



# Vaccines for Children Program Updates

## Important Information

### Holiday Shipment Blackout Dates

Below is the holiday shipment schedule for the remainder of 2023.

- No vaccine deliveries will occur on Wednesday, December 13, 2023, through Monday, January 1, 2024.
- Deliveries will resume Tuesday, January 2, 2024.

Orders generally arrive at the clinic site within 5-7 business days from the date the order is approved, and the order status changes to "Sent to CDC/Distributor". For orders placed this week, please allow an additional 3-5 days for your order to arrive. Be sure to monitor your inventory levels.

### Vaccine Transfers Must be Approved by VFC Staff

To maintain the proper cold chain from manufacturer to provider office, VFC tries to limit the transport of vaccines. When a transfer is needed to protect the viability of doses or to prevent wastage, transfers will be allowed but require approval by VFC office staff. Vaccine transfers can only occur with the approval and under direct guidance of the immunization program. All transfers must be conducted by your Immunization Regional Consultant unless otherwise directed.

Once the transfer is approved, the transfer and the transfer details must be entered into GRITS using the 'manage transfers' menu option. The transfer is complete once the receiving site has accepted the transfers which will update both the transferring site's inventory count as well as the receiving site.

### **Expired or spoiled vaccine**

When you receive an email with a return shipping label link, the label is to be used for all expired vaccines (including COVID vaccines) and returned to McKesson. Providers are no longer required to include a vaccine return invoice with these shipments.

### **Vaccine Order Shipment Information**

Please be sure that the Hours of Operation in GRITS are up to date for every day of the week, including Mondays. When a failed shipment is the result of incorrect provider address/shipping hours, the provider will be responsible for replacing spoiled vaccine shipments per the vaccine restitution policy.

1. Days and hours the provider is not open should be reflected in the business hours section (including lunch).
2. Shipping instructions should not be used to convey provider hours of operation or critical delivery address instructions. These notes are not consistently read by McKesson, FedEx, or UPS.
3. For carriers to be able to deliver vaccine, providers must be on site with appropriate staff available to receive the vaccine at least one day per week other than Monday, and for at least four consecutive business hours during that day.

### **December 4- 8 is National Influenza Week**

National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) is a critical opportunity to remind everyone 6 months and older that there's still time to protect themselves and their loved ones from flu by getting their annual flu vaccine. [CDC data](#) shows that flu vaccination coverage was lower last season, especially among certain higher risk groups, such as pregnant people and children. When you get a flu vaccine, you reduce your risk of illness, and flu-related hospitalization if you get sick. This week is meant to remind people that there is still time to benefit from the first and most important action in [preventing flu illness and potentially serious flu complications](#): get a flu vaccine today. Check out [CDC's NIVW toolkit](#) for more shareable resources and content.

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/resource-center/nivw/activities.htm#newsletter>

### **Reminder**

### **VFC/AVP Flu Vaccine Pre-Book 2024-2025 is OPEN**

In preparation for the 2024-2025 Influenza Season, please find the "2024-2025 Flu Pre-book" survey link below. The purpose of this survey is to aid in estimating

influenza vaccine needs for VFC-eligible patients, as well as eligible adults. We will use this information to determine how much influenza vaccine to order from the CDC. In addition to assuring a sufficient vaccine supply, we also want to minimize wastage. Remember, providers cannot administer federal or state-funded influenza vaccine to non-eligible children or adults. Thus, it is critical for us to obtain the best possible estimates of need. The survey must be completed by January 15, 2024. If you have questions/concerns, please contact the VFC Program at (800) 848-3868.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Flu2024-2025>

### **VFC Annual Recertification**

Annual VFC recertification for 2023 will be done online through GRITS. GRITS data will be used to pre-populate the information on the VFC Provider Agreement and the VFC Provider profile.

Recertification is due by December 20, 2023.

- 30-day email reminder will be sent November 20, 2023.
- 15-day email reminder will be sent December 5, 2023.

If you will not be able to complete recertification by the due by date, please let the VFC Program know as soon as possible.

The primary and backup VFC vaccine coordinators are required to complete the following webinar trainings provided by the CDC annually:

- You Call the Shots module on Vaccines for Children
- You Call the Shots module on Vaccine Storage and Handling

To find these trainings, please

visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/youcalltheshots.html>.

When Immunization Regional Consultants conduct VFC Compliance site visits, they will ask to see the following documents as part of the VFC recertification process:

- Completed You Call the Shot Training certificates.
- Current Vaccine Emergency Plans
- Thermometer Calibration certificates

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