## Dear Parent/Guardian:

### Key Points Regarding Claiming a Nonmedical Waiver for Michigan Schools and Licensed Childcares

Michigan recently modified the administrative rules that change how nonmedical waivers for immunizations will be processed for school/childcare programs. The new rule went into effect on January 1, 2015.

With Michigan having one of the highest waiver rates in the country, a proactive approach has been established to help inform everyone regarding the benefits of vaccinations and the risks of disease. Some counties in Michigan have waiver rates as high as 20.7%. This means that more than 20% of the students in those counties haven't gotten all their vaccines. Some school buildings have even higher waiver rates. The hope is that the new rule will help answer any questions/concerns one may have regarding immunizations.

**Key Points**

- The new rule applies to all children who are enrolled in a public or private:
  - Licensed childcare, preschool, and Head Start programs
  - Kindergarten, 7th grade, and any newly enrolled student into the school district
- The new rule does not take away your right to obtain a nonmedical waiver.
- Nonmedical waivers (religious or philosophical (other) objections) will need to be obtained from a county health department; the schools/childcare centers will not have them.
- Parents/Guardians must follow these steps when requesting a nonmedical waiver:
  - Contact your county health department for an appointment to speak with a health educator.
  - During the visit, there will be an opportunity to have a discussion about immunizations with the county health department staff.
  - If at the end of the visit, you request a nonmedical waiver for your child, you will receive a copy of the current, certified (stamped and signed) State of Michigan Nonmedical Waiver Form.
    - Schools/childcare centers will only accept the current, official State of Michigan form (Current date: January 1, 2015).
    - Forms cannot be altered in any way (such as crossing information out).
  - Take completed, certified waiver form to your child's school or childcare center.
- If your child has a medical reason (a true contraindication or precaution) for not receiving a vaccine, a physician must sign the State of Michigan Medical Contraindication form; this form is available at your doctor's office (not the county health department).
- Based on the public health code, a child without either an up-to-date immunization record, a certified nonmedical waiver form or a physician signed medical waiver form can be excluded from school/childcare.

For more information, please visit www.michigan.gov/immunize > then click on *Local Health Departments* > then click on *Immunization Waiver Information.* There is a list of all the county health departments on this website, along with their addresses and phone numbers.