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January 26, 2016

TO: Child Care, Preschool, and Head Start Facility Directors

FROM: Paul Leung, MPH
Immunization Program Manager, Contra Costa Public Health

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 277 and Immunization Requirements, Recommended Actions

Thank you for your hard work.

As you may know, SB277 changes school immunization law. Beginning in 2016, no new personal belief exemption (PBE) forms may be filed for children in child care or preschool. SB277 removes the personal belief exemption but does not affect children with medical exemptions or those who are conditionally admitted.

PBE forms filed **before** January 1, 2016 are valid and will remain valid until the child enters transitional kindergarten or kindergarten. A valid PBE may be transferred from one child care to another child care. However, if the PBE form is lost, then the child will need to meet current immunization requirements. PBE forms from other states or countries are not valid.

PBE forms on file should have been completed correctly and the child should be currently attending or will attend within 6 months of the health care provider or parent signature date. The statement "within 6 months before entry" on filed PBE forms refers to the first day of school. It does not include registration, walk-through, or other administration events. For example, a filed PBE form dated December 31, 2015 would be valid if the child starts child care on or before July 1, 2016. If the child will not be in child care by July 1, 2016, the PBE would not be valid. A PBE date calculator is available:

<http://www.shotsforschool.org/calculator/calculatorWidget.php>

To help protect your children and staff from serious vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles and whooping cough, we encourage child care providers to:

- **Review** enrollee immunization records. Records should show that all child care-required immunizations have been met, or that a valid PBE or medical exemption is on file, or that the child is in the process of meeting requirements as a conditional entrant.
- **Contact** families of current enrollees who do not meet immunization requirements. Families have up to 10 school days to provide the needed documentation but your facility can set a shorter time period.
- **Watch** an archived webinar for schools: <http://www.immunizeca.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Recording-New-School-Rules-Part-II.mp4>

Additional SB277 resources for schools and parents are available on the California Department of Public Health's Shots for School website: <http://www.shotsforschool.org/laws/sb277faq/>

Please visit our website: www.cchealth.org/immunization or contact the Contra Costa Public Health Immunization Program at (925) 313-6767 if you have any questions.

