

## COVID-19 Tracking: How to Identify a System that Provides Accessibility, Security & Accuracy

*Did you know that the International Certificate of Vaccination, more commonly known as the Yellow Card, was established way back in 1933? Using paper documents is not fitting for today's modern, tech-driven world, yet companies are scrambling to find a better solution amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. How can immunizations become more accessible on a large scale, and why is that so important when we talk about ending the pandemic?*

Viruses and communicable diseases have been around since the dawn of man, yet the Covid-19 pandemic has hit the world with a historical impact. It has changed our every day lives from school and work, to shopping and socializing. Although some of these changes might have ended up being a better fit for certain lifestyles, the general population is eager to get back to a sense of "normalcy". How can this be achieved? While immunization tracking and compliance management have been in place for decades, we are now seeing that those traditional, often manual, methods are outdated for everyday use, the current pandemic, and future planning. In a world where technology reigns supreme, having a web-based system that offers security and accuracy can greatly aid in ending the pandemic through accessible immunization compliance management.

When establishing procedures that regard sensitive information, such as medical records, it is critical that the involved parties understand the guidelines and regulations in place to protect privacy. That is where many companies are currently struggling with the pandemic. They want to build an easily accessible solution on a widespread level that provides proof of vaccines or a negative test, but they do not have the required certifications or do not comply with current laws to host immunizations data. Trending Apps seem to be discussed by big Fortune 500 companies, but who is reviewing the data to verify legitimacy, and how is the information being shared legally?

In the Healthcare Industry, accreditations can indicate a company's level of both security and accuracy. For example, users trust a company that maintains compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (**HIPAA**) to assure accuracy and confidentiality with all records, reports, and documents. HIPAA is a federal law which created national standards for protecting sensitive patient health information from being disclosed without the patient's consent or knowledge. While being HIPAA compliant should be a no-brainer, many companies in the immunization tracking industry surprisingly do not obtain that status. This accreditation is necessary when looking at tracking COVID-19 related data, on both a local and global scale, as it can safely allow the sharing of such data.

As medical records are not the only type of sensitive and private information out there, it is worth looking into other accreditations a company might possess to measure their standards on privacy and their value to abide by the law. An example would be an accredited member of the Professional Background Screening Association (**PBSA**). This accreditation validates the company as a screening organization that exceeds a measurable standard of competence, passing a rigorous onsite audit annually. The audit measures six crucial areas: consumer protection, legal compliance, client education, product standards, service standards, and general business practices. This recognition represents an organization's commitment to excellence, accountability, high professional standards, and continued institutional improvement.

Other noteworthy achievements to consider when measuring both accessibility and the highest level of security include:

- Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) compliance
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) compliance
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) compliance
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) compliance
- Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI-DSS) compliance
- BBB accredited with a high rating
- High levels of Cyber Insurance
- High levels of Errors & Omissions Insurance

Having accessible immunization data is nearly useless if the data is not verified before it is tracked. Systems that provide consistent and fair verification of individual immunizations, health, and compliance records against clearly defined rule sets allow for across the board verification. Advanced technology that offers a **rules-based engine** to utilizes algorithms eliminates human error in the verification process.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has put us in a new situation, the industry of immunization tracking has been around for decades. When looking for an easily accessible immunization tracking system for your institution, you will also want to consider a company's level of experience. This includes the number of years in business, the number of documents reviewed, and the type of clientele. While the CDC offers a general set of guidelines, operations can differ among institutions. Therefore, seek a system with configurability for different review standards. Having flexibility gives you complete control of how documents are reviewed.

As COVID-19 must be tracked on a large scale among varying entities, your tracking system should allow for **integrated solutions** to effortlessly move information between systems. As new systems are introduced to the market, our companies with an in-house IT Team are better equipped to add to their list of integration partners. Offered integrations should be tested and reviewed not just to streamline processes, but also to ensure that the solutions are HIPAA compliant, FERPA compliant, and GDPR compliant. Having an in-house legal counsel to further review integration partnerships and stay up to date with all legal developments in the industry can also offer you peace of mind.

While we can all agree that it is important to track immunizations data, it is harder to pinpoint safe, secure, and accurate ways to make that data far-reaching and easily accessible. As the status of the global pandemic is continually changing, we aim to stay hopeful and flexible with the solutions offered. For your compliance management needs, seek a trustworthy option that is HIPAA compliant. A web-based platform that can easily integrate and share necessary data will allow us to get back to school, work, travelling, and socializing.

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