

# CalWORKs Handbook :. 40-105.4

## Immunization Requirements

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 Published By: E203

### Summary

The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidance to staff on immunization requirements for CalWORKs applicants and recipients.

Assembly Bill (AB) 1542, Chapter 270, Statutes of 1997 requires that all children in the CalWORKs Assistance Unit (AU) under the age of six (6) have age-appropriate immunizations.

All applicants/recipients must be notified of the necessity to provide verification that each child in the AU who is under the age of 6 has received age-appropriate immunizations.

If the parent or caretaker relative fails to provide verification or fails to begin a course of appropriate immunizations, unless claiming an exemption/good cause, a penalty will be imposed for failure to comply. The penalty is to eliminate the parent's needs in the grant computation.

The purpose of the update to this handbook is to include new good cause reasons for failure to submit immunization verification and to provide guidance on removing a penalty.

### I. General

#### A. Age-Appropriate Immunizations

Age-appropriate immunizations are those suggested in the Recommended Childhood Immunization Schedule by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians.

1. Immunizations currently recommended for children under the age of 6:

TYPE OF IMMUNIZATION	ABBREVIATION(S)	DOSE	RECOMMENDED AT
Polio	OPV, TOPV, IPV, SABIN, SALK	1st 2nd 3rd 4th	2 months 4 months 6-18 months Before starting school (4-6 yrs)
Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis	DPT, DTaP, DT	1st 2nd 3rd 4th	2 months 4 months 6 months 15-18 months

		5th	Before starting school (4-6 yrs)
Measles, Mumps, and Rubella)	MMR	1st 2nd	12-15 months Before starting school (4-6 yrs)
Varicella Virus Vaccine (chickenpox) <sup>1</sup>	VAR, VZV	1st	12-18 months
Hepatitis B		1st 2nd 3rd	At birth - 3 months 1-5 months 6-18 months
Hemophilus influenzae type b (meningitis, pneumonia) <sup>2</sup>	Hib	1st 2nd 3rd 3rd or 4th	2 months 4 months 6 months (may not be required) 12-15 months <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Varicella Virus Vaccine is only required for children who have not had chickenpox.

<sup>2</sup> If any dose is given after 12 months, no further doses needed.

2. Recommended immunization schedule for children NOT immunized in the first year of life:

a. If the child has received some, but not all, of the recommended immunizations by their first birthday, the recommended schedule will depend on which immunizations the child is missing and the child's age. A health care provider should be consulted to determine the appropriate immunizations. Hib schedules vary by age when series is started.

VISIT	WHEN	VACCINES WHICH MIGHT BE GIVEN
First Visit		Hepatitis B DTaP (or DTP) Hib Polio (or OPV, TOPV, IPV, Sabin, Salk) MMR Varicella (or VAR, VZV) <sup>1</sup>
Second Visit	1 - 2 months after 1st visit	Hepatitis B DTaP (or DTP) Hib Polio (or OPV, TOPV, IPV, Sabin, Salk)
Third Visit	1 - 2 months after 2nd visit	DTaP (or DTP) Polio (or OPV, TOPV, IPV, Sabin, Salk)
Fourth Visit	6 months after 3rd visit	Hepatitis B DTaP (or DTP)

b. Delays between doses do not require repeating doses or re-starting series. After these immunizations have been completed, refer to first chart for immunizations to be completed.

**Note:** Social Security Income (SSI) children are NOT members of the AU, and are NOT subject to the immunization rules.

## II. Specifics

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### A. Informing Requirements

At the time of application, annual redetermination (RRR), and when adding a child under the age of 6, all applicants/recipients must be provided a notice informing them of their obligation to obtain age-appropriate immunizations for all children in the AU under the age of 6.

1. Form [CW 101](#), “CalWORKs Immunization Rules” included in CalWORKs Application and RRR packets notifies clients of good cause exemptions to the immunization requirements for a child(ren) in the AU, and informs applicants and recipients of the following:
  - Their obligation to secure immunization for all children in the AU under the age of 6 and the penalty for failure to comply;
  - The list of age-appropriate immunizations;
  - Their right to file an affidavit claiming that immunizations are contrary to their personal and/or religious beliefs or for medical reasons; and
  - How immunizations may be obtained through a fee-for-service provider that accepts Medi-Cal, a Medi-Cal managed care plan, a county public health clinic or any other available source.

### B. Exemptions

The immunization requirement does not apply if the parent(s)/caretaker relative submits one of the following:

1. A sworn statement signed under penalty of perjury by the recipient stating that the immunization requirement is contrary to their personal or religious beliefs. The client may also complete Form CW 2209 – Immunization Good Cause Request Form.
  - a. Recipients are not required to explain their reasons for their personal or religious beliefs. Eligibility Services Technician (EST) cannot require information beyond the sworn statement.
2. A written statement from a physician or health professional working under the supervision of the physician, stating that the child should not be immunized, which includes the prohibitive medical condition and the duration.

### C. Verification

Verification of immunizations is required at initial application, when adding a child under the age of 6 to the AU, and at RRR.

The EST shall first ask the client to provide verification of their child(ren)'s immunization record with the Form CW 2200 Request for Verifications.

Verification of immunizations must be submitted until the child completes all age-appropriate immunizations or the child reaches the age of 6.

1. Acceptable Verification

- a. The California Immunization Record (Yellow Card) is the primary document used to verify immunizations.
- b. Acceptable documentation of verification of immunization may also be provided by the following:
  - A medical provider (i.e. physician, authorized member of physician's staff, public health department, etc.); or
  - A public agency which requires age-appropriate immunizations (i.e. local school district, the Head Start Program, a licensed day care center, etc.)

2. California Immunization Registry (CAIR2)

The Department of Public Health launched an improved version of the CAIR system. The CAIR2 is a secure, confidential, statewide computerized immunization information system for California residents. The system is accessed online to help providers and other authorized users track patient immunization records. For additional information on CAIR2, how to access and use it, go to [www.cairweb.org](http://www.cairweb.org)

The benefits of the statewide CAIR2 database are:

- Easy retrieval of immunization records of patients seen previously at a provider's office.
- Gives authorized users the ability to replace lost California Immunization Records (yellow cards) by printing a new copy with up-to-date information.
- Displays instant and accurate vaccine doses due at each visit, based on current recommendations.
- Forecasts each child's next vaccine due dates to keep patients on schedule.
- Highlights critical patient information such as reaction histories and contraindications.
- Eases the burden on clients by generating the reminder/recall notices parents want to receive (set up by the provider's office).
- Helps eliminate duplicate immunizations with rapid access to current, complete immunization histories.

If a client does not have the required verification, the EST may use the CAIR2 system to search for the verification prior to asking the client to go and get the needed documents.

**D. Verification Time Frames**

Applicants/recipients shall provide verification of immunization for all children in the AU under the age of 6 in the following time frames:

THE FAMILY IS...	AND ...	THEN THE VERIFICATION MUST BE SUBMITTED WITHIN...
Applying for CalWORKs	Is receiving Medi-Cal	45 days from the date of application
Applying for CalWORKs	Is also applying for Medi-Cal	30 days from the date Medi-Cal is approved
Applying for CalWORKs for an additional child under age 6	Child is receiving Medi-Cal	45 days from the date of application
Applying for CalWORKs for an additional child under age 6	Is also applying Medi-Cal for child	30 days from the date Medi-Cal is approved
Receiving CalWORKs		45 days of redetermination of eligibility

The chart above references the amount of time an AU has to respond to written requests for verification of immunization records. An AU must not be penalized before it has had the time allotted to provide the requested verification.

The EST shall:

- Approve Initial CalWORKs applications without a penalty for the first and second benefit months. A penalty shall not be applied in any month where the AU is not provided at least 10 days' notice prior to receiving a reduction in benefits.

**Note:** CalWORKs cases that have previously applied penalties may carryover to new applications if the penalty is not verified during the new application period.

- Request verification of the immunization record when adding a child under age 6 to an AU; however, a penalty for not providing verification of immunization records will not be applied until 30 days from the date of the written request.

**Note:** For an AU with child(ren) under the age of 6 and receives CalWORKs for a child whom needs to verify their next dosage of vaccines, a penalty will not be applied until 45 days from the written request.

**Example:** Mary is already receiving Medi-Cal and applied for CalWORKs on 11/20. Verification must be provided by 01/04, 45 calendar days from the date of application.

#### E. Good Cause

To claim good cause, the client may complete Form [CW 2209](#) required at application, redetermination, and any time the EST requests the parent(s) or caretaker relative to provide proof of immunizations.

Clients will also be allowed to verbally inform the EST of their good cause request. Making a verbal request is the same as completing Form CW 2209. Upon receiving the request, the EST shall make a case note and suspend any penalty being imposed.

In addition, Form CW 2209 must be sent with all Notice of Actions (NOAs) pertaining to grant changes due to the failure to meet immunization requirements.

1. The EST shall determine if good cause exists for not submitting verification due to lack of reasonable access to immunization services.

Circumstances which may constitute good cause may include, but are not limited to:

- Language barriers,
  - Physical distance,
  - Illness of a parent(s)/caretaker relative,
  - Bona fide transportation problems;
  - Vaccine shortage,
  - Lack of available appointments,
  - [Is the victim of past/present domestic abuse which has caused the inability to comply with immunization requirements, or](#)
  - The records do not correctly show all the immunizations the child(ren) received and the parent(s)/caretaker relative is trying to correct the records
2. If it is determined that good cause exists, the applicant/recipient will have an additional 30 days to submit immunization verification.

#### **F. Good Faith Effort**

Applicants/recipients who have made a good faith effort to initiate age-appropriate immunizations for their child(ren) in the AU, but the child(ren) cannot complete the series because of a spacing requirement between vaccine doses, may be considered at that point to have received "all age-appropriate immunizations".

#### **G. Penalty for Non-Cooperation**

If an applicant/recipient fails to submit timely verification of immunization of any child(ren) in the AU under the age of 6, and DOES NOT qualify for an exemption or have good cause, the grant must be reduced by the amount allowed for the needs of the parent(s)/caretaker relative in the AU.

The CalWIN system will automatically impose an Immunization Penalty on the parent(s) or caretaker relative of any child under age 6 who does not have documentation of the age-appropriate immunizations (or good cause/exemption) entered in CalWIN.

**Example:** An AU composed of a mother and her three children fails to submit verification of immunization and is not found to have good cause. The mother has total earned income of \$525 per month and no disability-based unearned income. The AU is nonexempt.

Grant Computation: AU size remains four, but due to the penalty, MAP for three is used.

\$ 1000	Gross Earned Income
- 500	\$225 Income Disregard
\$ 500	Remaining Earned Income
- 250	50% Earned Income Disregard
\$ 250	Net Nonexempt Income
\$ 878	MAP for three (excluding the parent)
- 250	Total Net Nonexempt Income
\$ 628	Aid Payment

**Note:** In a Minor Parent case, the aided senior parent is considered the responsible caretaker relative and is therefore penalized if age-appropriate immunizations are not verified for the minor parent's child.

## H. Removing a Penalty

### 1. Child Turns Six

CalWIN will automatically end the immunization penalty effective the first of the month in which the child turns 6.

**Example:** If the child's sixth birthday is June 5, the penalty shall end May 31.

**Note:** If there is still a child in the AU who has not yet reached the age of 6 and for whom verification of immunization is still needed and the child/caretaker relative does not meet an exemption or good cause criteria, the penalty shall not be lifted until the youngest child for whom the penalty is imposed, reaches the age of 6, or meets the exemption/good cause criteria.

### 2. Verification is Submitted or Exemption Met

Once verification of immunization is submitted or an exemption is met, the EST shall increase the grant to reflect the needs of the parent(s)/caretaker relative effective the first of the month following the month in which verification is received.

## I. CalWIN Entries

For each child in the AU who is under the age of 6, the EST shall document receipt and verification of immunization, determination of good cause or any exemption in CalWIN on the Collect Individual Immunization Detail screen.

For each dose received, the EST shall update the case as follows:

- In the **Immunization Administered [Y/N]** field, select “Y”.
- In the **Administered Date** field, enter the date the immunization was received.
- In the Good Cause [Y/N] field, select whether good cause exists from the drop-down menu.
- In the **Verification Status** field, select appropriate answer from drop-down menu.
- In the **Source** field, select appropriate answer from drop-down menu.
- If the child has been granted good cause or exemption for immunization, choose the appropriate reason from the drop-down menu in the **Reason for Not Receiving Immunization** field.

**Collect Individual Immunization Detail** Jump:

View History | View Deleted | Search Comments | Maintain Comments | Case Overview | Run ED/BC | PR Details | Held Changes

Save | Switch | Reset | Add | Detail | Delete | Print | Close

**Case**

Number: 1B05R7Z Name: Waterloo, Immunization Alerts... Programs  
 Status: Pending Status Date: 02/26/2020 Pending Alerts: 4 Archived? PR Cycle

\* Name: Waterloo, Child | 2 | 126-12-1739

Effective Beg	Immunization Type	Begin Age	End Age	Administered [Y/N]	Administered Date	Good Cause [Y/N]	Verification Status	Source	Reason for Not Receiving Immunization
02/26/2020	DTP(diph.,tetanus,pert 4 Months	4 Months	4 Months	Yes	01/15/2018	No	Received	Immunization Record	
02/26/2020	Hemophilus Influenzae 4 Months	4 Months	4 Months	Yes	01/15/2018	No	Received	Immunization Record	
02/26/2020	Polio 2 4 Months	4 Months	4 Months	Yes	01/15/2018	No	Received	Immunization Record	
02/26/2020	DTP(diph.,tetanus,pert 6 Months	6 Months	6 Months	Yes	03/21/2018	No	Received	Doctor's/Physician's Statement	
02/26/2020	Hemophilus Influenza 16 Months	15 Months	18 Months	No		Yes	Received	Doctor's/Physician's Statement	
02/26/2020	Hepatitis B 3 6 Months	18 Months	18 Months						Lack of Availability
02/26/2020	Polio 3 6 Months	18 Months	18 Months						Language Barrier
02/26/2020	MMR(measles, mumps 12 Months	15 Months	15 Months						Medical Reason
02/26/2020	Varicella Vaccine(chick 12 Months	18 Months	18 Months						OTHER
02/26/2020	Hemophilus Influenzae 12 Months	80 Months	80 Months						Personal Belief
02/26/2020	DTP(diph.,tetanus,pert 15 Months	18 Months	18 Months						Transportation Issues

## J. Intercounty Transfers (ICTs)

For ICT cases, a recipient who has submitted verification of age-appropriate immunizations in the sending county and that county has determined it to be adequate, shall not be required to resubmit duplicate verification in the receiving county.

The EST shall:

Contact the other county to request a copy of the immunization verification before applying a penalty when processing an ICT, and the client cannot readily provide the immunization verification.

## References

All County Letter 97-70

All County Letter 98-35

All County Letter 11-57

All County Letter 14-98

All County Letter 17-86

All County Letter 17-87

[CalWIN Procedural Help – Remove Immunization Penalty](#)

[Form CW 101 CalWORKs Immunization Rules](#)

[Form CW 2209 Immunization Good Cause Request Form](#)

MPP Section 40-105.4