



## Vaccination Policy for TIR students

“To preserve one human life is to preserve the entire world” (Avot d’Rabbi Natan 31:2).

We are stating this policy to emphasize the importance of vaccinating your child.

Among our most cherished Jewish values is the imperative for preserving life and maintaining health. We embrace this value specifically by taking preventive measures to protect the public health of our sacred Temple community as a whole. We know from our sacred tradition: “Whenever a person can save another person’s life, but fails to do so, he or she transgresses a negative commandment”, as it says, “Do not stand idly by while your neighbor’s blood is shed” (Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Hilcot Rotzeah U’shmirat Hanefesh 1:14). Vaccines save lives and prevent others from being sick. This is in line with the URJ, Jacksonville Jewish community and local county school systems

### Effective August 1, 2019:

- We require all children attending TIR (including madrichim) to adhere to the immunization standards set forth in the "Recommended Childhood and Adolescent Immunization Schedule" published annually by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).
- Your child will not be enrolled in TIR unless a current immunization certificate is on file.

Practicing pediatricians across North America recognize this schedule as the standard of care regarding childhood & adolescent vaccinations. These standards, as currently published, are set forth in **Table 1**. The standards will be automatically updated to incorporate changes as amended by the AAP from time to time. TIR will require evidence of required vaccinations for registering students in preparation for each new TIR school year.

We are committed to protecting the health of all of our members. If you choose not to vaccinate your child, you are putting your child and others at unnecessary risk for life-threatening illness and disability, and even death. We believe that this goes against

the most honored principles of Judaism and our duty to protect our members. It is our hope that all members will embrace these Jewish principles and adhere to the vaccination standards described above.

### About Exceptions

Yes, there are exceptions to the Temple's vaccination policy, and they are very, very rare.

We recognize that individuals who have had a documented allergy or severe adverse reaction to a particular vaccine may not be able to complete the immunization schedule as outlined. Additionally, individuals with medical conditions such as congenital immunodeficiency or HIV, cancer and who are receiving chemotherapy, transplant patients, and persons receiving immunosuppressive drugs and chronic steroids also may not be able to receive certain vaccines. In these extremely rare circumstances, current documentation from a Physician (MD or DO), or a Pediatric/Family Practice Advanced Practice Nurse (ARNP or PNP), describing the reason for exemption from immunization must be furnished to Temple. We are happy to discuss case by case management of the extremely rare circumstance of medical contraindication to partial or complete vaccination. All information will be kept confidential between the family and the Director of TIR and will be housed in a locked file cabinet designated for this information.

Vaccines may be one of the greatest medical advances in the past century in terms of life saving measures and its impact on the health of the broader community. While I value different opinions within our society, there is no religious prohibition within Judaism to permit the use of religious exemption as a valid reason not to receive a vaccine. Judaism as a religion values medical progress and while vaccination is not forbidden in *Halachah* - it is simply not discussed. What is discussed is the preservation of life - a value reaching higher than even Shabbat.

This was approved unanimously by the Education Committee on July 9, 2019 and the Temple Board of Trustees on July 16, 2019.