

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · MICHIGAN

Enrolling a Child in School in Michigan: 2026 Guide

No SSN can be required and status cannot be asked, but two proofs of residency and a notarized lease are. The vaccine waiver is at the county health department.

SHORT ANSWER

Two halves, and they belong together. The good half: **a Social Security number cannot be required to enroll and immigration status cannot be asked about**, and the state education department told every district so in writing. The harder half: **districts may ask for two separate proofs of residency and a notarized lease**, which is the highest document threshold we have seen in this series. And know this from the start: **the district publishes in seven languages and Turkish is not one of them.**

The state's answer in writing: status cannot be asked, an SSN cannot be required

- Every child has an equal right to a free public education **regardless of citizenship and immigration status.**
- **Enrollment forms cannot ask about citizenship or about the immigration status of the student or the parent.** The memo's own wording is that a district may not ask immigration status or citizenship questions at enrollment.
- **A Social Security number is not required to enroll.** A school may ask for the number, but it must **say at the same time that it is not required.**
- Districts should not ask for information that could reveal immigration status, such as place of birth.
- **Source note:** we read the [January 2025 memo](#) and the letter beside it **indirectly**, because the state site would not open from this environment during the research. The provision is strong and it has been sent to districts, but if you are told something different at the school, ask for the memo itself; district offices are required to have it.

Compulsory education runs from age 6 to the **18th birthday**. A child who turns 6 **before** December 1 must be enrolled on the first day of that school year; a child who turns 6 on or after December 1 starts the following year. Enrollment goes to the district where the parent or guardian **resides**, and in Michigan school districts are bodies independent of the city: they have their own elected boards and their own property tax lines. Above them sits one more layer at county level, the **Intermediate School District**, which runs schools-of-choice eligibility between districts and whose own tax lines appear line by line on your property tax bill.

The document threshold: two proofs of residency and a notarized lease

REQUIRED	ACCEPTED
Parent identification	A driver's license, state ID card, passport or visa. Only a parent or legal guardian may enroll a child; certified copies of court documents such as a guardianship or divorce order are asked for where relevant.
Student identification	A birth certificate or passport. If no certified copy of the birth certificate exists, a passport or visa plus a notarized record of birth is accepted.
Residency: two documents	One of: the parent's current property tax statement, purchase agreement, closing papers or deed; or a legal and notarized lease showing the parent's name and address, the landlord or rental company name and telephone, the rental address, the start and end dates and all signatures. Plus one current utility bill or set-up confirmation: gas, electric, cable TV, internet or landline telephone.
Immunization record	A legible record, or a waiver issued by the county health department.
Vision and hearing screening	For kindergarten and preschool entry.
Oral health assessment	A dental screening form, required for kindergarten.
Report cards and transcripts	Helpful; schools may ask for additional records.

The critical point: no Social Security number appears anywhere on that list and there is no question about immigration status. But the requirement of two residency documents and a **notarized** lease can be a real obstacle for a family that has just arrived. Somebody with a lease and a utility set-up confirmation meets it; **somebody staying with relatives does not.**

IF YOU HAVE NO LEASE OF YOUR OWN: FOUR ROUTES

- A **Notarized Affidavit of Residency.**
- A **temporary residency affidavit and referral.**
- A **Caregiver Authorization Form.**
- A **notarized guardianship affidavit.** Ask the enrolling school which one fits your situation.
- **And if you have no documents at all:** a student who meets the definition of homelessness under the federal **McKinney-Vento** Act has the right to **enroll immediately even without the required documents**; residency information, enrollment status and identifying information are kept confidential and shared only with school officials with a legitimate educational interest. For a family whose housing is not yet settled, that is a real door.

Immunization: the waiver is at the county health department, after an education session

First the requirement. Proof of immunization is required **by the first day of school** from a child in one of three groups: **entering kindergarten, entering 7th grade, or newly enrolling in a district at any grade**. The third one speaks directly to a family that has just moved: whatever grade your child is in, the immunization file is needed. A waiver exists, **but a signed statement is not enough**. The Michigan administrative rule requires, for every child entering a program **after December 31, 2014**, that a non-medical (religious or philosophical) exemption be **certified by the local health department**, with the parent recorded as having **received education on the risks of not receiving the vaccines being waived and the benefits of vaccination to the individual and the community**. All waivers must use the form prescribed by the department. So since **January 1, 2015** a waiver is obtained only **in person at the county health department, after an education session**. The rule also covers licensed childcare, preschools and Head Start.

- For Washtenaw County the contact is **Washtenaw County Health Department, 555 Towner Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48198, 734-544-6700**.
- **We could not confirm whether an appointment is needed, how long the session takes, whether there is a fee, or at which sites it is held**: the county's waiver page would not open from this environment. So we print no procedure, we print the telephone number. Call before you travel.
- Two extra screenings surprise newcomers: a **hearing and vision screening certificate** before kindergarten, and the **kindergarten oral health assessment** that is now required. Both can be done at the county.
- **One caution**: the state education department issued a **December 2025** memo on immunization waivers and we could not read its contents; it may have changed practice, so ask your district or the county.
- **What to do**: collect your child's immunization file before you leave Türkiye and bring it with an English translation. Michigan asks every newly enrolling student for proof by the first day of school, and the waiver route in this state is strict.

The district names seven languages, and Turkish is not among them

We answer this honestly. Ann Arbor Public Schools' [enrollment language support](#) page is published in exactly seven languages: **English, Spanish, Chinese, Portuguese, Japanese, Korean and Russian**. Each version invites the family to complete an **enrollment language support and translation service request** if they need help to enroll a child. **Turkish is not among those seven**. The languages taught in the schools are a separate list and Turkish is not there either: American Sign Language, Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Latin and Spanish. The district says its students speak **more than 75 languages** and has an English learners department with a named coordinator. **What to do**: complete the translation service request and write to the coordinator directly to ask what can be offered for Turkish interpretation. We do not say Turkish support exists, because no district page says so. The district's non-discrimination statement lists **language differences** and national origin among its grounds, so putting the request in writing works in your favor.

How enrollment works, and which doors are closed

- The process starts with an **online pre-enrollment**, then full enrollment is completed by email invitation and documents are uploaded; documents can also be handed in at the school office. **Living inside the district boundary gives a place at the zoned school from kindergarten through 12th grade**, and an address can be checked with the district's street lookup tool.
- **But some doors are closed for 2026-27, and knowing that saves a year:** only **neighborhood enrollment** is open, **in-district transfer applications are closed**, and **schools-of-choice applications between districts are closed**.
- Two schools admit students by **annual lottery** and a lottery entrant must still meet the district's residency requirement; **a family arriving in the fall has already missed that year's lottery**.
- **The school year runs from August 31, 2026 to June 16, 2027.** For the early years programs in 2026-27, children turning five between **May 1 and December 1, 2026** are eligible; places are limited and a place at the neighborhood school is not promised.
- The district office is at **2555 S State, Ann Arbor, MI 48104, 734-994-2200**.

THREE THINGS TO DO BEFORE YOU SIGN A LEASE

- **Collect the residency documents at the moment you rent.** Get the lease notarized the same day you sign it, and keep a printout of the electricity or internet set-up confirmation. Both documents can be in your hands that day; collecting them later takes weeks.
- **Bring the immunization file with an English translation**, because the waiver route here runs in person and only after an education session; a waiver that does not arrive in time delays enrollment.
- **You have written backing on the status and number question:** the state education department told districts that immigration status cannot be asked at enrollment and that a Social Security number cannot be required. If you are told otherwise, ask for the memo and write to us.
- Set no expectations on Turkish support: it is not among the seven languages the district names, so **put the request in writing** and keep the answer.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN MICHIGAN

Have a question about your immigration status?

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