

# BEST PRACTICES IN VACCINE STORAGE

The PA Department of Health (DOH), Division of Immunization, Vaccine Cold Chain Protocol for Immunization Providers Effective January 1, 2015 The PA Vaccines For Children(VFC) Program does NOT recommend or endorse products or manufacturers.

## DOH supplied vaccine must be stored in one of the following:

Standalone storage units, medical grade preferred.  
Household combination unit, using refrigerator portion only, must have separate stand alone freezer.  
Medical grade combination units must have a separate compressor for each function

## All storage units must be approved by the VFC program for enrolled VFC providers.

New providers are strongly recommended to use Medical grade stand-alone freezers & stand-alone freezerless refrigerators for vaccine storage. Absolutely No DORMITORY or BAR style units will be allowed. Providers with a DOH approved household combination units will be given 90 days to acquire a stand-alone freezer.

During the 90 days, the provider will NOT be allowed to order additional frozen VFC vaccine.

Providers making no accommodation to acquire a stand –alone freezer within 90 days will be suspended from ordering all VFC vaccines.

Providers will remain suspended until a stand-alone freezer is acquired.

After one year of suspension, the provider will be disenrolled from the VFC program.

## The cold storage unit selected must be:

Dedicated to vaccines only with limited access and locks if possible

Large enough to accommodate the year's largest inventory

Capable of maintaining refrigerator temperature of 2 to 8 degrees C or 35 to 46 degrees

Capable of maintaining freezer temperature of -50 to 15 degrees C or -58 to +5 degrees F

Enough space to store water bottles in the refrigerator to reduce temperature deviations

Enough space to store frozen coolant packets in the freezer to hold temperature

Capable of housing a calibrated thermometer accurate to +/- 0.5 degrees C or +/- 1 degree F

Calibrated thermometer centrally located in the storage unit

Capable of accepting baskets &/ or racks to separate vaccine & promote air flow

Cleaned/ Defrosted on a monthly basis

Able to rotate inventory on a weekly basis

Identified in the circuit breaker box

Labelled with do NOT unplug stickers

The provider should have maintenance/service contacts established