



## BRIGHT FROM THE START

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning  
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**Nathan Deal**  
GOVERNOR

**Amy M. Jacobs**  
COMMISSIONER

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Dear Child Care Provider:

As we begin the 2015-2016 school year, the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) and the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) are writing to remind you that Georgia has specific laws governing vaccinations in public and private child care facilities and schools.

Georgia law requires that all children attending a child care facility have a valid certificate of immunization upon enrollment in a child care program. DECAL's rules and regulations for child care programs require that a valid certificate of immunization be obtained during the enrollment process before the child's first day of attendance or within 30 calendar days after a child's first day of attendance.

The law provides two exceptions to this requirement:

- Georgia state law allows families to object to vaccinations on **religious grounds** by filing an affidavit noting their objection. Starting with the 2015-2016 school year, the **only** affidavit that may be used to register a religious objection to required vaccinations is DPH Form 2208. Religious affidavits must be notarized and kept on file at your child care facility or school. To download the form, click [here](#).
- Georgia law also allows a physician to issue a "medical exemption" for immunizations when it is deemed medically necessary for the health of a child. These medical exemptions are valid for a one-year period and may be reissued from year to year until immunizations can be completed as determined by a physician. Documents for students with a medical exemption must be kept on file at your child care facility or school.

For more information about Georgia vaccination and immunization requirements, visit DPH's website by clicking [here](#) or visiting [www.dph.ga.gov](http://www.dph.ga.gov).

Sincerely,

Amy M. Jacobs  
Commissioner  
Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Brenda Fitzgerald, M.D.  
Commissioner and State Health Officer  
Georgia Department of Public Health