



SNOHOMISH HEALTH DISTRICT
RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 19-07

RESOLUTION SUBJECT: REQUEST TO THE WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE TO
REDUCE THE NUMBER OF EXEMPTIONS FOR VACCINE
PREVENTABLE DISEASE

WHEREAS, Washington is one of 17 states that gives parents to ability to opt out of school vaccinations requirements for personal or philosophical reasons; and

WHEREAS, the majority of states allow only medical and religious exemptions to school vaccinations; and

WHEREAS, those states have less disease and fewer communicable disease outbreaks than states that allow personal exemptions; and

WHEREAS, measles is one of the most contagious diseases; and

WHEREAS, Washington experienced three large measles outbreaks over the past ten years; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, Snohomish Health District responded to a measles outbreak amongst mostly unvaccinated persons; and

WHEREAS, according to Washington Department of Health, 5.5% - 7.3% of Snohomish County students in grades kindergarten through 12th grade have an immunization exemption; and

WHEREAS, 9.8% of Snohomish County kindergartners were without complete measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccines during the 2017-2018 school year; and

WHEREAS, the reasons for not being vaccinated are personal exemption (4.6%), non-compliance with school requirements (4.5%), and the remaining 0.8% being either medical, religious, or religious membership exemptions; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) both agree on the MMR vaccine's safety; and

WHEREAS, two doses of MMR vaccine are about 97% effective at preventing measles and one dose is about 93% effective; and

WHEREAS, by removing personal exemptions and providing funding for public health outreach and partnerships with schools to decrease those noncompliance rates, the Snohomish Health District is better able to protect the 0.8% who cannot get vaccinated because of medical or religious reasons.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Snohomish Health District Board of Health calls on the Washington state legislature to support reducing the number of exemptions allowed for students entering our school systems.

ADOPTED this 12th day of March 2019.

Stephanie Wright, Chair
Board of Health

ATTEST:

Mark Beatty, MD, MPH
Health Officer