



Georgia Medical Freedom Guide for Parents & Citizens Your Rights in Georgia: What You Need to Know

As a Georgia parent or citizen, you have choices when it comes to vaccinations for yourself and your children. This guide explains your rights, the exemption process, and helpful additional resources.

I. Vaccination Exemption Types: An Overview¹

- Medical Exemption: When a licensed physician determines a vaccine may be medically harmful.
- Religious Exemption: When vaccination conflicts with your moral, personal, or religious beliefs.
- Full Vaccination: When one follows the state-required immunization schedule.

Note: [Georgia Senate Bill 1](#) (2023) bans state agencies, local governments, school districts, and colleges from mandating COVID-19 vaccines.

II. Medical Exemptions in Georgia²

A. When to Use This Option

- You may request a medical exemption if a licensed physician determines that a vaccine may pose a medical risk to your child or to someone living in your household.

B. Requirements

- According to [Georgia Rule 511-2-2](#), a medical exemption must:

¹National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). (2025). [State Non-Medical Exemptions From School Immunization Requirements](#).

²Georgia Department of Public Health. [Immunizations](#).; see also [Georgia Code §§ 20-2-771](#).

- Be documented on the state’s official immunization certificate ([Georgia Certificate of Immunization Form 3231](#)).
 - Be issued by a physician, APRN or PA licensed under Georgia law (or under the laws of a comparable state, if previously licensed elsewhere) or by the local board of health. ([Policy Guide 3231INS: Standards for Issuing and Filing Certificates of Immunization](#)).
 - Be renewed annually or “until the physician determines that immunization or a specific immunization may finally be accomplished without danger to the child's health.” ([Rule 511-2-2-.05 Certificate of Immunization Issued for Child with Physical Disability.](#))
- Schools and child-care facilities are required to accept a valid medical exemption.

III. Religious Exemptions in Georgia³

A. When to Use This Option

- You may request a religious exemption if vaccination conflicts with your sincerely held religious beliefs.

B. Georgia Law⁴

- Georgia requires parents or guardians to complete the Affidavit of Religious Objection to Immunization ([Form 2208](#)) issued by the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH).
- The affidavit must be signed and notarized.
- Once submitted, the religious exemption does not expire, but schools and child-care facilities must keep the affidavit on file.

C. Step-by-Step Process

1. Download the [form](#) from the Georgia Department of Public Health [website](#).
2. Complete the form with your child’s information and the vaccines you are declining.

³Georgia Department of Public Health. [Immunizations](#).

⁴GA Code § 20-2-771 (2024)

3. Have the form notarized by a Georgia notary public (in-person or remote).
4. Submit the notarized Form 2208 to your child's school or child-care provider.
5. Resubmit the form only when your child enrolls in a new school or program, or if the facility requests an updated copy.

IV. Vaccine Mandates During Public Health Emergencies

- During an epidemic or threatened epidemic of any disease for which immunization is required by the Georgia Department of Public Health, children who are not immunized may be excluded from school or child-care until they are immunized (unless they provide valid evidence of prior disease) or until the epidemic or threat no longer constitutes a significant public health danger.

V. School Immunization Requirements by Grade Level⁵

Georgia requires students to provide proof of immunization or a valid exemption. Key vaccine requirements include:

- Pre-K & Elementary
 - DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)
 - Polio
 - MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
 - Hepatitis B
 - Varicella (or documented history of chickenpox)
 - Hepatitis A
- 7th Grade
 - Tdap booster
 - Meningococcal (MenACWY)

⁵Georgia Department of Public Health. [Immunizations](#).

- 11th – 12th Grade
 - Meningococcal Booster (MCV4): second dose required before 11th grade entry (If the first dose was given on or after age 16, a booster is not required.)
- College Students Under Age 22
 - Meningococcal vaccine within the past 5 years and at least 10 days before the semester begins.
 - Exemptions accepted.
- Homeschool Immunization Rules and Public School Activities
 - Georgia law does not require homeschooled students or private homeschool co-op participants to provide proof of immunization, since these settings are not classified as “schools” under state immunization regulations ([O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690 et seq.](#); [Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. r. 511-2-2-.07](#)).
 - However, under the Dexter Mosely Act ([O.C.G.A. § 20-2-319.6](#)), homeschooled students who participate in public school extracurricular activities, athletics, or interscholastic events must follow the same health and eligibility requirements, including immunization documentation, that apply to enrolled public school students.

VI. Constitutional, Federal, and Employment Protections

A. Constitutional Protections

- The [First Amendment](#) guarantees your right to religious exercise. Courts have consistently held that government policies cannot favor secular motivations over religious ones.

B. Federal Civil Rights & Employment Protections

- Under [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act](#), employers must consider requests for religious accommodation related to vaccination.
- An employer must grant an accommodation unless doing so would create an undue hardship on the business.
- The [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission \(EEOC\)](#) enforces these protections.

C. State-Specific Employment Protections

- Georgia is an employment-at-will state which means that the employee or the employer can terminate the employment for almost any reason that is not “wrongful.” There will be little state protection for employees seeking accommodation for religious beliefs in at-will states.

D. Public Health Emergencies

- Under [O.C.G.A. § 38-3-51](#), the governor can declare a public health emergency, activating emergency powers that allow suspension of certain rules, use of facilities, controlling movement, etc.

E. Key Legal Principles⁶

- Your belief must be sincerely held and religious in nature.
- You may need to explain how your beliefs conflict with a vaccination requirement.
- Employers must evaluate each request individually; blanket or automatic denials are not permitted.
- An employer may deny a request only if it can demonstrate undue hardship.

VII. **Tips for Parents & Citizens**

A. Documentation

- Keep copies (digital and printed) of all exemption forms.
- Photograph or scan forms before submitting them.
- Ask the school for a dated receipt.

B. Working With Schools

- Present your documentation clearly and respectfully.
- Understand that some staff may be unfamiliar with exemption rules; you may need to reference Georgia Department of Public Health guidance.
- If necessary, request to speak with an administrator.

⁶This document should not be construed as legal advice or guidance; consult a qualified attorney for advice specific to your situation.

C. Notarization Options

- Banks
- Credit unions
- UPS/FedEx stores
- Libraries
- Some remote online notaries

D. Reporting Issues

- If you experience any adverse effects from vaccines, report to [VAERS \(Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System\)](#). Document any pressure, coercion, or discrimination related to vaccine status.

VIII. Frequently Asked Questions⁷

1. Can I pick and choose which vaccines to exempt?

Yes. You may exempt your child from specific vaccines while receiving others. You are not required to take an “all or nothing” approach.

2. Do I need to belong to a specific religion to claim a religious exemption?

No. Georgia law does not require membership in an organized religion. But you must have a sincerely held religious belief that conflicts with immunization.

3. How long does the exemption process take?

For religious: Once you complete and notarize Form 2208 and submit it to the school/child-care facility, the exemption is valid indefinitely (unless revoked by the local health/DPH in outbreak conditions).

For medical: The physician must mark it on Form 3231, and the exemption must be renewed annually.

4. Can schools reject my exemption?

Schools must accept valid submissions: a notarized Form 2208 for religious, or a properly marked Form 3231 for medical. However, during an epidemic, children with exemptions may be excluded under Georgia law.

⁷This document is for general education only and not legal or medical advice. Always consult a qualified healthcare provider for medical decisions and a licensed attorney for legal questions. Verify all laws and agency policies before acting.

5. What happens if we move to another school in Georgia?

Your exemption transfers with your child's school records. Submit the same form (or updated certificate) to the new school. The school may request the records be transferred or you may provide duplicates.

IX. Helpful Resources & Websites⁸

- **Official Georgia Resources**
 - [Georgia Department of Public Health – School Vaccines and Updates](#)
 - [Georgia's "Get Required Health Records to Attend School" guide](#)
 - [Form 2208: Affidavit of Religious Objection to Immunization \(DPH\)](#)
 - [Form 3231: Certificate of Immunization \(DPH\)](#)
- **Advocacy Organizations**
 - [Georgia Coalition for Vaccine Choice](#)
- **Legal & Educational Resources**
 - [National Vaccine Information Center](#)
 - [Children's Health Defense](#)
 - [Network for Public Health Law](#)
 - [The Healthy American](#)
 - [America's Frontline Doctors](#)
- **Federal Government Resources**
 - [CDC Vaccine Information](#)
 - [VAERS](#)

⁸The inclusion of outside resources should not imply endorsement and instead are exclusively provided for informational purposes.