TRANSPORTING REFRIGERATED VACCINES

The number of times vaccines are handled and transported should be minimized.

The provider should contact district/county nurses when vaccine is within 90 days of expiration for assistance with transfer.
Check three months of temperature logs before transferring vaccine between provider offices to assure vaccine is usable.
Vaccine is transported in the original box, and it is critical that vaccine potency is protected by maintaining the cold chain at all times.
If vaccine is transported to an off-site clinic, temperatures must be recorded every 30 minutes during transport and throughout the duration of the clinic. Diluent should travel with its corresponding vaccine and should never be frozen.

Materials for transport must be readily available at all times.

Cooler: The CDC recommends hard sided coolers or the reuse of original vaccine shipping containers. Enough coolers should be available to transport your typical supply of refrigerated vaccine. A label attached to the outside of the cooler should state "keep refrigerated," vaccine type, quantity, date, time and originating facility. Do not use soft-sided collapsible coolers. Equipment designed specifically for transporting vaccine may have varying instructions; please contact manufacturer for guidance on these occasions.

Temperature monitoring: The CDC and the PA DOI require digital data loggers for all temperature monitoring, including vaccine transport. The buffered probe of the available monitoring device should be kept refrigerated. The date, time and temperature must be recorded at beginning and end of transport. You should also document temperatures every 30 minutes.

Coolant: The CDC recommends use of conditioned frozen water bottles. Frozen water bottles should be prepped in freezer at all times in case of immediate need. Frozen water bottles are conditioned by placing in a sink of lukewarm water until the ice inside the bottle spins freely when rotated in your hand.

Insulating materials: Premeasure two pieces of corrugated cardboard and two one-inch layers of bubble wrap or packing foam to place above and below the vaccines in each cooler.

HOW TO PACK VACCINE

1. Conditioned frozen water bottles should be spread over the bottom of the cooler.
2. Completely cover conditioned frozen water bottles with one sheet of corrugated cardboard.
3. Completely cover cardboard with at least one inch of bubble wrap or packing foam when using conditioned frozen water bottles.
4. Vaccine is placed on top of insulating materials with the refrigerated buffered probe of the monitoring device nestled between the layers of vaccine; the temperature display is placed outside the cooler.
5. Completely cover vaccine with at least one inch of bubble wrap or packing foam.
6. Completely cover bubble wrap with one sheet of corrugated cardboard.
7. An additional layer of conditioned frozen water bottles is added to the cooler.
8. If there is excess space, fill the cooler to the top with packing materials to prevent shift.
9. Close lid and secure the temperature display to the lid of the container.
10. Temperatures between 36.0° F and 46.0° F will be maintained up to eight hours using this method if container is not opened or closed repeatedly.
11. At end of transfer, assure appropriate storage to a refrigerator that has maintained a temperature between 36.0° F and 46.0° F for at least five days.