

# State of California HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY



DIANA S. DOOLEY  
SECRETARY

October 9, 2015

The Honorable Kevin de León  
President pro Tempore  
State Capitol, Room 205  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Toni G. Atkins  
Speaker of the Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 219  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Aging

Child Support  
Services

The Honorable Jean Fuller  
Senate Republican Leader  
State Capitol, Room 305  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Kristin Olsen  
Assembly Republican Leader  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Community Services  
and Development

Developmental  
Services

Dear Senate pro Tem de León, Assembly Speaker Atkins, Senate  
Republican Leader Fuller, and Assembly Republican Leader Olsen:

Emergency Medical  
Services Authority

Health Care Services

I am writing to inform you that I am granting a temporary exemption  
from California Health and Safety Code Section 124172 for seasonal  
influenza vaccine with trace levels of thimerosal to be administered to  
children younger than three years from October 9, 2015 through  
December 31, 2015, because the current supply of thimerosal-free  
vaccine for young children is inadequate.

Managed Health Care

Public Health

Rehabilitation

Social Services

This exemption was requested by the California District of the  
American Academy of Pediatrics, the California Academy of Family  
Physicians, the California Medical Association and the California  
Immunization Coalition, and has been recommended by the  
California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

State Hospitals

Statewide Health  
Planning and  
Development

The federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and the  
CDPH recommend that all persons six months and older, especially  
young children, receive influenza vaccine each year for their  
protection.

Young children are at increased risk of severe or fatal illness from  
influenza. While thimerosal-free formulations of influenza vaccine  
administered to adults in the United States appear to be ample, there  
are currently limited supplies of thimerosal-free seasonal influenza  
vaccine to protect California's young children, many of whom will  
need two doses of vaccine for maximal protection.

October 9, 2015

I have written the manufacturer, Sanofi Pasteur, urging it to take any and all steps necessary to promptly address the shortage of this influenza vaccine, and asking it to provide an immediate and clear timeline on the availability of the vaccine so that all necessary actions may be taken to protect California's children.

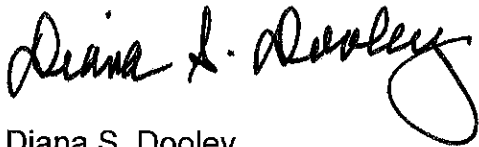
We will continue to assess the need for an extension of this temporary exemption over this period, and will be in regular contact with the manufacturer to assess product availability and to continue to monitor the vaccine supply.

Similar exemptions are in place at present in other states that have restrictions on mercury content, including Illinois and Iowa. I am granting this temporary exemption because of the health risk posed to California by influenza, and because there are inadequate supplies of this vaccine to comply with the law.

In accordance with the intent of the law, during this exemption period immunizers should prioritize available supplies of thimerosal-free vaccine to young children.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 654-3454 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diana S. Dooley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Diana S. Dooley  
Secretary