**Section 665.510 Religious Objection**

a) *Children* entering any public, private or parochial school or a preschool program operated by an elementary or secondary school or institution of higher learning whose *parents or legal guardians object to health, dental or eye examinations or any part thereof, to immunizations,* *or to vision and hearing screening tests on religious grounds shall not be required to undergo the examinations, tests or immunizations to which they so object if such parents or legal guardians present to the appropriate local school authority a signed Certificate of Religious Exemption detailing the grounds for the objection and the specific immunizations, tests or examinations to which they object* in accordance with subsections (f) and (g)*.*

b) *The grounds for the* religious *objection must set forth the specific religious belief that conflicts with the examination, test, immunization or other medical intervention. The religious objection stated need not be directed by the tenets of an established religious organization. However, general philosophical or moral reluctance to allow physical examinations, eye examinations, immunizations, vision and hearing screenings, or dental examinations does not provide a sufficient basis for an exception.*

c) *The signed* Certificate of Religious Exemption *shall also reflect the parent's or legal guardian's understanding of the school's exclusion policies in the case of a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak or exposure.*

d) *The* Certificate of Religious Exemption *must also be signed by the authorized examining health care provider responsible for the performance of the child's health examination confirming that the provider provided education to the parent or legal guardian on the benefits of the immunization and the health risks to the student and to the community of the communicable diseases for which immunization is required in this State. However, the* *health care provider's signature on the certificate reflects only that education was provided and does not allow the health care provider grounds to determine a religious exemption.*

e) *The local school authority is responsible for determining if the content of the Certificate of Religious Exemption constitutes a valid religious objection. The local school authority shall inform the parent or legal guardian of exclusion procedures in accordance with* the Control of Communicable Diseases Code *at the time the objection is presented.* The Certificate of Religious Exemption form shall be placed on file in the student's permanent record.

f) *Parents or legal guardians must submit the Certificate of Religious Exemption to their local school authority prior to entering kindergarten, sixth, and ninth grade* *for each child for which they are requesting an exemption.* (Section 27-8.1(8) of the School Code)

g) Use of the Certificate of Religious Exemption applies to students transferring into school districts at any grade or students entering preschool programs operated by elementary or secondary schools. If the permanent record transferred with the student includes a valid Certificate of Religious Exemption, the new school district or preschool program shall accept the Certificate presented as if the Certificate had been initially presented to the new school.

h) The Certificate of Religious Exemption and subsections (a), (b), (c) and (d) are also applicable to children entering child care facilities not operated by an elementary or secondary school or institution of higher learning whose parents or legal guardians object to health, dental or eye examinations, immunizations or vision or hearing screening tests on religious grounds. The child care facility shall inform the parents or legal guardians of outbreak control exclusion procedures, in accordance with the Control of Communicable Diseases Code, at the time the religious exemption is presented. The child care facility shall attach the form to the child's health record and place the record in the child's permanent record.

(Source: Amended at 41 Ill. Reg. 2973, effective February 27, 2017)