County of Orange Social Services Agency
Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services Division

Program/Area:	**CalWORKS/Eligibility**		
Title:	**Immunizations**		
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Approved:	**Signature on file**		

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines on the immunization requirements for all children under the age of six in the CalWORKs (CW) Assistance Unit (AU).

CW requires that all aided children who are not required to be enrolled in school must have all age-appropriate immunizations. If immunizations are not verified within the set time frames, penalties will be applied to the aided parent(s)/caretaker relative, resulting in a reduced CW grant.

BOOKMARKS

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WHO IS AFFECTED?

The requirement for immunizations applies to all children under the age of six in the AU.

INFORMING REQUIREMENTS

At initial application, annual Re-Evaluation (RE), and when adding a child under the age of six, all applicants and recipients must be provided with the CalWORKs Immunization Rules - CW 101
and the Recommended Immunization Schedules - TEMP CW 101A. Eligibility Workers must inform all applicants and recipients of the following:

- Their obligation to secure immunizations for children under the age of six in the AU;
- The recommended immunizations;
- The exemptions due to medical reasons or personal/religious beliefs; and
- How immunizations may be obtained.

The CalWORKs Immunization Rules (CW 101), Recommended Immunization Schedules (TEMP CW 101A), and the Immunization Good Cause Request Form (CW 2209) will be included in all CalWORKs Applications packets (Worker Tool (WT) 47 - CalWORKs/CalFresh Referral and Application Packet) and in the Annual RE packets (WT 48 - CalWORKs Re-Evaluation Packet.

In addition, the Immunization Good Cause Request Form - CW 2209 must be sent with the CW Change – Required Documentation – Immunizations Not Received Notice of Action (NOA) - M40-105C pertaining to grant changes due to the failure to meet immunization requirements.

EXEMPTIONS

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

1. A physician's written statement stating that the child should not be immunized, which includes the prohibitive medical condition and the duration.
2. An affidavit stating that the immunization requirement is contrary to their beliefs and the reasons for their objection.

VERIFICATION OF IMMUNIZATION

The parent(s)/caretaker relative must cooperate in verifying each aided child's age-appropriate immunizations until the child completes all immunizations or the child reaches the age of six.

Verification will be requested at application, annual re-evaluation, and when adding a child to the AU under the age of six.

Note: If the immunization verification on file still indicates that the child meets the immunization requirements, additional verification is not needed.

Acceptable forms of verification include the following:

- The child's Yellow Immunization Record.
- A statement from a physician that the child's immunizations are up-to-date based on the age of the child.

VERIFICATION TIME FRAMES

Verification of immunization must be received within the following time frames:

If the Household is…	And…	Verification must be submitted within…
Applying for CW	is receiving Medi-Cal	45 days from the date of application

Applying for CW	is also applying for Medi-Cal	30 days from the date Medi-Cal is approved
Adding a child under the age of 6	the child is receiving Medi-Cal	45 days from the date of application
Adding a child under the age of 6	is also requesting Medi-Cal for the child	30 days from the date Medi-Cal is approved
Receiving CW	The annual RE is due	45 calendar days after the annual RE interview

Notes:

- When requesting Immunization records from client, the Request for Verification – CW 2200 must be sent along with the Immunization Good Cause Request Form - CW 2209 with a return due date of 10 calendar days (If the 10th day falls on a weekend/holiday, then the date must be manually moved to the next business day in CalSAWS).
- Approval of CW cannot be delayed pending the return of the immunization verification. If verification is not received prior to transferring the case to Continuing, the Intake worker will ensure that the Immunization Status Detail page in CalSAWS reflects that the immunization verification is pending and must communicate this information to the Continuing Worker.

AGE-APPROPRIATE IMMUNIZATIONS

Age-appropriate immunizations are those suggested for children under six years of age:

Type of Immunization	Abbreviation (s)	Dose	Recommended at
Polio	OPV, IPV	1st 2nd 3rd 4th	2 months 4 months 6-18 months Before starting school (4–6 yrs)
Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis	DTP, DTaP, DT	1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th	2 months 4 months 6 months 15-18 months Before starting school (4–6 yrs)
Kinrix Combination Vaccine (DTaP and IPV combined)		Booster	4-6 years of age as a booster dose of DTaP and IPV
Measles, Mumps, Rubella	MMR	1st 2nd	12-15 months Before starting school (4–6 yrs)
Varicella virus vaccine *(chicken pox)	VAR, VZA	1st	12-18 months

Hepatitis B		1st 2nd 3rd	At birth – 3 months 1-5 months 6-18 months
Hemophilus influenza type b	Hib	1st 2nd 3rd Or 4th	2 months 4 months 6 months (may not be required) 12-18 months

*The varicella virus vaccine is only required for susceptible children, that is, for children who have not had the chickenpox.

REVIEWING VERIFICATIONS

The Eligibility Worker will use the Recommended Immunization Schedules – TEMP CW 101A and the WT 13 - Immunization Schedule Template to determine if the child's immunizations are up-to-date.

Vaccine names are often abbreviated. Eligibility Workers will use the Vaccine Acronyms & Abbreviations chart for additional information regarding widely used vaccines.

Yellow Immunization Record:

The following steps will assist the Eligibility Worker with reviewing the Yellow Immunization Record:

1. Determine the child's current age in months.
2. Start at the top of the card with Polio.
3. Based on the child's age, is the required number of shots, per the table above, entered on the Yellow Card?
4. If the child is overdue on a shot series, look at "Dose" and "Recommended at Age" columns on the Recommended Immunization Schedules - TEMP CW 101A. If more time has elapsed than is recommended, they are out of compliance.

If the child needs additional immunizations, refer the parent(s)/caretaker relative to their doctor or clinic.

PENALTY FOR NON-COOPERATION

If the parent fails or refuses to cooperate in providing verification, the needs of the eligible parent(s)/caretaker relative will be deducted from the Maximum Aid Payment (MAP) in determining Financial Eligibility and the CW grant. In a two-parent AU, the needs of both parents are not considered. The penalized parent(s) remains a member(s) of the AU and is required to comply with the Welfare-to-Work requirements.

If a client is in the process of working with the doctor's office to correct an error in their child(ren)'s immunization records, the Eligibility Worker must ask the client for a current record once the immunization record has been corrected.

Minor Parent:
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.

Note: The Vendor/Two-Party Issuances provision does not apply when the penalty for failure to comply with the immunization requirement is imposed.

GOOD FAITH EFFORTS

Good Faith Effort is when the applicant/recipient has attempted to comply within the limits of their resources.

Applicants/recipients who have made a good faith effort to initiate immunizations for a 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." Good faith effort may also apply in cases where the vaccine is not available.

Staff shall document when the applicant/recipient makes a good faith effort in obtaining necessary documentation in a CalSAWS Journal Entry.

GOOD CAUSE

Prior to applying a penalty, the worker must determine whether an exemption or good cause exists when requested by the client. Good cause may be granted if any of the following circumstances exist:

- Transportation issues.
- An appointment is delayed or the client is unable to get an appointment.
- The immunization needed is not available.
- The doctor does not speak their language or there is another language access problem.
- Client or the child(ren) is sick and unable to go to the doctor or clinic.
- The records do not correctly show all the immunization the child(ren) received and the client is trying to correct the records. The client will need to provide the corrected records.

Upon request for good cause, the Immunization Good Cause Request Form - CW 2209 must be provided to applicants or recipients. However, completion of the form is not required. A client's verbal request for good cause must be accepted in lieu of a completed CW 2209. When a verbal request is accepted, the worker must document the request in a CalSAWS Journal Entry.

If good cause exists, a penalty must not be applied to the AU and the client must be allowed an additional 30 days to submit the immunization verification.

An extension of 30 additional days may be granted for good cause if the verification cannot be provided due to a lack of access to immunization services such as those listed above.

The reason for not receiving immunizations shall be documented in a CalSAWS Journal Entry.

Examples of Good Cause:

- Immunization Good Cause Request Form - CW 2209: Worker receives a completed Immunization Good Cause Request Form - CW 2209 in order to claim good cause due to a flat tire. The client was unable to get to the doctor's office as scheduled. Good cause was granted, a 30-day control is set up by the worker to follow-up and the non-compliance entry was removed. The client is given 30 days to provide verification that the child is up to date on his/her immunizations. At the end of the 30 days, if the verification requested has not been provided, the non-compliance is applied again. At this point the worker must send the CW Change – Required Documentation – Immunizations Not Received NOA - M40-105C to decrease the CW grant, and the Immunization Good Cause Request Form - CW 2209.
    - **Note:** The Immunization Good Cause Request Form - CW 2209 must be sent with each CW Change – Required Documentation – Immunizations Not Received NOA - M40-105C.

- Request for good cause: If the client fails to provide the Immunization Good Cause Request Form - CW 2209 or does not call the worker to inform that there is good cause for not immunizing the child(ren) within the allowed time frame, the cash aid would not be retroactively issued to the AU for non-compliance.

- Time Limit: There is no set time limit for the client to claim good cause for not meeting the immunization requirements. In the above scenario, within the 30-day period, if the client submitted the Immunization Good Cause Request Form - CW 2209 or contacted the worker to claim yet another good cause reason, i.e., the child is sick or the client cannot get an appointment before the 30 days ended, good cause must be granted and the client has a new 30-day period to comply.
    - **Note**: The worker must determine if good cause exists for each claim received on a case-by-case basis.

PENALTIES

Penalties are effective the first of the month following the month that a timely notice is sent.

The CW Change – Required Documentation – Immunizations Not Received NOA - M40-105C NOA must include:

- Name of the child who is not current in his/her immunization records or lacks proof of up-to-date immunizations;
- List of possible good cause reasons;
- Explanation of why a penalty would apply; and
- Information on how and when cash aid will be restored to the AU.
- The Immunization Good Cause Request Form - CW 2209.

The penalized parent(s)/caretaker relative will not be included in the AU size when determining the MAP for both financial eligibility and grant computation.

Examples:

Child Only Cases (Parent(s) not in the AU):

No penalty can be applied in these cases because an immunization penalty is only applied to the parent(s)/caretaker relative(s) in the AU.

Stepparent in the AU:

If the AU includes a stepparent and a penalty is to be applied for not verifying immunization for a stepchild, the biological parent or caretaker relative of the non-immunized child would be penalized. If the biological parent left the home and the stepparent became the caretaker relative, then the penalty would be applied to the stepparent.

Unmarried couple with a common child:

In an AU that includes an unmarried couple with a common child and the mother's separate child, the mother fails to provide immunization verification for her separate child. Only the mother is penalized.

Senior parent and minor parent:

An AU includes a senior parent and a minor parent and minor parent's child. The senior parent is responsible for both the minor parent and the minor parent's child and is therefore, responsible for submitting verification of immunization for minor parent's child. Both the senior parent and minor parent are penalized if it is not provided.

Treatment of Income:

The non-exempt income of the penalized person(s) is counted in the family's grant determination, and they remain an eligible member of the AU.

CALFRESH IMPACT

CalFresh (CF) benefits will not increase when the parent(s) or caretaker relative is penalized for non-cooperation with immunization verification requirements. The MAP differential will be budgeted in CF.

The penalized individual(s) remains CF eligible and the CF Household retains Categorical Eligibility in such situations.

REMOVING A PENALTY

All children in the AU who have reached the age of six years old should have the immunization penalty removed from the parent(s)/caretaker relative. The penalty will be removed on the prior month in which the child turns six years of age and benefits restored the first day of the child's sixth birthday month.

Example:

If a child's sixth birthday is June 5th, the penalty will end in the month of May and benefits should be restored effective June 1st.

If the immunization verification is provided after a penalty has been imposed, the needs of the parent(s)/caretaker relative are added back effective the first of the month following the month in which verification is received or the good cause is granted per request (verbally or via the Immunization Good Cause Request Form - CW 2209).

Example:

A parent/caretaker relative provides the immunization verification on August 25th, the worker will lift the penalty in the month of August and restore benefits effective September 1st.

NOTICES OF ACTION

- CW Change – Required Documentation – Immunizations Received NOA – M40-105B
- CW Change – Required Documentation – Immunizations Not Received NOA - M40-105C

REFERENCES

- ACLs 05-19, 13-51, 14-88, 14-98, 17-86, 17-87, 97-70, 98-35.
- ACINs I-19-99.
- EAS MPP 40-105.4, 44-315.311.

ATTACHMENTS

- CalWORKs Immunization Rules - CW 101
- Immunization Good Cause Request Form - CW 2209
- Recommended Immunization Schedules - TEMP CW 101A
- Vaccine Acronyms & Abbreviations
- WT 13 - Immunization Schedule Template
- WT 47 - CalWORKs/CalFresh Referral and Application Packet
- WT 48 - CalWORKs Re-Evaluation Packet
- Yellow Immunization Record