



Vaccines for Children Provider Notice

Pennsylvania Department of Health,
Bureau of Communicable Diseases, Division of Immunizations

February 2018

The Pennsylvania Vaccines for Children program has created the following guideline for providers to reference regarding the role of primary Vaccine Coordinator. The Vaccine Coordinator not only ensures maintenance of VFC policies and procedures, but also trains site staff and develops emergency plans for vaccine safety and storage.

The guide can be found online at the following link:

[VFC Vaccine Coordinator roles and responsibilities](#)

Vaccine Coordinator roles and responsibilities

Designate a person to be the primary vaccine coordinator for your facility. This person will be responsible for ensuring all vaccines are stored and handled correctly. Appoint a second staff member to serve as an alternate in the absence of the primary coordinator (this is particularly important in case of after-hours emergencies). Both coordinators should be fully trained in routine and emergency policies and procedures.

Coordinator responsibilities:

- Ordering vaccines
- Overseeing proper receipt and storage of vaccine deliveries
- Documenting vaccine inventory information and organizing vaccines within storage units
- Setting up temperature monitoring devices
- Reading and recording storage unit temps a minimum of two times each workday
- Reading and recording current minimum/maximum temps from a digital data logger two times each workday
- Reviewing and analyzing temperature data at least weekly for any shifts in temperature trends
- Rotating stock at least weekly so vaccine with the earliest expiration dates are used first
- Removing expired vaccine from storage units
- Responding to out-of-range temperatures (temp excursion)
- Maintaining all documentation, such as inventory and temperature logs
- Ensuring staff is properly trained
- Monitoring operation of storage equipment and systems
- Overseeing proper vaccine transport (when necessary)
- Overseeing emergency preparations, including plans for ensuring safety of vaccine during emergencies
- Tracking inclement weather conditions
- Ensuring appropriate handling of vaccines during disaster or power outage

The coordinator will also maintain the Vaccines for Children email (RA-PAVFC@pa.gov) on your safe senders list to ensure you receive the important communications from the VFC program.

Staff Training

All staff members who receive deliveries and/or handle or administer vaccines should be familiar with storage and handling policies and procedures at your facility. Keep standard operating procedures for storage and handling near storage units and make sure staff knows where to find them.

CDC recommends that storage and handling training should be done:

- As part of new employee orientation;
- Annually as a refresher for all staff involved in immunization activities;
- Whenever new vaccines are added to inventory; and
- Whenever recommendations are updated.

Preparing for a VFC Compliance visit

Sites preparing for compliance visits from VFC immunization nurses often have questions before the date of the visit. Provider staff should print and review the detailed checklist at the following link for assistance:

[2018 How to Prepare for a Compliance Visit.pdf](#)

Communications

- **Providers with expiring vaccines:** Providers need to call their local immunization nurse if they have expiring vaccine that can't be used within 90 days. This offers the opportunity to relocate the vaccine so that it is not wasted.
- When communicating with VFC staff, including immunization nurses, please include your **PIN** number on all correspondence. This includes certificates of training, such as required CDC You Call The Shots modules.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated immunization fact sheets

CDC has informed grantees that they have updated their [childhood immunization "basics" disease fact sheets](#) and webpages, both in English and Spanish. "Each of the 14 sheets provides an overview of a vaccine-preventable disease and vaccine information. These fact sheets were developed together with The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and The American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) for use with parents of children 0-2 years old. They are part of CDC's [Provider Resources for Vaccine Conversations with Parents](#), which also includes communication guidance and vaccine safety resources. The fact sheets can be viewed online or printed for distribution in doctor's offices, clinics, or at community health events." Providers should be aware that CDC will retire the [in-depth disease fact sheets](#) spring of 2018.