

## GISW Immunization Policy

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect the overall health, safety and welfare of the German International School of Washington, DC (GISW) campus and its community.

In accordance with Maryland State law, the German International School of Washington D.C. (GISW) must implement the 2013 Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) immunization requirements with the annual updates indicated on the Maryland Department of Health website:

<https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/OIDEOR/IMMUN/Pages/back-to-school-immunization-requirements.aspx>

The COMAR clearly indicates the required vaccinations at various ages and grades for any student attending the GISW.

GISW will post current immunization requirements on its website. The Admissions Coordinator ensures that parents and/or guardians are informed about these requirements, including possible consequences when not fulfilled, and will provide the immunization forms.

Should the prior country of residence have different immunization regulations/requirements the Admissions Coordinator shall point out that proof of immunity by positive blood test would be acceptable in lieu of the vaccination by certain timelines and will refer the family to the school nurse if there are specific questions.

In order to implement the COMAR, prior to the first day of school all new students and students transitioning from the Preschool to the SES will submit a new up to date vaccination form, and all re-enrolling students will submit a new form in the years in which they are required by the COMAR to have new vaccinations. The School would highly recommend submitting an updated vaccination record (copy from the doctor's office or vaccination card) whenever a new vaccination has been administered.

In addition, the School's Admissions Coordinator will notify the School Nurse of any new students who have confirmed their enrollment in the school within 2 business days of the confirmed enrollment.

Students may not start school unless the appropriate forms have been submitted to the School Nurse, checked for compliance with state law or the indicated documentation for temporary admission, as stipulated by the COMAR 10.06.04.06, and approved by the School Nurse. The Nurse informs the Admissions Coordinator within 1 business day of her/his approval. If adequate immunization or the above mentioned temporary documentation is not submitted/approved, the Head of School or her/his delegate will inform families that their child is not allowed to start school until the adequate documentation is submitted and approved.

The COMAR makes clear that the only instances in which students may be admitted without the required vaccinations are instances of:

1. COMAR 10.06.04.04: Medical Contraindications. This exemption requires the student to "present a licensed physicians' or health officer's written statement that the student's immunization against disease" stipulated in COMAR 10.06.04.03 is medically contraindicated. Furthermore, the physician or

health officer must indicate whether the contraindication is permanent or temporary and follow the COMAR 10.06.04.04 requirements for temporary contraindications.

Furthermore, as indicated in COMAR 10.06.04.04 D and E the school shall maintain a current list of all students enrolled who have an exemption to immunizations on medical grounds and make the necessary reports to the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene as indicated in the COMAR.

2. COMAR 10.06.04.05 Religious Exemption. This exemption requires the student, “whose parent or guardian objects to immunization on the ground that the immunization conflicts with the parent’s or guardian’s bona fide religious beliefs and practices” use the form provided by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, to request and exemption from the state required immunizations stipulated in COMAR.

As clearly indicated in COMAR 10.06.04.05 B, this exemption “does not apply when the Secretary declares an emergency or epidemic of disease.”

The German International School requires that religious exemption be documented on the State of Maryland immunization form and include the signature of the student’s physician indicating the lack of immunizations and that counseling on immunizations has been provided.

Furthermore, as indicated in COMAR 10.06.04.04 and 10.06.04.05 (#1 and #2 as shown above): The School Nurse shall maintain a current list of all students enrolled who have an exemption to immunizations on medical or religious grounds and make the necessary reports to the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene as indicated in the COMAR (annually by November 15).

The COMAR 10.06.04.06 provides clear guidelines for temporary admission or retention of students in cases in which the student is homeless, or is unable to provide the necessary proof of immunization.

Similarly, COMAR 10.06.04.07 provides information on vaccine provision, COMAR 10.06.04.08 describes the need for the school to provide records of immunizations of all its students to a health officer to assure compliance with the regulations and COMAR 10.06.04.09 indicates procedures for annual reporting of new students lead by the nurse (annually by November 15).