

IMMUNIZATIONS

Every student enrolled in a Catholic School in the State of Texas shall be immunized against vaccine-preventable diseases caused by infectious agents in accordance with the immunization schedule adopted by the Texas Department of State Health Services. A student who fails to present the required evidence shall not be accepted for enrollment.

A student may be provisionally enrolled if they have an immunization record that indicates they have received at least one dose of each specified age-appropriate vaccine required by this policy. To remain enrolled, the student must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and provide evidence of immunization to the school (i.e., documentation from a pediatrician or other medical clinic/provider). **The school nurse or health coordinator must review the immunization status of a provisionally enrolled student every 30 days to ensure compliance with this policy. If at the end of the 30 days, the student has not received a subsequent dose of the vaccine, the student is not in compliance with this policy. The school shall exclude the student from attendance until the required dose is received and proof is provided to the school.**

Immunizations are not in conflict with the Catholic faith. Conscientious objections or waivers, **which may be permissible for attendance in public schools, do not qualify for an exemption in Catholic Schools in Texas.** The only exception to the preceding requirement is a medical exemption signed by a licensed physician (M.D. or D.O.) in good standing and authorized to practice in the State of Texas that includes the physician's license number. The statement must state that, in the physician's opinion, the immunization required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or any member of the student's household. Unless it is written in the statement that a lifelong condition exists, the exemption statement is valid for only one year from the date signed by the physician.

Pontifical Academy for Life Statement

The Pontifical Academy for Life rejects the claim that Catholics have a moral duty to refuse the rubella vaccine on the grounds of conscience and Catholic teaching. It encourages Catholic parents to vaccinate their children against rubella and other serious diseases despite the unfortunate origin of the cell lines used in the manufacture of vaccines. Therefore, immunizations are not in conflict with the Catholic faith. [The Pontifical Academy for Life, "Moral Reflections on Vaccines Prepared from Cells Derived from Aborted Fetuses", 2005: +DEF].

This immunization policy was approved by the Texas Catholic Conference Accreditation Commission and endorsed by the Bishops of Texas in January 2009 and reaffirmed by the Bishops of Texas in April 2017, 2021, and 2023 with no changes.
