

PREPARING FOR A NEW PROVIDER SITE VISIT

Proper vaccine storage and handling practices play a crucial role in maintaining the integrity and effectiveness of vaccines. Ensuring that vaccines are stored correctly from the time they arrive at your facility until the moment they are administered is essential for protecting vaccine integrity. As a new VFC provider, it is your responsibility to meet these standards consistently.

To help you prepare for an upcoming **New VFC Provider Site Visit**, please follow the guidelines below to ensure your vaccine storage units are properly set up and compliant with VFC program requirements.

Storage Unit Placement

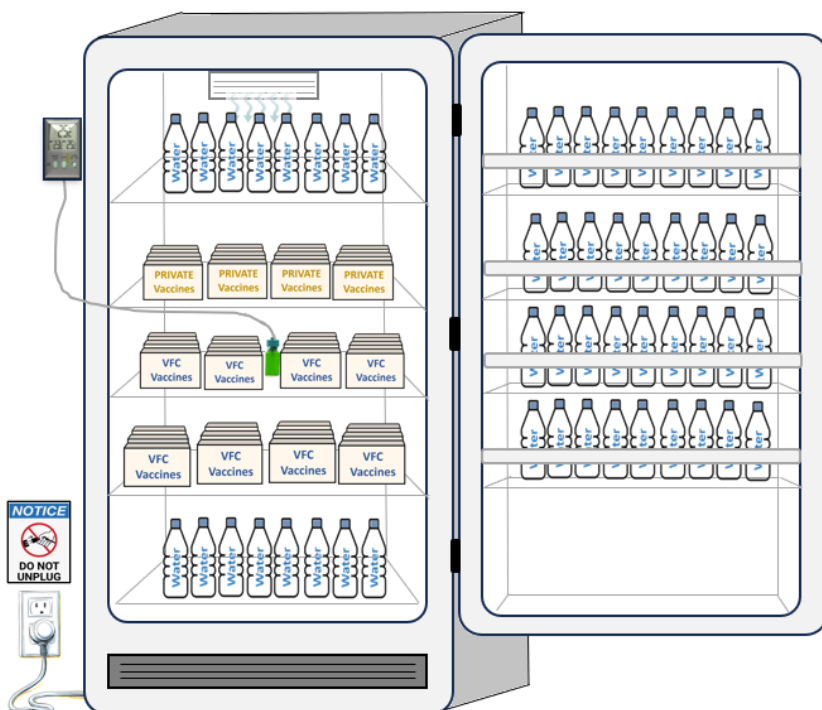
- Place vaccine storage units in a well-ventilated room that allows for proper airflow around the unit.
- Ensure there is sufficient space around the sides, top, and back of the unit—typically a few inches to promote adequate air circulation.
- The ambient room temperature should be maintained between 68° F and 77° F (20° C and 25° C).

Refrigerator and Freezer Unit

Vaccines must be maintained under strict storage and handling conditions to **preserve their viability and effectiveness**. Exposure to temperatures outside the recommended range, even for a short period, can reduce a vaccine's potency and render it ineffective.

By adhering to proper storage and handling procedures, you help protect patients, minimize vaccine loss and waste, and avoid revaccination.

Vaccine storage must be “STAND-ALONE” units. Stand-alone units are self-contained units dedicated to a single temperature range, as either a refrigerator or freezer. Stand-alone refrigerator and freezer units are considered best practice for vaccine storage as they provide the best temperature stability.



DO NOT USE:

- Multi outlet power strips or extension cords
- Outlet with GFI circuits switches with red buttons
- Outlets that are controlled by the switches
- Unit to store food



- Place water bottles throughout the storage unit to help stabilize temperatures.
- Store vaccine 2-3 inches away from unit walls
- Keep vaccine away from unit's internal air vent(s)
- Do not place vaccine on the bottom, inside of drawers, or door shelves
- Use baskets, rubber bands, or tags to organize the vaccine
- **Clearly label** the vaccine with the funding source (ex. VFC/Private)
- Place the digital data logger (DDL) probe in the center of the unit
- Ensure the DDL is correctly installed and properly functioning
- Storage units must be plugged straight into outlet
- Place the **“DO NOT UNPLUG”** sign by outlet and on the units

Storage Units	Fahrenheit	Celsius
Refrigerator	Between 36° F - 46° F	Between 2° C and 8° C
Freezer	Between -58° F and +5° F	Between -50° C and -15° C
Ultra-cold Freezer	Between -130° F and -76° F	Between -90° C and -60° C

Digital Data Logger

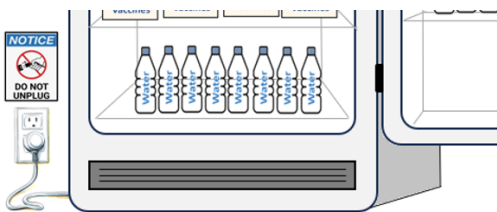
A digital data logger (DDL) is a device that provides the most accurate storage unit temperature information, including details on how long a storage unit has been operating outside the recommended temperature range (referred to as a “temperature excursion”).

- A DDL must be used in each unit that stores vaccine to monitor vaccine storage temperatures.
- Each DDL must have a certificate of calibration
- A back-up DDL and certificate of calibration is required

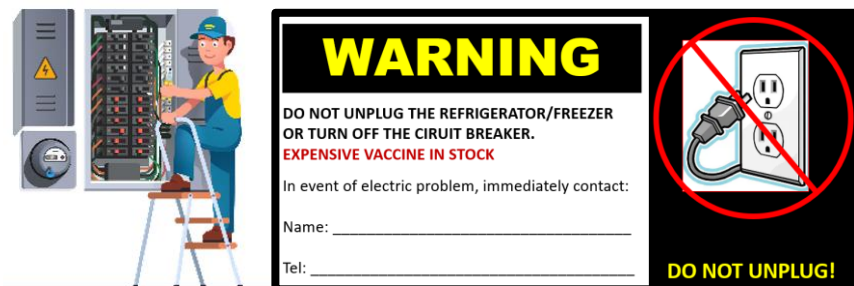
Storage Unit Signage Required

Important storage signage must be placed by outlet and circuit breaker box.

- “Do Not Unplug” by outlet



- “WARNING, Do Not Unplug” by the circuit breaker box
- Identify which circuit breaker corresponds to the vaccine storage units

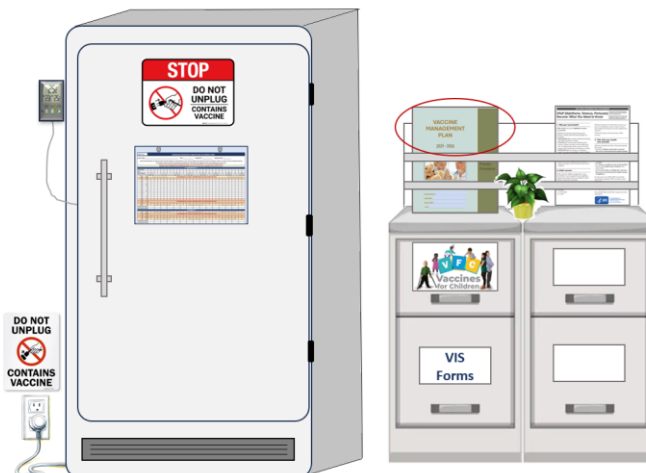


VFC Management Plan – Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

Facilities must develop and maintain a clearly written, detailed, and up-to-date storage and handling standard operating procedures (SOPs). SOPs should be reviewed by all staff and updated by the VFC Vaccine Coordinator annually.

SOPs should contain plans and information for three major areas:

- General information – include contact information for vaccine manufacturers, equipment service providers, and important facility staff, as well as job descriptions, regularly used forms, and staff training requirements.
- Routine storage and handling – include information for all aspects of vaccine inventory management, from ordering to monitoring storage conditions.
- Emergency vaccine storage, handling, and transport – outline steps to be taken in the event of equipment malfunctions, power failures, natural disasters, or other emergencies that might compromise vaccine storage conditions.
- VFC management plan must be placed on or by the storage unit(s).



Temperature Recording Logs

Vaccine storage, handling, and accountability are vital components to the success of the Vaccines for Children Program. In accordance with VFC Operational Guide and State Policies, VFC Providers are required to manually:

Option 1

- Record the unit's daily temperature **twice a day** (AM & PM). Recordings must include:
 - o **Current temperatures**
 - o **Time of recording** (AM or PM must be clearly indicated)
 - o **Initials** of the person recording the temperature
- Record **min/max temperatures** of the storage unit once daily (typically during the AM check)
- Reset the min/max after recording to track next 24- hour period accurately
- The temperature recording log **must be placed on or near the** vaccine storage units
- Logs must always be **readily accessible for review**

Option 2

- Use a system WiFi/Cellular/Bluetooth DDL that will alarm you by phone, text, or email when the temps are out of range. Staff can sign in remotely from any computer or device. Paper logs are not required if staff can sign in electronically, for example PharmaWatch.

DAYS 1-15										REFRIGERATOR/FREEZER TEM									
CLINIC NAME: Happy Pediatrics Clinic										PIN #: 1232									
Check the temperatures in both the freezer and the refrigerator compartments of your unit that corresponds with the temperature. Record minimum and Maximum temperature. CONTACT THE VACCINE MANUFACTURER(S) ANY TIME VACCINE TEMPERATURES ARE OUT OF RANGE.																			
RECORD ACTUAL TEMPERATURE FOR REFRIGERATOR 34°F/1°C OR COLDER																			
Staff Initials	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD	JD
Time	8:00	4:00	8:00	4:00	8:00	4:00	8:00	4:00	8:00	4:00	8:00	4:00	8:00	4:00	8:00	4:00	8:00	4:00	8:00
Day of Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
F° Temp	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48
C° Temp	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
46	7.7																		
45	7																		
44	6.6																		
43	6.1																		
42	6																		
41	5	X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X	
40	4.4			X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X		
39	4																		
38	3																		
37	2.7																		
36	2.2																		
35	2																		
34	1.1																		
33	1																		
32	0																		
MINIMUM TEMP	39.9	39.9	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5
MAXIMUM TEMP	41.7	41.9	41.9	41.3	42.6														
RECORD ACTUAL TEMPERATURE																			
57	>14																		
6	-14.4																		
5	-15																		
4	-15.5																		
3	<-16	-10	-10	-9.2	-9.2	-8.5	-8.4	-8.4	-9.4	-9.4	-9.5								
MINIMUM TEMP	-10.1	-10.1	-10.1	-10.1	-10.1	-10.1	-10.1	-10.1	-10.1	-10.1	-10.1								
MAXIMUM TEMP	-9.5	-9.4	-9.4	-9.4	-9.4	-9.4	-9.4	-9.4	-9.4	-9.4	-9.4								

Vaccine Information Statements (VIS)

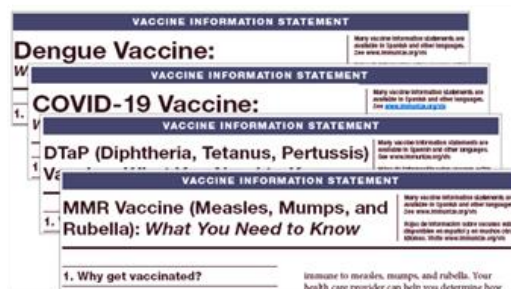
A Vaccine Information Statement ([VIS](#)) is a document produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that informs vaccine recipients, or their parents or legal guardians, about the benefits and risks of a vaccine they are receiving.

Federal law requires that vaccine providers, whether public or private, must give the appropriate VIS to the patient (or parent/legal guardian) before administering each dose of vaccines covered under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act ([NCVIA](#)).

The provider must have a mechanism in place to record **the edition date of the current VIS and the date of when the VIS was provided to the patient.**

Ways to give a VIS:

- Paper copies of the VIS may be printed and given to patients prior to vaccination.
- Permanent, laminated office copies may be given to patients to read prior to vaccination.
- Patients may view VISs on a computer monitor or other video display.
- Patients may read the VIS on their phone or other digital device by downloading the pdf file from CDC's website.
- Patients may be given a copy of VIS during a prior visit, or told how to access it through the internet, so that they can read it prior to vaccination. These patients must still be offered a copy to read during the immunization visit.
- **VISs should be supplemented with visual presentations or oral explanations as appropriate.**



Miscellaneous

During a site visit, the VFC Representatives will review the items listed below to ensure VFC compliance:

- Storage unit placement
- Type of storage units
- DDL and Certificates of Calibration
- Appropriate signage for outlet and circuit box
- Temperature logs and DDL temp downloads
- VFC Provider Guide
- VFC Management Plan and location
- VFC program binder and location
- “You Call the Shots” training certificates
- Vaccine Information Statements location

Additional information provided by the VFC Representative during your site visit:

- Provide training on how to run reports
- Provide training on ordering vaccines
- Review of the VFC Agreement
- Review of the Provider Population
- Discuss VFC Coordinator and back-up responsibilities
- Discuss VFC annual enrollments
- Best vaccine practices
- Answer questions and provide VFC resources

Resources

- [Vaccine Storage and Handling Resources | Vaccines & Immunizations | CDC](#)
- [Current VISs | Vaccines & Immunizations | CDC](#)
- [Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit](#)
- [Warning Do Not Unplug](#)
- [The National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986 | National Vaccine Information Center \(NVIC\)](#)