

Vaccine Accountability: Return & Waste Procedures

Unused, non-viable vaccine is disposed of in two ways. All unopened vaccine that is expired or spoiled, including influenza and COVID-19 vaccine, must be **returned** to McKesson. Non-viable returnable vaccine is eligible for Federal Excise Tax credit. Any non-viable vaccine that cannot be returned to McKesson is considered **waste**.

Terms used in vaccine accountability:

- OPENED:** a partially used multi-dose vial;
a vial that has been punctured;
a syringe with an opened safety cap; or
a vial missing the plastic cap.
- UNOPENED:** a pack of single dose vials or syringes with doses administered – the remaining doses are considered “unopened.”
- EXPIRED:** any vaccine in its original container that has not been administered prior to the expiration date indicated on the vial or syringe.
- SPOILED:** any vaccine that has been exposed to temperatures outside of the recommended range, transport conditions, power outages, or unit failure.
- WASTED:** any vaccine that has been drawn up, but not administered;
a broken vial or syringe;
lost or unaccounted for vaccine; and
open/partial vials that have expired or spoiled.
- LOST OR UNACCOUNTED FOR:** any vaccine for which the physical vial or syringe is missing.

The above terms should be considered when determining which non-viable vaccines need to be returned and which need to be wasted.

All unopened non-viable vaccine, if ordered through the Department of Health, must be returned to McKesson within six months after the expiration date. Vaccines will still be accepted after six months, but this should be a rare situation. If the non-viable vaccine is returnable, providers must complete and submit a **Vaccine Return** in PIERS.

Non-viable vaccine that cannot be returned to McKesson is considered waste. (See above for waste criteria.) Wasted vaccine must still be reported and accounted for but can then be destroyed following state and local disposal requirements. If the non-viable vaccine cannot be returned, providers must complete a **Vaccine Inventory Adjustment** in PIERS.

If the non-viable vaccine is being returned for any reason other than “Expired,” a **Vaccine Incident Report and Worksheet** must be completed and submitted to DOI within five days of the incident.

Opened multi-dose vials are not returnable. Any non-viable vaccine in an opened multi-dose vial must be entered as wastage.

Diluent is not considered a vaccine and is not reported through this process.

To return spoiled/expired vaccine, follow these steps:

1. Create and submit a Vaccine Return in PIERS. Follow the steps outlined in [Create and Submit a Vaccine Return](#). This document is also available on the VFC website, Resources and Forms page: [VFC Resources \(pa.gov\)](#). Submitting a Vaccine Return to the VFC Program will initiate the request for a shipping label. If providers contact FedEx or UPS directly, there may be a charge for retrieval of the box(es).
2. Providers can receive UPS shipping label(s) for returns in three ways:
 - **Email** – Listed as *'Email to Provider Email stored in VTrckS'* in PIERS
 - If this option is selected, a UPS return label will be emailed to the primary VFC coordinator indicated in PIERS. Please ensure the email listed in PIERS is correct before selecting this option.
 - Email is the recommended option. This option should be selected for all sites that have established routine UPS service.
 - The email with the return label will come from McKesson [mailto:pkginfo@ups.com] and the subject of the email will be titled 'UPS Label Delivery, <Label tracking Number>.' Providers must confirm this e-mail address (pkginfo@ups.com) will not be blocked by their e-mail spam filters.
 - The label will not be attached to the email. Providers will need to click on the box stating 'Get Shipping Label,' then click 'Print Label' to retrieve the shipping label.
 - The emailed return label will be coded with an internal tracking number used by McKesson to manage vaccine returns. It will not contain the VTrckS return ID required to be included in the box(es) with the vaccines.
 - One unique return label will be included per email. Labels cannot be photocopied or reprinted for multiple uses. (This means that if three boxes are indicated in the return, the contact will receive three emails, each containing a single return mailing label. It does not matter which label is put on each of the three boxes for that specific return, because when the boxes are received, McKesson will be looking at the boxes altogether.)
 - If you do not use all of your requested labels, remaining labels should be discarded.
 - Providers should receive their UPS shipping label within *1-3 hours*. If labels are not received timely, providers should contact RA-pavfc@pa.gov.
 - Emailed return labels are valid for *30 days*. If the vaccine has not been returned within that timeframe, providers should contact RA-pavfc@pa.gov.
 - **Standard Mail** – Listed as *'Mail to Provider Shipping Address'* in PIERS
 - If this option is selected, a label will be mailed to the provider and the provider will hand the labeled box(es) of vaccine to the UPS driver at the next pick up. Please ensure the mailing address listed in PIERS is correct before selecting this option.
 - This option should only be selected when the provider is currently part of a regular UPS shipping route.
 - An envelope should arrive at your shipping address within *7 days*. If labels are not

- received timely, providers should contact RA-pavfc@pa.gov.
- Standard return labels are valid for *30 days*. If the vaccine has not been returned within that timeframe, providers should contact RA-pavfc@pa.gov.
 - **Pick-up** – Listed as *‘Provider and Distributor will Coordinate’* in PIERS.
 - If this option is selected, staff at McKesson will make arrangements with UPS for a pick-up.
 - Pick-up should only be selected when the site does not have routine UPS service.
 - No return label will be sent to the provider.
 - A UPS driver will arrive at the site within the reported clinic hours with the number of requested shipping labels. The vaccine must be packed up and ready to go once notification is received from DOI that the request has been processed.
 - Sites should expect a UPS driver within *1-4 business days*. If the driver does not arrive within that timeframe, providers should contact RA-pavfc@pa.gov.
3. Once the return has been processed, a confirmation email from DOI will be sent to the primary VFC coordinator. The email will contain a list of all vaccines included in the return and the VTrckS return ID.
 4. Returns can be sent in the McKesson shipping container or a container of your own. If you use your own container, ensure the vials are secure so they don’t break during transport.
 5. Providers **must** include the VTrckS return ID in the box with the vaccine.
 6. Do **NOT** return any vaccine not included in the list contained in the confirmation email. A separate return must be submitted for additional vaccines.
 7. UPS will pick up all vaccines being returned to McKesson, even if packages are normally shipped to the site by a different company.
 8. Do **NOT** return vaccines prior to the expiration date unless they were exposed to temperatures outside of the recommended range for storing vaccines.

To report wasted vaccine, follow these steps:

1. Complete an Inventory Adjustment in PIERS. Follow the steps outlined in [Adjust On-Hand Inventory](#). This document is also available on the VFC website, Resources and Forms page: [VFC Resources \(pa.gov\)](#).
2. For the “Reason” field, provider must select one of the VTRCKS options with the correct reason for the vaccine wastage.
3. Providers will **NOT** receive notification from DOI unless clarification is required.
4. Once the Inventory Adjustment has been completed, the vaccine should be destroyed following state and local disposal requirements.