



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON

11 FEB 2026

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Army Directive 2026-03 (Child, Youth, and School Services Immunization Requirements)

1. References. See references enclosed.
2. Purpose. This directive implements immunization policy to protect children and Army Child and Youth Services (CYS) personnel from communicable diseases in the Army's Child, Youth, and School Services (CYSS) programs pursuant to Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction 6060.02. Safe, reliable childcare reduces the stress between parental responsibilities and mission requirements, an integral factor in military readiness. The Army remains committed to ensuring the wellness of Families enrolled.
3. Applicability. The provisions of this directive apply to the Regular Army, Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States, and U.S. Army Reserve.
4. Policy.
 - a. Age-appropriate immunizations are required for adults and children working or participating in CYS programs. Pursuant to references 1f and 1j, all children, employees, and staff will obtain immunization against communicable diseases in accordance with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Immunizations are required only for diseases that are reasonably anticipated to be contracted or transmitted in the workplace. Since there is no reasonable risk of exposure to or transmission of the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) or Mpox associated with working in CYS, HPV and Mpox vaccines are not required. Additionally, pursuant to reference 1d, vaccines for the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) are no longer required.
 - b. For the purposes of this policy, CYS appropriated (APF) and non-appropriated fund (NAF) civilian employees are referred to collectively as "CYS civilian employees," and "other CYS staff" includes OCONUS foreign national/host-nation employees, Family Child Care (FCC) providers, and specified regular volunteers.
 - c. Immunization of foreign nationals/host-nation employees employed by CYS programs outside the United States will comply with CYS immunization policies to the extent permitted by host-nation agreements and laws. Immunization of contractor personnel must be coordinated with the appropriate contracting officer representatives/contracting activities.

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d. Newly hired employees have 30 days to initiate and 60 days to complete all required immunizations once onboard.

e. To reduce the risk of spreading vaccine-preventable disease in Army CYS programs, the following requirements take effect 60 days from the date of this directive.

(1) CYS civilian employees and other CYS staff members who are not immunized as directed in paragraph 5a of this directive will not be assigned to care for infants.

(2) If, in consultation with the Installation Public Health Department (IPHD), the senior commander declares an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease on the installation, or the garrison commander declares an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease within the CYS program, the following requirements will apply:

(a) The 30-day grace period for children to begin immunization series after starting care will be suspended.

(b) The grace period for newly hired CYS civilian employees and other CYS staff (30 days to initiate and 60 days to complete all required immunizations once onboard) will be suspended.

f. The preservation of public health and safety remains a primary factor in decisions to grant or deny an exemption. All immunization exemptions must be in writing. Medical immunization exemptions are valid for no longer than 1 year from the date of exemption approval or on policy revision, whichever is sooner. Non-medical immunization exemptions are valid for the duration of CYS involvement at the approving installation.

(1) CYS Civilian Employee Immunization Exemption Requests—Medical and Religious.

(a) The garrison commander is the approval authority for all CYS civilian employee immunization exemption requests. This authority may not be delegated lower than the deputy to the garrison commander.

(b) CYS civilian employees may request a medical- or religious-based exemption to the immunization requirements as a reasonable accommodation in accordance with reference 11. Philosophical exemptions are not permitted.

(c) Requests for a medical exemption will include a written statement from the employee's healthcare provider explaining why an exemption from a specific immunization requirement is medically recommended.

(d) Requests for a religious exemption will include a written statement describing the

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employee's religious belief, practice, or observance that is the basis for the request for a religious exemption from the CYS vaccination requirement and how the identified vaccine(s) conflict(s) with the religious belief, practice, or observance.

(e) Exemption requests will be submitted to the requestor's supervisor and will be processed as requests for reasonable accommodation under the provisions of reference 11 in consultation with the designated supporting Equal Employment Opportunity Office's Disability Program Manager. When appropriate, coordination will be made with the servicing legal office, IPHD/Preventive Medicine, and garrison commander. Requests will include a written statement from a healthcare provider explaining why an exemption from a specific immunization requirement is medically recommended. The garrison commander may approve CYS employee exemption requests unless providing the accommodation would pose an undue hardship, as explained in reference 11.

(f) CYS civilian employees requesting an immunization exemption must be informed that, when there is a declared outbreak within the installation or within multiple CYS programs, they will not be scheduled to work within childcare settings until it has been determined by the IPHD office that conditions allow for unimmunized or under-immunized staff members to return to work. In the event an outbreak is declared within a single CYS facility, unimmunized or under-immunized staff may be scheduled to work in alternate facilities, as available, if deemed appropriate by the IPHD office.

(2) Other Immunization Exemption Requests.

(a) The garrison commander is the approval authority for all other CYS staff and child immunization exemption requests. This authority may not be delegated lower than the deputy to the garrison commander.

(b) Other CYS staff and parents/guardians of children participating in CYS Services programs may request, in writing, a medical-, non-medical, or administrative-based exemption to the immunization requirement. Administrative exceptions may be based on host-nation laws or similar matters. Philosophical exemptions are not permitted.

(c) OCONUS foreign national/host-nation staff members may request an administrative exemption in accordance with host-nation agreements or law.

(d) Immunization exemption requests will be submitted to the director or program manager in which the child or other CYS staff member is enrolled or working.

(e) Medical Exemption Requests. Parents/guardians, and other CYS staff submitting a request for a medical exemption will include a written statement from a healthcare provider explaining why an exemption from a specific immunization requirement is medically

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recommended. All child and other CYS staff medical exemption requests will be reviewed/acknowledged by a licensed practitioner (physician, physician's assistant, nurse practitioner) appointed in writing by the installation medical officer, preferably within the IPHD office, and consultation provided through the installation Director of Health Services/senior medical officer to the garrison commander prior to decision. If an appointed medical practitioner is not available for review and/or consultation to garrison command, this responsibility may be fulfilled by the preventive medicine physician within the Medical Readiness Command/Office of the Surgeon General, U.S. Army Medical Command, or Office of Deputy Chief of Staff for Force Health Protection.

(f) Religious Exemption Requests. Parents/guardians and other CYS staff requesting exemption based on a religious objection will include a statement explaining how the required vaccination imposes a substantial burden to a sincerely held religious belief. In accordance with reference 1a, and in consultation with local installation-designated supporting offices, when applicable, (including Equal Employment Opportunity, the servicing legal office, IPHD/Preventive Medicine, and the personnel office), garrison commanders may accommodate religious practices based on a sincerely held religious belief. If vaccination imposes a substantial burden on a sincerely held religious belief, the accommodation may be denied only if vaccination of this individual furthers a compelling governmental interest and vaccination of this individual is the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling government interest.

(3) Approval authorities will consult, when applicable, with their servicing Equal Employment Opportunity Office, legal offices, and medical staff prior to approving or disapproving requests received from non-civilian employees or parents on a child's behalf for medical, religious, and all other (administrative) exemption requests. Recommendations made by the installation public health authority will be routed to the installation Director of Health Services/senior medical officer (appointed by the installation senior commander) for concurrence prior to forwarding to the garrison commander.

(4) Parents/guardians and other CYS staff must be informed of the immunization requirements and exemption request process at the time of employment (for staff), registration, re-registration, or prior to an immunization renewal date for children. Parents/guardians and other CYS staff must be informed when an outbreak occurs that a non-immunized child or other CYS staff member will be excluded from care or program activity until the IPHD office determines conditions allow for unimmunized or under-immunized children staff to return to care.

g. Reporting Requirements.

(1) Program managers will track all CYS civilian employees, other CYS staff, and children who are delinquent on an immunization or have an approved medical or non-medical exemption, identifying which immunizations are exempt.

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(2) The installation CYS Coordinator will input a monthly report of all delinquent immunizations or approved medical and non-medical (religious or administrative) exemptions into the Child and Youth Management System (CYMS). The report must be submitted through the Commanding General, U.S. Army Installation Management Command to the Chief, Child and Youth Services in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS), G-1. The report will detail the number of children and staff (APF/NAF employees, OCONUS foreign national/host-nation staff, FCC providers, specified volunteers, and contractors), type of exemption (medical or non-medical), immunization waived, and date of approval.

5. The DCS, G-1 will publish execution guidance for submitting participant and program personnel requests for medical and non-medical exemptions from immunization.

6. Proponent. The Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) is the proponent for this policy. The DCS, G-1 will incorporate its provisions into Army Regulation 608–10, and The Surgeon General will incorporate its provisions into Army Regulation 40–562, within 2 years of the date of this directive.

7. Duration. This directive is rescinded on publication of the revised regulations.



Dan Driscoll

Encl

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REFERENCES

- a. Title 42, United States Code, section 2000bb-1 (Free exercise of religion protected), as amended
- b. Executive Order 14099 (Moving Beyond COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements for Federal Workers), 15 May 2023
- c. Secretary of Defense memorandum (Recission of August 24, 2021 and November 30, 2021 Coronavirus Disease 2019 Vaccination Requirements of Members of the Armed Forces), 10 January 2023
- d. Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) memorandum (Child and Youth Programs Coronavirus Disease 2019 Vaccination Guidance), 4 August 2025
- e. Department of Defense Instruction 1300.17 (Religious Liberty in the Military Services), 1 September 2020
- f. Department of Defense Instruction 6060.02 (Child Development Programs (CDPs)), 5 August 2014, incorporating Change 2, effective 1 September 2020
- g. Army Directive 2020-17 (Child, Youth, and School Services Immunization Requirements), 15 December 2020 (hereby superseded)
- h. Army Directive 2015-44 (Updated Policy for Army Child, Youth, and School Services Programs), 14 December 2015 (hereby superseded in part)
- i. Army Regulation (AR) 40-5 (Army Public Health Program), 12 May 2020
- j. AR 40-562 (Immunizations and Chemoprophylaxis for the Prevention of Infectious Diseases), 7 October 2013
- k. AR 215-3 (Non-appropriated Funds Instrumentalities Personnel Policy), 7 May 2024
- l. AR 608-10 (Child, Youth, and School Services), 11 May 2017
- m. AR 690-12 (Civilian Personnel Equal Employment Opportunity Employment Programs), 6 February 2025

Enclosure