



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care

EEC Policy on Immunizations for Funded Programs	Field Operations Policy
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- ❖ For use by: Funded Programs
- ❖ Effective date: October 1, 2019
- ❖ Supersedes: New Policy

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## POLICY STATEMENT

*Through this policy statement, the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) seeks to outline the EEC process for immunizations, immunization exemptions, and immunization grace periods.*

### EEC Authority

The **Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)** is the federal law that authorizes the *Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)*, which is the primary source of federal funding for child care subsidies for low-income working families and funds to improve early childhood program quality. Under federal regulations adopted pursuant to the 2014 reauthorization of CCDBG, there are certain requirements, designed to protect the health and safety of children, which must be put into place for programs receiving funds through CCDF under 45 CFR 98.41. These requirements include ensuring all children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized.

### Immunization Requirements for Funded Programs

Funded Programs shall retain written documentation for all children and providers within the program documenting evidence of immunizations in accordance with the schedules and recommendations of the Department of Public Health.

- Staff Records: The Funded Program shall maintain a complete, accurate, and confidential personnel record for each staff member documenting that the staff member has been immunized in accordance with the recommendations of the Department of Public Health.
- Children's Records: The Program shall maintain a complete, accurate, and confidential file for each child documenting that the child has been successfully immunized in accordance with the current Department of Public Health's recommended schedules.

### **Immunization Exemptions**

No child shall be required to have any such immunization if his or her parent(s) objects, in writing, on the grounds that it conflicts with their sincere religious beliefs or if the child's physician, nurse educator, or physician assistant submits documentation that such a procedure is contraindicated.

If a staff member cannot be immunized or objects thereto, in writing, on the grounds that it conflicts with their sincere religious beliefs or if the staff member's physician, nurse educator, or physician assistant submits documentation that such a procedure is contraindicated, an exception to the requirement could be applied.

### **Immunization Grace Period**

Children from a homeless, teen parent, or supportive family may have difficulty obtaining medical records and/or documentation of immunizations at the time of admission into the program because of the stresses and disorganization caused by issues affecting these priority populations. Accordingly, a Funded Program must allow a family from a priority population up to six (6) months from the date of their child's admission into the program to obtain the necessary medical records and/or documentation of the child's immunizations.