

## Michigan Mom Spends Week in Jail for Not Immunizing Son



**Summary:** A Michigan mother was sentenced to jail for defying a judge's order to immunize her son and during the week she spend locked up her son received his immunizations.

A Michigan mother is upset about spending five days behind bars but is even more upset that her son was immunized while she was locked up. Rebecca Bredow, of the Detroit area, ignored a court order to vaccinate her 9-year-old son so a judge sent her to jail for contempt of court.

The 40-year-old mother said, "It was the worst five days of my life pretty much except for the fact that I just found out that he was vaccinated and I'm not going to get him back today. It's been a rough few days to say the least."

Bredow shares custody of her son with her ex-husband James Horne. He wanted their son to be immunized but she refused to do so, citing religious beliefs. She said to The Washington Post, "I can't give in against my own religious belief. This is about choice. This is about having my choices as a mother to be able to make medical choices for my child."

Oakland County Circuit Judge Karen McDonald disagreed with Bredow, stating that she wasn't the only parent with a say in her son's care. Horne was given temporary custody of the boy with an order for him to be vaccinated. While his ex-wife was in jail, he followed the court order and had his son receive the first round of vaccines.

Bredow was sentenced October 4 to seven days in county jail. Oakland County Jail gives a one-day credit to inmates who successfully serve five days so she was able to be released at midnight on October 9.

Nearly half of the states allow for nonmedical exemptions, including Michigan. Only California, Mississippi and West Virginia do not allow for nonmedical exemptions. Parents and guardians with children enrolled in public and private schools in Michigan must attend an educational session to learn about the diseases that vaccines prevent before they are allowed to receive a nonmedical waiver.

Bredow says she did this and that she and Horne had an agreement when their son was born to delay his vaccine schedule for three months. When their son was two, she claims the couple agreed to suspend all vaccinations. A statement about Horne's version of their agreement has not been obtained.

Her attorney, Steven Vitale, claims the case is about more than just vaccinations. He told the Detroit Free Press that Bredow had been the primary custodian but the judge approved a recommendation for an evenly split custody on Wednesday. He said of his client, "She's devastated" but does not regret her decision to not vaccinate. She told the Press that being in jail was "horrific" but "I still stand by my choices because I stand up for what I believe in."

Do you think all states should require vaccinations with only medical vaccinations? Share your thoughts with us in the comments below.

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