
Appendix 5: Immunisation certificate

A5.1 Introduction

The Health (Immunisation) Regulations 1995 require parents/guardians of children born from 1 January 1995 to show their child's immunisation certificate when these children start at an early childhood service and on entry to primary school (school year 1). The immunisation certificate shows whether a child is fully immunised or not. Information must be recorded at age 15 months when the early childhood vaccinations are complete, and after the immunisations at age 4 years. For those parents/guardians who decline to have their child vaccinated, the immunisation certificate may be completed at any time, but the completed immunisation certificate must still be shown when the child starts at an early childhood service or primary school.

A5.2 Parent/guardian responsibilities

Parents or guardians can choose whether or not to vaccinate their child, but they must show the immunisation certificate when their child starts at an early childhood service and on school entry, regardless of the child's immunisation status.

A5.3 Vaccinator responsibilities

When completing and signing the immunisation certificate, vaccinators should be confident that a child is fully vaccinated. The primary concern is the child's protection. If the previous vaccination history is uncertain and parents/guardians do not wish their child to be vaccinated, the child should be certified as 'not fully immunised'. Children who have not received the necessary doses of a vaccine or have no evidence of laboratory-proven disease should be recorded as 'not fully immunised'.

The immunisation certificate is included in the *Well Child Tamariki Ora My Health Book*. This book also contains the record of the child's vaccinations. Vaccinators should ensure they record vaccination and other relevant health information in this book. This becomes particularly important if the child sees different health professionals. If the child's book is lost, it should be replaced. Copies of the *Well Child Tamariki Ora My Health Book* and immunisation certificate pads can be obtained from the authorised provider of health education materials, usually the local public health service, or ordered from the HealthEd website (www.healthed.govt.nz).

A5.4 Early childhood services and school responsibilities

All early childhood services and primary schools, including kōhanga reo, independent schools and kura kaupapa Māori, must keep an immunisation register for children born from 1 January 1995. The register is a tool to help reduce the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases in early childhood services and schools, as well as in the wider community. Registers are available from the authorised provider of health education materials, or from the HealthEd website (www.healthed.govt.nz).

The early childhood service or school has the responsibility to:

- advise the child's parent/guardian that an immunisation certificate is required
- ensure the parent or guardian is asked to provide the immunisation certificate
- record the information from the immunisation certificate (or the fact that it was not shown) on the register
- advise the parent/guardian that a GP, practice nurse or public health nurse can help them to get an immunisation certificate if they do not have one.