Aug 2017	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis	Infanrix
	117	Measles Mumps Rubella Varicella	ProQuad
4 years	01 Jul 2019	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Polio	Infanrix IPV

No vaccines due. This child is fully immunised. Date due

Notice/s

This individual has received all vaccines required under the National Immunisation Program childhood schedule.



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### Immunisation history statement

11 July 2019 As at:

For: **RUTH J KARPENKO** 

Date of birth: 01 January 2016

not up to date Immunisation status:

Child is not up-to-date.

Schedule	Date given	Immunisation	Brand name given
2 months	01 Mar 2016	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis	DTP
		Hib	PedvaxHIB
		Polio	Poliomyelitis
4 months	01 May 2016	Hib	PedvaxHIB
		Polio	Poliomyelitis
		Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis	Triple Antigen
months	01 Jul 2016	Polio	Poliomyelitis
		Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis	Triple Antigen
2 months	01 Jul 2016	Hib	PedvaxHIB
	01 Feb 2017	Hib	Hiberix
		Measles Mumps Rubella	MMR II
Other	15 May 2017	Hepatitis A	Havrix
		Pneumococcal	Pneumovax 23

Next immunisation/s due	Date due
Hepatitis B	01 Mar 2016
Meningococcal C	01 Jan 2017
Measles Mumps Rubella	01 Jul 2017
Varicella	01 Jul 2017
Polio	01 Jan 2020
Notice/s	TOWN THE PARTY OF

#### **Example AIR immunisation history statement – on an approved catch-up schedule**



**Department of Human Services** 

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#### **Immunisation history statement**

As at:

14 February 2020

For:

A CITIZEN

Date of birth:

11 January 2014

Immunisation status:

not up to date - Catch up schedule active until 10 Aug 2020

Child is on an approved catch-up schedule that is active at enrolment. Child meets immunisation requirements for enrolment and can be enrolled.

Schedule	Date given	Immunisation	Brand name given
Birth	11 Jan 2014	Hepatitis B	H-B-Vax II
2 months	11 Mar 2014	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hib Hepatitis B Polio	Infanrix Hexa
		Pneumococcal	Prevenar 13
		Rotavirus	Rotarix
4 months	12 May 2014	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hib Hepatitis B Polio	Infanrix Hexa
		Pneumococcal	Prevenar 13
		Rotavirus	Rotarix
6 months	10 Jul 2014	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hib Hepatitis B Polio	Infanrix Hexa
		Pneumococcal	Prevenar 13
		Rotavirus	Rotarix
12 months	21 Jan 2015	Measles Mumps Rubelia	MMR II
		Hib Meningococcal C	Menitorix
18 months	21 Jan 2015	Varicella	Varivax

Next immunisation/s due	Date due
Measles Mumps Rubella	11 Jul 2015
Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis	11 Jan 2018
Polio	11 Jan 2018
Notice/s	

#### **Example AIR immunisation history statement - medical contraindications or natural immunity**



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#### Immunisation history statement

Child is up-to-date.

As at: 01 August 2019

For: RICKY SCHMIDT

Date of birth: 04 May 2015

up to date .... Immunisation status:

Schedule	Date given	Immunisation	Brand name given
2 months	04 Jul 2015	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hib Hepatitis B Polio	Infanrix Hexa
		Pneumococcal	Prevenar 13
		Rotavirus	Rotarix
4 months	04 Sep 2015	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hib Hepatitis B Polio	Infanrix Hexa
		Pneumococcal	Prevenar 13
		Rotavirus	Rotarix
6 months	04 Nov 2015	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hib Hepatitis B Polio	Infanrix Hexa
		Pneumococcal	Prevenar 13
		Rotavirus	Rotarix
12 months	04 May 2016	Hib Meningococcal C	Menitorix
		Measles Mumps Rubella	Priorix
18 months	04 Nov 2016	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis	Infanrix
		Measles Mumps Rubella Varicella	Priorix-Tetra
4 years	01 May 2019	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Polio	Quadracel

Next immunisation/s due	Date due
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No vaccines due.

Notice/s

Medical contraindication to Varilrix recorded on 01 Mar 2019.

This individual has received all vaccines required under the National Immunisation Program childhood schedule.

Information on medical contraindication and/or natural immunity to one or more vaccines appears here

#### 2.2 Immunisation certificate issued by the Chief Health Officer

The Chief Health Officer (CHO) may issue an immunisation certificate on a case-by-case basis for a child who is not up-to-date:

- for the purposes of meeting immunisation requirements for enrolment in a child care service or kindergarten program, and
- where the CHO is satisfied that but for a special or prescribed circumstance, the child's immunisation status would be up-to-date.

#### To apply for a Chief Health Officer issued immunisation certificate: Prescribed circumstance

Prescribed circumstances are:

- a child vaccinated overseas
- temporary unavailability of vaccine, or
- a child is part of an approved vaccine study.

If a child meets any one of the above prescribed circumstances, parents/guardians are advised to talk to their local public health unit.

A Medical Officer at a <u>public health unit</u> has the authority to validate that the child meets one of the prescribed circumstances, and can issue a Chief Health Officer issued Immunisation Certificate to the parents/quardians.

#### To apply for a Chief Health Officer issued immunisation certificate: Special circumstance

Parents/guardians are advised to talk to their doctor in the first instance.

Only in situations where the doctor certifies:

- that a special circumstance is applicable to the child, and
- but for this circumstance, the parent/guardian would otherwise intend to vaccinate their child.

The doctor may then advise a Public Health Physician within the Communicable Disease Control Directorate of why the child is not up-to-date. The doctor may make this advice by email to immunisation@health.wa.gov.au. In this advice, the child's doctor needs to:

- request an immunisation certificate for the child for the purposes of meeting immunisation requirements for enrolment in a child care service, pre-kindergarten or kindergarten program; and
- provide the child's first name, last name, date of birth, Medicare number, parent/guardian contact details, advice on the child's special circumstance and why the child is not up-to-date.

The CHO, or their delegate, will then assess the case, and if satisfied that, but for that special circumstance the child's immunisation status would be up to date, issue an immunisation certificate for the child for a period specified in the certificate, or if no period is specified, for an indefinite period.

#### **Example Chief Health Officer issued immunisation certificates**





#### **Medical exemptions**

Parents/guardians seeking a medical exemption to vaccination for their children, are advised in the first instance to consult their GP. A medical practitioner can complete an AIR Immunisation Medical Exemption Form if certain vaccines require exemption on the basis of a medical condition, or refer the child to the Perth Children's Hospital's Specialist Immunisation Clinic relating to other special circumstances including adverse events following an immunisation.

#### 2.3 Overseas immunisation records

All parents/guardians of children from overseas enrolling into child care services, community kindergartens and schools are required to provide their child's AIR immunisation history statement, including:

- children who may only be in WA on a temporary basis or,
- children who have moved to WA and are permanent residents of Australia.

#### For these children:

- overseas vaccination records must not be accepted
- parents/guardians are required to provide their child's AIR immunisation history statement to the child care, community kindergarten or school
- parents/guardians need to provide any information about their child's overseas vaccinations to a local immunisation provider; for parents/guardians located overseas, they are advised to contact the relevant public health unit
- the local immunisation provider can:
  - register the child on AIR
  - upload any previous vaccinations to the AIR
  - provide any overdue vaccinations to the child.
- following updates to AIR, parents/guardians can then access their child's AIR immunisation history statement (see Section 2.1).
- if a child's overseas immunisation records have been sent to the AIR but these records are yet to appear in the child's AIR Immunisation History Statement, a Medical Officer at a public health unit can issue the child with a Chief Health Officer issued Immunisation Certificate (Prescribed Circumstance); see Section 2.2. This is an interim measure to enable the child to enrol immediately, rather than to wait for the AIR record to update.
- persons in charge of child care services, community kindergartens and schools are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the parent/guardian of the child provides the child's AIR immunisation history statement at enrolment.

#### Starting child care, pre-kindergarten or kindergarten

If a child is enrolling into child care services, pre-kindergarten or kindergarten, the child must meet immunisation requirements for enrolment as outlined in Section 3.

#### Children who do not have Medicare

Individuals that are not registered with Medicare can still have an AIR record. Any immunisation provider is able to assist in registering a child on AIR, as well as commence a child on a catch-up schedule for any overdue vaccinations.

#### **Translating services**

If translating services are required:

- overseas immunisation records can be sent to the **Department of Home Affairs** who provide a free document translating service for most permanent residents and some temporary or provisional visa holders or;
- it is recommended that immunisation providers contact their <u>local public health unit</u> to organise these documents to be translated.

Further information for parents/guardians:

Starting or moving child care, kindergarten or school – immunisation requirements (HealthyWA)

# 3. Ensure children meet immunisation requirements for enrolment

#### Effective 22 July 2019

Applies to all enrolments into child care services (long day care and family day care), pre-kindergarten and kindergarten only.

The person in charge of a child care service, community kindergarten or school is responsible for ensuring that a child is not permitted to enrol into a child care service or kindergarten program unless the child meets one of the following requirements.

Immunisation requirement at enrolment	Description	Documentation required
Child's immunisation status is up-to-date.	As part of enrolment documentation, the parent/guardian must provide the child's AIR immunisation history statement. The AIR immunisation history statement must be no more than two months old and show the child's immunisation status to be up-to-date.	AIR immunisation history statement no more than two months old indicating the child's immunisation status is up-to-date.  See Section 2.1 for example.
Child is following a catch-up schedule prescribed by the regulations.	If a child has an immunisation status that is not up-to-date but the child is following a catch-up schedule planned by a recognised immunisation provider in accordance with the Australian Immunisation Handbook, the child may still be enrolled.  Reporting required: any child enrolled whose immunisation status is not up-to-date must be reported to the Chief Health Officer when requested to do so. See Section 4.	AIR immunisation history statement no more than two months old, indicating the child is following an approved catch-up schedule that is active at enrolment.  See Section 2.1 for example.

Immunisation requirement at enrolment	Description	Documentation required
Child has an immunisation certificate:  that is issued by the Chief Health Officer, stating that the child's immunisation status is considered up-to-date but for a particular circumstance, or  that is a document or class of documents declared by the Chief Health Officer, to be an immunisation certificate.	The Chief Health Officer (CHO) may issue an immunisation certificate for a child for the purposes of meeting immunisation requirements for enrolment in a child care service or kindergarten program, where the CHO is satisfied that but for that exceptional circumstance, the child's immunisation status would be up-to-date.  This CHO immunisation certificate will state that the child's immunisation status is considered up-to-date but for the special circumstance the child is experiencing.  The CHO may, by notice published in the <i>Gazette</i> , declare a document or class of documents to be an immunisation certificate for enrolment purposes.  Reporting required: any child enrolled whose immunisation status is not up-to-date must be reported to the CHO when requested to do so. See Section 4.	CHO issued immunisation certificate.  See Section 2.2.
Person in charge is satisfied that the child is exempt because of particular family circumstances.	An exempt child is any child who at the time of enrolment meets the description of a class of children prescribed in regulation 10AB of the <i>Public Health Regulations 2017</i> .  Reporting required: any child enrolled whose immunisation status is not up-to-date must be reported to the CHO when requested to do so. See Section 4.	Various forms of evidence may be used to support a child's eligibility, see Section 3.2.  Exemption Eligibility Form (family circumstances), see Section 7.

#### Penalty \$10,000:

- for any child care service, community kindergarten or school who permits a child to enrol into a child care service or kindergarten program who does not meet one of these requirements.
- for any person who gives false or misleading information to any person pursuant to a requirement under the Public Health Act 2016 to provide information or produce a record or other document to that person. This offence would include the provision of false or misleading information or documentation in relation to a child's immunisation status.

#### **Scenarios and suggested responses** 3.1

The majority of children in WA are up-to-date with their immunisations (including where they have a medical contraindication or natural immunity), however a small number of children are not up-to-date and are not on a catch-up schedule prescribed by the regulations.

The scenarios below have been developed to assist child care services, community kindergartens and schools understand what to do when parents/guardians present with various situations.

Scenario	What to do
Parent/guardian needs more	Direct parent/guardian on where to find further information.
information on the WA laws relating to immunisation.	Advise the parent/guardian that from 22 July 2019, a child's immunisation status will affect their eligibility to enrol into child care services, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten.
	Children enrolling into family day care, long day care, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs are required to have an immunisation status that is up-to-date, be on a catch-up schedule prescribed by the regulations, have an immunisation certificate issues or declared by the Chief Health Officer, or qualify as an exempt child.
	Inform them that WA Department of Health advises parents/guardians to keep their children's immunisation status up-to-date at all times. By doing this, the parents/guardians are providing their children with the best protection against serious, life threatening vaccine-preventable diseases and ensuring their children can access early education and care, in addition to family assistance payments provided by Centrelink.
	See <u>Sections 7</u> and <u>9</u> for further information for parents.
A child who is currently attending a	No action.
child care service or kindergarten program is not fully immunised.	The legislation applies to new enrolments only, from 22 July 2019 onwards.
Parent/guardian applied to enrol	Do not enrol this child until relevant documentation is provided.
the child prior to the legislation coming into effect (i.e. prior to 22 July 2019) and the child will commence kindergarten in 2020 or later.	Enrolment commences by an application and a child is enrolled when all the requirements of the enrolment process are met and the school has registered that enrolment. The school determines what is required for the enrolment and when the child is enrolled.
Parent/guardian does not provide	Do not enrol this child until relevant documentation is provided.
the appropriate documentation to demonstrate their child meets one of the immunisation enrolment requirements.	Advise the parent/guardian that from 22 July 2019 children must meet immunisation enrolment requirements. See <u>Section 3</u> .

Scenario	What to do
Parent/guardian provides an AIR immunisation history statement	Do not enrol this child until an updated AIR immunisation history statement is provided.
which shows the child is not up-to- date but advises the child has had all their scheduled vaccinations. i.e. the AIR statement is incorrect.	Advise the parent/guardian to get their child's AIR records updated by their immunisation provider, following which they will need to provide an updated copy of the AIR immunisation history statement.  See Section 2.1.
Child is up-to-date and	No action.
commences kindergarten at age 3; child then turns 4 years old.	The child is up-to-date at the time of their enrolment.
Parent/guardian advises that their child has a medical condition that prevents the child from being	Do not enrol this child until the parent/guardian provides a copy of the AIR immunisation history statement that records that the child is upto-date and has any medical contraindications recorded.
vaccinated.	Advise the parent/guardian to take their child to their GP to arrange for an AIR Immunisation Medical Exemption Form to be completed and submitted to the AIR. The form must indicate exemptions or immunity for some or all diseases. The parent/guardian must then provide a copy of the updated AIR immunisation history statement that records the medical contraindications.
Parent advises that their child has natural immunity to a vaccine-preventable disease.	Do not enrol this child until the parent/guardian provides a copy of the AIR immunisation history statement that records that the child is up-to-date.
	An exemption to vaccination due to natural immunity can only be determined by, and reported to AIR by a medical professional.
	While technically not fully vaccinated, the child's AIR immunisation history statement should clearly show an up-to-date immunisation status and indicate that the child has natural immunity to a particular disease.
	If not, the parent should discuss their child's immunisation status with their GP who is responsible for reporting natural immunity.
	An exemption based on natural immunity can only be given for measles, mumps, rubella, varicella (chickenpox) and hepatitis B.
Parent/guardian advises that their child is on a vaccination catch-up schedule.	Do not enrol this child until the parent/guardian provides a copy of the AIR immunisation history statement no more than two months old indicating the child is on a catch-up schedule that is active at enrolment.
	When a child commences an approved catch-up schedule for any overdue vaccines, the immunisation provider must indicate this on the child's online AIR record. Parents/guardians are advised to contact their immunisation provider and ask them to update the information on the child's AIR record.
	See <u>Section 2.1</u> .

Scenario	What to do
Parent/guardian advises they are unable to provide an up-to -date AIR immunisation history statement as they choose not to vaccinate their child.	If the child cannot meet one of the immunisation enrolment requirements, do not enrol this child.  See Section 3.
Parent/guardian advises that their child was immunised overseas and they do not have an AIR immunisation history statement.	Do not enrol this child until relevant documentation is provided.  Advise the parent/guardian to take their child to their immunisation provider and request that the child's overseas immunisation records are reviewed and recorded on AIR.  See Section 2.3.  Individuals that are not registered with Medicare can still have an AIR record. An immunisation provider is able to assist in registering a child on AIR, as well as commence a child on a catch-up schedule for any missing vaccinations.  Once this is done, they can access an AIR immunisation history statement.
Parent advises they have treated their child homoeopathically.	If the child cannot meet one of the immunisation enrolment requirements, do not enrol this child.  Children who have only had homoeopathic treatments will be shown as not up-to-date on their AIR immunisation history statements.
Parent/guardian provides the child's Purple Book as proof of vaccination.	Do not enrol this child until relevant documentation is provided.  Advise parent/guardian that specific documentation is required to prove a child's immunisation status.  The only documentation that can be used is either an AIR immunisation history statement or other documentation specified in <a href="Section 2">Section 2</a> .  The Purple Book is not acceptable proof of vaccination because it only contains hand written updates, may be incomplete, is difficult for services to interpret, and does not clearly indicate a child's immunisation status.

#### 3.2 Exempt children because of particular family circumstances and suggested supporting evidence

#### **Exempt child**

A child may be exempt because of particular family circumstances. This is any child who, at the time of enrolment, meets the description of a class of children prescribed in regulation 10AB of the *Public Health Regulations 2017*.

#### When to assess whether a child is exempt because of particular family circumstances

Persons in charge should use the Exemption Eligibility Form (family circumstance) (see Section 7) only in a situation where:

- a child is enrolling into a long day care, family day care, pre-kindergarten or kindergarten program; and
- the child's immunisation status is not up-to-date according to their AIR immunisation history statement; and
- the child is not following an approved catch-up schedule prescribed by the Public Health Regulations 2017; and
- the child does not have immunisation certificate issued or declared by the Chief Health Officer.

The table below provides examples of supporting evidence which a parent/guardian may wish to provide at enrolment in order to satisfy the person in charge of the child care service, community kindergarten or school that their child is an exempt child.

Persons in charge of child care services, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs have final determination in relation to an enrolment application.

Exempt Child	Description	Suggested supporting evidence	
Child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI).	As defined under the Children and Community Services Act 2004:  • 'Aboriginal child' means a child who is a descendent of the Aboriginal people of Australia.  • 'Torres Strait Islander child' means a child who is a descendant of the indigenous inhabitants of the Torres Strait Islands.	<ul> <li>Verbal response.</li> <li>In the event there is a need to specifically confirm a child's eligibility for this exemption, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Studies website provides three criteria that Government agencies and community organisations usually accept as confirmation of ATSI heritage:         <ul> <li>being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent;</li> <li>identifying as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; and</li> </ul> </li> <li>being accepted as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person by the community in which they live or formerly lived.</li> </ul>	

Exempt Child	Description	Suggested supporting evidence	
Child is in need of protection.	A child who is in need of protection as defined in s.28(2) of the <i>Children and Community Services Act 2004</i> .	Documentation confirming this from the Department of Communities.	
		e.g. child protection order; s.35 warrant (provisional protection and care) issued by a magistrate; letter from Department of Communities advising child is under provisional protection and care under s.37 of the Act.	
Child is living in crisis accommodation.	A child who is living in crisis or emergency accommodation because of family violence or a risk of family violence, or homelessness.	Documentation confirming this from the Department of Communities, Housing Authority or a relevant not for profit service.	
Evacuated child.	A child who has been evacuated from their ordinary place of residence because it is in an area of the State to which a declaration made under the <i>Emergency Management Act 2005</i> , section 56 applies.	<ul> <li>Verbal response.</li> <li>Documentation confirming state of emergency in the relevant residence's area.</li> </ul>	
Child is in the care of an adult, other than their parent or guardian.	A child who is in the care of an adult, other than the child's parent or guardian, because of exceptional circumstances. e.g. illness or incapacity of their parent or guardian.	Documentation confirming this arrangement e.g. letter from the parent or guardian's medical practitioner or another third party who has regular interactions with the family and can independently verify the family's circumstances such as a medical practitioner, social worker etc.	
Child is in the care of a responsible person who holds a valid:  Health Care Card; Pensioner Concession Card; or Veterans' Affairs White Card or Veterans' Affairs Gold Card.	These are Commonwealth issued cards, available to certain eligible persons.  • Health Care Card is an automatic issue concession card that provides cheaper medicines and other discounts. It is issued under the Social Security Act 1991.	Sight a copy of the valid cards:    Modified   Modified	

Exempt Child	Description	Suggested supporting evidence
	Pensioner Concession Card is a concession card that provides cheaper health care, medicines and other discounts. It is issued under the Social Security Act 1991 (Commonwealth) section 1061ZF.	Production Cannel Control Cont
	Veterans' Affairs White Card entitles the holder to care and treatment for accepted injuries or conditions that are war caused or service related, and symptoms of unidentifiable conditions that arise within 15 years of service. It is issued under the Veterans' Affairs Entitlements Act 1986.	Andrellan Government Department of Viterans' Affairs  SAMPLE  VEARS OF ANT ACT THE No.  Card expires or on recall
	Veterans' Affairs Gold Card entitles the holder to funding for services for all clinically necessary health care needs, and all health conditions, whether they are related to war service or not. It is issued under the Veterans' Affairs Entitlements Act 1986.	Androllan Concrement Department of Visionary Affairs  SAMPLE  File No.  Card expires or on recall
Child first entered Australia less than 6 months before the time of enrolment and holds or parent holds, one of the following visa subclasses: 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 785, 790, or 866.	A child who first entered Australia not more than 6 months before the time of enrolment and who holds, or whose parent holds, a visa (as defined in the <i>Migration Act 1958</i> (Commonwealth) section 5(1)) of one of the following subclasses:	<ul> <li>Sighting of the relevant refugee, humanitarian or protection visa; or</li> <li>Sighting of documentation confirming visa status from the Department of Home Affairs or the WA Humanitarian Entrant</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>subclass 200 (Refugee)</li> <li>subclass 201</li> </ul>	Health Service.
	<ul><li>(In-country Special Humanitarian)</li><li>subclass 202</li><li>(Global Special Humanitarian)</li></ul>	
	subclass 203     (Emergency Rescue)	
	subclass 204     (Woman at Risk)	
	subclass 785     (Temporary Protection)  authorized 700	
	subclass 790 (Safe Haven Enterprise)	
	<ul> <li>subclass 866 (Protection).</li> </ul>	

# 4. Report under-vaccinated children

Under regulation 10C of the Public Health Regulations 2017, the Chief Health Officer (CHO) may direct the relevant person in relation to a school including community kindergarten, or the persons in charge of a child care service to provide a report to the CHO in respect of information given to that person about the immunisation status of children enrolled at the school, community kindergarten or child care service.

#### 4.1 When to report

Child care services: are required to report any child who is enrolled with an immunisation status of not up-to-date, any time such a child enrols in the child care service.

Non-government schools: are required to report any enrolled child with an immunisation status of not up-to-date when requested to do so by the CHO, and this will usually occur during Term 1 each year.

**Public schools:** are not required to report this information individually. The Department of Education will provide reports in relation to children enrolled in public schools, including community kindergartens, with an immunisation status of not up-to-date when requested to do so by the CHO, and this will usually occur during Term 1 each year.

#### At other times

The CHO may request reports of the immunisation status of children enrolled in a child care service, community kindergarten or school at other specified times. For example, during the outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease.

Penalty \$1,000: for any child care service, community kindergarten or school which does not provide this report when requested to do so.

#### 4.2. Criteria for reporting a child

It is particularly important that any child who is enrolled into a child care service or kindergarten program whose immunisation status is not up-to-date, is reported. This includes where:

- the child's AIR immunisation history statement states that the child's immunisation status is not up-to-date, as shown on the example statement provided in Section 2.1; or
- the child has an immunisation certificate issued by the CHO, stating that the child's immunisation status is considered up-to-date but for a special circumstance the child is experiencing as shown on the example statement provided in Section 2.2; or
- the child has an immunisation certificate that is a document or class of documents declared by the CHO to be an immunisation certificate as shown on the example statement provided in Section 2.2; or
- the child is following a catch up schedule for overdue vaccinations, as prescribed by the regulations as shown in the example statement provided in Section 2.1; or
- the child is exempt because of particular family circumstances as described in Section 3.2.

#### 4.3 Information to report

When reporting a child whose immunisation status is not up-to-date, the following immunisation-related information is required:

Information	Additional details	Required
Child's details		
Child's enrolment type:		Yes
Medicare number and reference	If available	
Surname	As appears on the child's AIR immunisation history statement	Yes
Given name	As appears on the child's AIR immunisation history statement	Yes
Gender:     female     male     unspecified.		Yes
Date of birth	As appears on the child's AIR immunisation history statement	Yes
Indigenous status:		Yes
Current residential street address, suburb, state, postcode	While attending child care or during school term	Yes
Child's immunisation status		
<ul> <li>Immunisation status:</li> <li>Not up-to-date</li> <li>Not up-to-date, catch up schedule active</li> <li>Unknown.</li> </ul>	As appears on the child's AIR immunisation history statement	Yes
Date AIR immunisation history statement sighted by staff		Yes
Is the child an exempt child?		Yes
Does the child have an immunisation certificate issued by the Chief Health Officer?	A copy may be requested	Yes

Information	Additional details	Required
Please specify the applicable exemption category for the child. (Required if the child is an exempt child.)	<ul> <li>Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander</li> <li>In care of Department of Communities</li> <li>Living in crisis or emergency accommodation</li> <li>Emergency evacuation</li> <li>Living with adult who is not child's parent</li> <li>Health care card</li> <li>Pensioner card</li> <li>White or Gold Card</li> <li>Refugee, humanitarian or protection visa</li> </ul>	Yes
Parent or Guardian's details		
Surname		Yes
Given name		Yes
Contact phone number	Mobile preferred	Yes
Email address		Yes
Postal address		Yes
Provide any additional information	e.g. language spoken	

#### 4.4 How to report

When requested by the CHO, the person in charge of the child care service or non-government school is required to report all children enrolled who meet the criteria listed in Section 4.2.

All child care services and non-government schools are provided with a unique link to complete their report online. Do not share this link with other services.

You can report multiple children in the same session. You can also save and return to complete the report later. Please contact immunisation@health.wa.gov.au if you are are unsure of your unique link or have any issues completing your report.

By submitting a report, you confirm that the person in charge has approved the information to be provided.

All information goes to the WA Department of Health, who will contact the families of these children to provide support in accessing local immunisation services.

# 5. Other legal requirements

Persons in charge of child care services, community kindergartens and schools can play an important part in providing a safe and healthy environment for all persons attending including children, their parents, other family members and staff. The table below describes additional legal responsibilities under the new regulations that must be undertaken, if and when directed by the CHO.

When	Legal responsibilities
When an enrolled child has, or is reasonably believed to have, a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease.	<ul> <li>The CHO may direct the person in charge of a child care service, community kindergarten or school to report an enrolled child who has, or is reasonably believed to have, contracted a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease.</li> <li>The report must specify the vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease that the child has, or is believed to have, contracted.</li> <li>The CHO will provide an 'approved form' which must be used to provide the report.</li> <li>Following a direction from the CHO, it is an offence for a person in charge of a child care service, community kindergarten or school to fail to report a child who has, or who is believed to have, a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease.</li> <li>Penalty \$1,000: for a person in charge of any child care service, community kindergarten or school which does not provide this report when requested to do so.</li> </ul>
When a child has not been immunised against a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease.	<ul> <li>The CHO may direct the person in charge of a child care service, community kindergarten or school to not permit a child to attend or participate in an educational programme of the child care service, community kindergarten or school, if the child has not been immunised against, a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease.</li> <li>Penalty \$1,000: for a person in charge of any child care service, community kindergarten or school which does not comply with a direction from the CHO to not permit a child to attend.</li> <li>The person in charge must provide notice in writing to the child's parent/guardian specifying the vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease that the child has not been immunised against, and the period of time during which the child must not attend or participate, as directed by the CHO.</li> <li>Penalty \$1,000: for a person in charge of any child care service, community kindergarten or school which does not provide written notice to the parent/guardian of the child who is required to not attend or participate in an educational programme of the child care service, community kindergarten or school.</li> </ul>
To limit or prevent the spread of a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease.	<ul> <li>The CHO may direct a person in charge of a child care service, community kindergarten or school to close the whole or part of their facility.</li> <li>The direction must be in writing and will specify the period of time during which the whole or part of the facility must remain closed.</li> <li>Penalty \$1,000: for a person in charge of any child care service, community kindergarten or school which does not comply with a direction from the CHO to close the whole, or a part, of the facility.</li> </ul>

# 6. WA Childhood Immunisation Schedule

The immunisation enrolment requirements are based on the recommended vaccines under the National Immunisation Program (NIP). The WA Childhood Immunisation Schedule lists all these NIP funded vaccines and the ages they are recommended to be given, from birth to 4 years. All vaccines are provided for free by the Commonwealth.

As part of good practice, early education services should routinely follow up with the parents/guardians of children who have not provided an updated immunisation form after each immunisation age milestone.

# 7. Resources

In addition to these Guidelines a number of resources are available to support early education services and parents to understand the immunisation requirements for enrolment, and to answer general questions about immunisation.



#### Starting child care, pre-kindergarten or kindergarten

The starting child care, pre-kindergarten or kindergarten parent fact sheet has been developed to help parents/guardians understand the immunisation requirements for enrolment in child care services, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten.

Starting child care, pre-kindergarten or kindergarten fact sheet



#### **Exemption eligibility form (family circumstances)**

A resource for persons in charge of child care services, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten to determine a child's eligibility to enrol as an exempt child because of particular family circumstances.

Enrolling and exempt child (family circumstances) fact sheet and form



#### Request for support for families form

A resource for persons in charge of child care services, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs to refer families who may be experiencing difficulty in meeting the immunisation requirements for enrolment to WA Health for immunisation support.

Request for support form



#### WA Health - Immunisation

WA Health provides comprehensive information about immunisation for babies, children adolescents and adults, including the WA Childhood Immunisation Schedule.

www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/immunisation



#### Australian Government – Immunisation

Comprehensive guide on immunisation for health professionals and parents.

www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation

# 8. Template – Parent enrolment letter

This template can be used by your service when contacting the parents/guardians in relation to immunisation requirements for enrolment into child care services, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten (refer Section 3). This letter may be used in its entirety or adapted to suit your individual service needs.

[Insert name of early childhood education and care service] [Insert date]

Dear [insert parent/guardian name]

#### Re: Child Care Enrolment [insert relevant year]

I am contacting you regarding your application to enrol your child at the [insert name of early childhood education and care service].

To process your child's application to enrol we are required to see copies of the following:

- 1. A birth certificate
- 2. Proof of address
- 3. Medicare number and reference, if available
- 4. Under the *Public Health Act 2016* (WA), proof that your child's immunisations are up-to-date for their age. The only acceptable documentation for this purpose is the child's Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) immunisation history statement.

You can access your child's AIR immunisation history statements any time through:

- MvGov
- Medicare Express Plus App
- visiting a Medicare or Centrelink office, or
- calling the AIR General Enquiries Line on 1800 653 809 to request a copy to be posted.

If your child's immunisation status is not up-to-date, or if we do not receive your child's AIR immunisation history statement, we cannot process your child's enrolment application.

If you are experiencing difficulties accessing vaccinations or the required related documents, please contact us immediately for assistance.

It is important to keep your child's immunisation status up-to-date at all times in order to provide the best protection against serious, life threatening vaccine-preventable diseases. Doing so will also ensure your child can access early education and care, in addition to family assistance payments provided by Centrelink.

If you have any questions, please contact us at [insert contact details] or visit www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/ <u>S T/Starting-or-moving-schools-immunisation-records for more information.</u>

We are committed to the health and well-being of children in our care, their families, and our staff, and we support WA's immunisation laws.

Yours sincerely,

[insert name of Director] [insert name of early childhood education and care service]

# 9. Useful contacts

#### **WA Department of Health**

#### **WA Public Health Units**

The public health units focus on preventing disease, illness and injury, and promoting health and well-being at a population or whole of community level across Western Australia. Contact your local public health unit for information about local immunisation providers or clinics.

For contact details of the public health units, visit www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/publichealthunits

#### **Immunisation**

WA Health provides comprehensive information about immunisation for babies, children, adolescents and adults.

www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/immunisation

#### Immunisation requirements for child care services, kindergarten and schools

Provides an overview of WA's immunisation requirements including No Jab No Play legislation, immunisation support and reporting of under-vaccinated children.

ww2.health.wa.gov.au/immunisationenrolment

#### Starting or moving child care, kindergarten or schools – immunisation requirements

Information for parents/guardians on No Jab No Play legislation, and providing their child's immunisation records.

www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/S T/Starting-or-moving-schools-immunisation-records

#### **Immunisation Program**

For clarification on the immunisation requirements for enrolment legislation.

Phone: (08) 6376 0550

Email: immunisation@health.wa.gov.au

#### Childhood immunisation schedule, WA

Schedule of the recommended vaccines for certain age points.

www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A E/Childhood-immunisation-schedule

#### **Perth Children's Hospital - Immunisation Service**

A comprehensive immunisation service available to all children and their families attending Perth Children's Hospital. The service is comprised of specialist paediatricians and senior immunisation nurse specialists. It provides an opportunity for children and families to get routine vaccinations, advice and education regarding current immunisation recommendations and to meet the vaccination needs of medically at-risk children.

https://pch.health.wa.gov.au/Our-services/Immunisation-Service

#### **Central Immunisation Clinic, West Perth**

Provides a free immunisation service for children, and can provide immunisation advice over the phone or email.

Phone: (08) 9321 1312

Email: centimm@health.wa.gov.au

#### **Australian Government**

#### **Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)**

General enquiries: 1800 653 809

https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register

#### **Medicare service centres**

https://findus.servicesaustralia.gov.au/

#### **Department of Health and Aged Care**

For parents, topics include the National Immunisation Program, how to check a person's immunisation status, timing of vaccines, and vaccine safety.

www.health.gov.au/topics/immunisation

Questions about vaccination

www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/guestions-about-vaccination.pdf

#### No Jab No Pay - Family assistance payments

Information on the immunisation requirements to receive family assistance payments including Family Tax Benefit and Child Care Subsidy.

https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/family-tax-benefit/who-can-get-it/ immunisation-requirements

#### healthdirect Australia

Health information and advice available 24 hours.

Phone: 1800 022 222

www.healthdirect.gov.au

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