Policy: Vaccine Requirement Exemption Request Policy

Section: Infection Control and Control and Safety

History: Created on 05/01/2019. Revised 09/01/2021.

Approval: Medical Director, Health Services

Purpose:

- Entrance health requirements and vaccine requirements are vital to reduce the risk of potential exposure infectious diseases to the students. The Vaccine Requirement Exemption Request Policy is how a student may request exemption from required vaccines.

Objective:

- To provide a mechanism for students to request exempt from the Caltech vaccine requirements.

Responsibility and Authority:

- The Medical Director has the authority to formulate, modify and implement this policy in consultation with the Vice President of Student Affairs.

Procedures for Implementation:

- The California Institute of Technology allows for exemptions to immunization requirements based on a medical condition that is a contraindication to vaccination for the following vaccines: MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella), Varicella (chickenpox), Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) Hepatitis B, Meningococcal conjugate (Serogroups A, C, Y, & W-135) and COVID-19. Requests for exemptions for non-medical reasons will be denied and are not eligible for appeal.
- A list of established medical contraindications to vaccination can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website for Guide to
Contraindications and standard Medical References. Contraindications can also be found on the package insert of each vaccine.

- Medical exemption requests must be documented on the VACCINE EXEMPTION APPLICATION:
  
  https://wellness.caltech.edu/documents/20886/Vaccination_Exemption_Form_3.1.22.pdf

  and submitted by the student to the Medical Director. **ALL EXEMPTION REQUESTS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:**

  - The specific vaccine(s) for which the exemption is/are requested
  - A written statement by a currently licensed, treating medical provider [a physician (MD or DO), nurse practitioner (NP), or physician’s assistant (PA)], including the following for any vaccine(s) for which an exemption is requested:
    - The applicable CDC contraindication for the vaccine(s), or the applicable contraindication found in the manufacturer’s package insert for the vaccine(s).
    - A statement that the medical condition of the person or medical circumstances relating to the person are such that immunization is not considered safe or is contraindicated, indicating the specific medical reason and probable duration of the medical condition or circumstances that contraindicate immunization with the vaccine(s).
  - Whether or not the duration of the exemption is permanent or temporary for any vaccine(s) and, if temporary, the expiration date of the exemption for each vaccine.
  - Alternatively, proof of documentation of positive antibody titers (if available) to any of the above vaccinations, at levels which indicate immunity to disease, may be used to satisfy the immunization requirements or to appeal the immunization requirement for that vaccine.

- All forms must be signed by a currently licensed, treating medical provider (MD, DO, NP, or PA) and include the practice location address, telephone number, signing provider’s license number, and state or country (if outside the U.S.) where the licensed medical provider practices.

- Requests for medical exemptions will be reviewed by the Medical Director for Caltech Student Wellness Services (SWS). Requests for exemption will be considered if the Medical Exemption Request Form requirements are met for each vaccine for which an exemption is requested. If information supplied is ambiguous or insufficient after review by the Medical Director, the student will be informed, and attempts will be made to obtain additional necessary information. If sufficient clarification or information is not provided, the exemption request will be denied. The student will be informed of the decision.

- Appeal of denied medical exemption to vaccine requirements.
  - The student and their medical provider may submit a written appeal to the Caltech Medical Director, who will review the appeal in consultation with the
local Public Health Department and/or State Public Health Department and/or specialists in the field of vaccinations.
  o The student will be informed of the appeal decision.
• In active infectious disease outbreak situations, students granted medical exemptions may not be allowed to come to campus. These situations will be determined on a case-by-case basis, and in consultation with state and local public health officials.