



VACCINES FOR CHILDREN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If you have a question, then this section is for you. We have gathered the most frequently-asked questions and put them into an easy-to-reference section for your convenience.

In this section you will find questions and answers on the following:

- Enrollment
- Patient Eligibility
- Vaccine Reporting
- Storage/Handling and Shipment Issues
- Administration Fee and Reimbursement

If you have a question that is not answered here, please call our toll-free number at **(800) 848-3868** to receive assistance from a Vaccines for Children representative.

General

Q Is Medicaid required (federally mandated) to cover vaccines on the current childhood immunization schedule for the Medicaid population?

A Yes, all of the recommended vaccines are part of the HealthChecks benefit package for Medicaid children under age 21. Immunizations for children through age 18 years are covered by the VFC program. The Medicaid program covers vaccines for Medicaid members aged 19 years through 20 years separately.

Q How long should VFC records be retained by a provider?

A At minimum, VFC program provider records must be kept for a period of three (3) years after service to the patient has been rendered.

Enrollment

Q How long will it take to get the vaccines after we send in our enrollment application?

A The entire enrollment process from the date of application submission to receipt of vaccines can take up to one month. This process includes application processing, site visitation and approval, and order processing and shipment.

Q I don't know how many children we will see in a year. How do I complete this section on the Provider Profile and Enrollment Form?

A Providers are encouraged to access internal documentation such as claims data, encounter data, doses administered data (providers using GRITS consistently can access this information through the registry), or other methods of assessing the number of children immunized.

Q Which forms must be completed?

A In order to become enrolled in the Vaccines for Children Program, your office must complete the Provider Agreement and the Provider Profile and Enrollment Form. All medical personnel who wish to enroll must read the Provider Agreement Policy, Vaccine Loss Policy, Accountability Policy, and Fraud and Abuse Policy prior to signing the Provider Agreement. The signed Provider Agreement and a copy of each provider's professional license must be included with your enrollment application.

Q Is there any special equipment required to be enrolled in the VFC program?

A Yes. Please refer to the storage equipment slide and information regarding certified thermometers included in your enrollment materials.

Q How will I know when I have been officially enrolled in the program?

A Your site will receive enrollment approval upon completion of a successful enrollment site visit. Once approved for enrollment and vaccine storage, your first vaccine order will arrive within 5 business days of your site visit.

Patient Eligibility

Q Is it necessary to complete the Patient Eligibility Screening Record each time a child is seen in our office?

A The Patient Eligibility Screening Record should be completed on the child's initial visit. Subsequent visits should be documented in the "Screening Updates" portion of the form. Parents should be asked if their child's eligibility status has changed each time they visit your office. The provider must document eligibility status at every visit.

Q Is a child that only has a limited amount of immunization coverage on his/her insurance plan (for example, \$100 maximum per year) eligible for vaccines through the VFC Program?

A Once a child has reached or exceeded his/her insurance coverage cap on vaccines, the child is then classified as “Underinsured” and, therefore, eligible for vaccine supplied by the VFC Program. It should be noted that a child with this type of coverage will become ineligible for VFC vaccine at the beginning of each year, until the coverage cap has been reached.

Q What if a child has insurance that pays for certain vaccines, but not all vaccines?

A The child would be considered “Underinsured” on those vaccines not covered by the insurance policy. Only vaccines not covered by insurance should be administered out of VFC stock.

Q We have had several situations involving a child that is fully insured but there is a high deductible to be met on the insurance policy before the insurance company will pay. Is this child eligible for VFC because of the deductible?

A No. The child is still considered “Fully Insured” and cannot receive VFC vaccine. The parent will be responsible for paying for medical services billed prior to the deductible being met.

Q How does “Medicaid enrolled” differ from “Medicaid eligible”?

A For the purposes of the VFC Program, the terms, “Medicaid enrolled” and “Medicaid eligible,” are equivalent and refer to children who have health insurance covered by a state Medicaid program.

Vaccine Reporting

Q Why am I required to send in a report every month?

A The monthly Comprehensive Report is the one consistent method of communication with our providers. It enables you, the provider, to be accountable for your vaccines, and it assists VFC staff in determining vaccine replenishment orders. Failure to submit regular monthly reports can easily lead to wastage, low vaccine inventory, and can result in withdrawal from the program. Remember, monthly reporting is a condition of enrollment in the VFC program.

Q When do we send in the Comprehensive (Vaccine Usage, Inventory, and Wastage) Report?

A The Comprehensive Report must be submitted once per month in order for your office to receive a vaccine replenishment shipment. The report details your facility's usage and inventory, which is crucial for vaccine accountability. This report may be submitted at any time during the month, but only once during the month. Monthly reporting allows us to keep your facility adequately stocked with VFC vaccine.

Q How does your system calculate how much vaccine to send us based on our Vaccine Usage Report?

A Our system analyzes your reported inventory and monthly usage amount of each vaccine your office has received. The system calculates the amount your office would need for a three-month supply based on usage multiplied by three then by subtracting the number of doses reported as inventory. The difference between your three-month supply and your reported inventory is the recommended vaccine shipment.

Formula:

Vaccine usage x 3 – doses listed as inventory = # of replenishment doses to ship

Q Do I need to send in an Inventory Report with my Vaccine Usage Report each month on the Comprehensive Report Form?

A All portions of the Comprehensive Report (Usage, Wastage, and Inventory) are required. This helps ensure that your office receives the maximum amount of vaccines possible in the event shots were inadvertently not recorded at the time of administration. This also helps to protect your practice from having poor vaccine accountability due to "unaccounted for" vaccines.

Q Do I need to send in a Vaccine Order Form with my Comprehensive Report each month?

A No. The Vaccine Order Form should only be submitted for your initial order during enrollment. Requests for additional vaccine may be submitted with your monthly report or via email to gavfc@dhr.state.ga.us.

Q If I send in my Comprehensive Report today, how soon will I receive my shipment?

A Usually, you will receive your vaccines within 5-7 business days from the date your Comprehensive Report is received by our office. Please remember that refrigerated vaccines will be shipped from McKesson's distribution center whereas frozen vaccines are shipped directly from the manufacturer.

Q Why is there a form to report vaccine usage for Private Pay patients?

A The Private Pay Usage Tally Sheet is included in your packet in an effort to reduce the number of times information is recorded in your facility. We hope the inclusion of the Private Pay form will allow your facility to use the VFC forms as your primary log for all vaccines given in your practice. Keeping a record of vaccines administered to Private Pay patients can assist you in determining the amount of Private Stock you should order or keep in inventory.

Q I report manually, how can I get a copy of the Comprehensive Report?

A [Send](mailto:gavfc@dhr.state.ga.us) your request via email to gavfc@dhr.state.ga.us.

Storage/Handling and Shipment Issues

Q What should I do if I receive warm or damaged vaccines?

A Call our office **IMMEDIATELY** at 1-800-848-3868. We will be able to help you determine if the vaccine is still viable and generate a replacement shipment if needed. Vaccines should be placed into the proper storage temperature as quickly as possible. Vaccines should not be discarded prior to calling our office to determine viability. Keep vaccines stored appropriately (i.e., refrigerated vaccines in the refrigerator, frozen vaccines in the freezer) until advised otherwise.

Q We receive the same vaccines but from different manufacturers through the VFC Program. Why does this happen, and what should we do if we start a child using one brand of vaccine but receive another in the middle of completing the series?

A According to the ACIP, a series should be completed with the same brand of vaccine if possible. However, administering doses of the same series using different brands does not adversely affect safety or immunogenicity. If you do not know what brand of vaccine a child has received or do not have that particular brand in your inventory, you should use the vaccine you have in stock.

Q What should I do if I have vaccine that has expired or is about to expire?

A As stewards of vaccines purchased with taxpayer dollars, we should have **zero** doses of expired vaccine. Policy states that provider must notify the VFC Program three months prior to the expiration date so the vaccine can be transferred. In many instances, we are able to transport short-dated vaccines to another location to be used before the expiration date. If we are unable to move the short-dated vaccine, we may also recommend that you use as much as you can and expire remaining doses. We will make every attempt to transfer the vaccines to another location for administration before the expiration date. You may be required to replace unreported expired vaccine (see the Vaccine Loss Policy for more detail).

Expired vaccine must be reported on the monthly Comprehensive Report and then sent to McKesson accompanied by the Federal Vaccine Return Form. Instructions are available via the link at the bottom of the GRITS home page titled “Returning Federally-Purchased Vaccine.”

Q What should I do if there is a discrepancy between what is in the shipment and what my invoice says there should be in the shipment?

A You should always check the quantity, lot number, and expiration date of the vaccines in your shipping container against your invoice to ensure you have received the correct vaccine quantities. In the event you find a discrepancy, double-check your shipping container. If after checking the content there is still a discrepancy, please contact the Vaccine Logistics Associate at 404-657-5013. We will follow up with McKesson on the discrepancy.

Q What is CDC’s policy regarding the use of certified thermometers and the expectation in terms of frequency of re-calibrating thermometers?

A The VFC Program requires every provider to have one certified thermometer per refrigerator or freezer compartment where VFC vaccine is stored. This certified thermometer must be used for recording temperatures. If there is not a certified thermometer at the time of the VFC site visit in all of the vaccine storage units, then shipments may be held until the situation is corrected. The Immunization Program Consultant will follow up to ensure the corrective actions steps were taken.

In the Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit, CDC recommends the use of refrigerator and freezer thermometers that have been individually certified against an ASTM or NIST standard. Additional information about thermometers is available in the Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit at <http://www2d.cdc.gov/nip/vsh/ToolkitWeb/splash.html>.

Administration Fee & Reimbursement

Q How much can we charge for an administration fee?

A You are not required to charge any amount for an administration fee, but you may charge up to \$21.93 per injection.

Q Who pays the administration fee for children who are underinsured or uninsured?

A The parent or guardian would pay the administration fee at the time of service if their child is underinsured or uninsured. However, no child can be denied VFC vaccine due to the parent's inability to pay the administration fee. If a child is enrolled in Medicaid or PeachCare for Kids, the administration fee is reimbursed after your claim is filed.

PROVIDER ENROLLMENT

HOW TO ENROLL:

- 1) Read the **Provider Agreement, Vaccine Loss Policy, Accountability Policy, and Fraud and Abuse Policy**. Complete and sign the **Provider Agreement**. Make sure all advanced medical personnel (physicians, nurse practitioners, nurse midwives and physician assistants) at your location sign the Provider Agreement and include a copy of his or her medical/professional license with the enrollment package.
- 2) Complete the **Provider Profile and Enrollment Form**. It is very important for all sections to be completed before the profile is returned. A vaccine order cannot be processed without this information.
- 3) Complete the **Vaccine Order Form** to receive your first shipment of vaccines.
- 4) Fax or email the **Provider Agreement**, copies of **medical/professional licenses**, **Provider Profile and Enrollment Form**, and **Vaccine Order Form** to the VFC Program office at (800) 372-3627 or gavfc@dhr.state.ga.us.
- 5) A Site Visit will be scheduled and conducted by the Immunization Program Consultant (IPC). The IPC will provide further instruction on VFC Program requirements and will verify that your vaccine storage and temperature monitoring equipment meets program requirements. The IPC will notify the VFC office when your facility has been approved to receive vaccines.
- 6) Upon approval of your storage equipment, your initial vaccine order will be placed and will arrive within 5 business days. Your first Monthly Comprehensive Report will be due 30 days from the receipt date of your shipment.

ENROLLING AN ADDITIONAL LOCATION

The new location will receive a unique VFC ID number; therefore the full application packet must be submitted for each new location.

ENROLLING NEW PROVIDERS FOR EXISTING LOCATIONS

If your office needs to add new providers to the VFC Program, please follow the instructions below:

- 1) New providers (advanced medical personnel) must read the **Provider Agreement, Vaccine Loss Policy, Accountability Policy, Fraud and Abuse Policy**, and sign the **Provider Agreement**. Submit a copy of the new provider's medical/professional license with the Provider Agreement.
- 2) If you expect the patient load to increase in your facility due to the addition of new personnel, please update the estimated number of children your facility will see on the **Provider Profile and Enrollment Form (sections C and D)**. If your patient load is not expected to increase, this form does not need to be completed.
- 3) Fax or email the **Provider Agreement, medical/professional licenses**, and **Provider Profile and Enrollment Form** to the VFC Program office at (800) 372-3627 or gavfc@dhr.state.ga.us.

REMOVAL OF PROVIDERS

If a provider decides to leave your facility, the VFC Program office should be notified, in writing so we may remove the provider from our database. Please follow the instructions below:

- 1) On office letterhead, submit the name of the provider that needs to be removed along with the date of separation.
- 2) Fax or email this information to the VFC Program office at (800) 372-3627 or gavfc@dhr.state.ga.us.

WITHDRAWING FROM THE PROGRAM

Contact the VFC Program to request a Withdrawal Letter. The completed form must be returned with a copy of your site's temperature logs for a period of 12 months, include a list of vaccines currently stored as inventory, and on the final day of vaccine administration, submit a copy of your final Monthly Comprehensive Report.

If vaccines need to be picked-up, your Immunization Program Consultant (IPC) will contact you to schedule a pick up time.

UPDATING THE PROVIDER PROFILE AND ENROLLMENT FORM

To receive adequate quantities of vaccine in your facility, you may need to update your estimate of the number of patients to be immunized. This can be accomplished by resubmitting the **Provider Profile and Enrollment Form**.

- 1) Make a copy of the blank **Provider Profile and Enrollment Form** included in your enrollment packet.
- 2) Complete the Provider Profile and Enrollment Form including the new estimates for the number of patients to be seen in your office in **Sections C and D**.
- 3) Fax or email the updated Provider Profile and Enrollment Form to the Vaccines for Children office at (800) 372-3627 or gavfc@dhr.state.ga.us.

PROVIDER PROFILE UPDATE

On an annual basis, the VFC Program will administer a “Provider Profile Update” via email to all providers as required by federal law. This update ensures that the program maintains accurate information on all practices. Failure to return this packet by the deadline will result in termination from the VFC Program. Updates are normally scheduled during late spring - summer.