

## 2026 Vaccine Management Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

**Purpose:** To ensure the vaccine cold chain is maintained for optimum potency.

**Instructions:**

- Post on or near primary vaccine storage unit(s).
- Review and update annually during re-enrollment, when vaccine management policies change, or when staff with designated vaccine management responsibilities change.
- **\*\* If both the Primary and Backup Vaccine Coordinator are planning on taking an extended leave (> 1 month), your medical director must designate interim Vaccine Coordinators to fill the daily roles. In addition to your site's Vaccine Coordinators and Medical Director, all staff handling vaccines (including only in emergency settings) must read, sign, and adhere to the protocols described in this document.**
- If both Primary and Backup Vaccine Coordinator are not present during your site's hours of operation, another staff member must be appointed responsibility of overseeing your site's Vaccine Program operations.

Office/Practice Name	Pin Number

**Medical Director:**

Name (First & Last)	
Credentials	
Email Address	
Signature	

**Vaccine Coordinators:**

	<u>Primary Vaccine Coordinator</u>	<u>Back-Up (Alternate) Vaccine Coordinator</u>
Name		
Phone Number		
Email Address		
Signature		

\*Notify the Vaccine Program within 10 days if a new Vaccine Coordinator or Medical Director is identified.

**Emergency Vaccine Storage Location:**

Location Name	
Location Address	
Contact Name	
Contact phone #	
Does the vaccine storage location have a pharmaceutical grade or purpose-built refrigerator for storage?	
Date of confirmation that location is still available for use as a back-up location:	

**Additional Contact Information** (ex. Nurse Coordinator, pharmacist, maintenance, etc.)

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## Vaccine Storage & Handling

### Storage Unit Requirements:

- **Pharmaceutical-grade or purpose-built refrigerators are required** for storage of refrigerated state-supplied vaccines. **Standalone freezer units (pharmaceutical-grade or purpose-built not required) are required** for storage of frozen state-supplied vaccines. All storage units are required to maintain proper temperatures.
- The use of any household combination refrigerator/freezer unit or dormitory style unit for storage of any vaccines including temporary storage is strictly prohibited.

List your site's active vaccine storage units that hold state-supplied vaccines in the table below. If you require additional space, utilize Exhibit A at the bottom of this document. *Whenever a new vaccine storage unit is posted, sites must complete and submit the [Vaccine Storage Unit Checklist](#) to the Vaccine Program.*

<u>Storage Unit Name</u>	<u>Storage Unit Type</u>	<u>Storage Unit Make</u>	<u>Storage Unit Model #</u>	<u>Data Logger Type</u>	<u>Data Logger Calibration Date</u>
Red Station Fridge	Refrigerator	ABS	XYZ12345	LogTag	11/31/27

### Vaccine Storage:

- Refrigerated vaccines should be stored within the temperature range of **2° C to 8° C** in a pharmaceutical-grade or purpose-built refrigerator designated for vaccine storage only.
- Varicella, MMRV, Mpox and Moderna COVID-19 vaccine must be stored in a stand-alone freezer that maintains a temperature between **-50° C and -15° C**. Store **Merck MMR vaccine in the freezer** to reduce the likelihood of a vaccine loss due to a temperature excursion.
- Rotate stock ensuring that short-dated and soon to expire vaccine is used first.
- Mark or identify inventory to differentiate state-supplied versus privately purchased vaccine.
- Do not store anything on top of the storage unit which could prevent the door from completely closing.
- Place the digital data logger probe in a central area of the refrigerator and freezer unit affixing it to the shelf, adjacent to the vaccine.
- Do not store food or beverages in vaccine storage units.
- **Store vaccines centrally in the refrigerator or freezer** and away from walls to allow for proper air circulation. There should be sufficient space between rows of vaccine boxes or bins and shelving units. Do not over crowd refrigerators, especially during Respiratory season.
- **Store frozen water bottles in the freezer (or secondary on-site freezer)** as part of your emergency preparedness in case of transport and to stabilize temperatures.

### Storage Unit Power Requirements:

- Post a "DO NOT UNPLUG" sign next to the electrical outlet for all vaccine storage units and post a "DO NOT DISCONNECT" label next to the circuit for any vaccine storage units on the circuit breaker.
- Plug all vaccine storage units directly into a wall outlet. Check with an electrician to see if a 'dedicated line' is needed for your storage unit(s).
- Never plug storage units into power strips, surge protectors, extension cords, Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter outlets (GFC), generators or battery packs.
  - *Exception:* Generators and battery packs can be utilized if they are wired directly into the circuit breaker of the building. This would result in the storage unit still being plugged directly into the wall outlet.

- Vaccines must be moved to a backup unit before servicing or defrosting your storage units. ALWAYS contact the Vaccine Program before moving vaccines.

### Temperature Monitoring

- All vaccine storage units holding state-supplied vaccines must be monitored continuously by a calibrated digital data logger that meets all [Vaccine Program requirements](#). Minimum and maximum temperatures should be physically acknowledged at least twice daily for all vaccine storage units holding state-supplied vaccine.
- If your state-supplied data logger is broken, call the Vaccine Program for immediate replacement.
- Temperature reports or logs must be reviewed for completeness and out-of-range temperatures. Immediate action must be taken if temperatures are out of range.

### Vaccine Receiving

- Staff receiving shipments (front office, loading dock, reception, etc.) must notify the Vaccine Coordinators as soon as a vaccine shipment arrives. **Contact the Vaccine Program immediately for guidance if there are any concerns or inaccuracies with the vaccine order shipment.**
- Open the shipping container immediately upon arrival. Check the two transit temperature monitors for shipments sent from McKesson. If temperature monitors indicate a possible temperature excursion, **contact** the Vaccine Program at (617) 983-6828 immediately.
- For direct ship vaccines from Merck, check the shipment date located on the packing slip and check the shipper insert supplied in the box. Shipments of MMRV are always delivered within 24 hours. Varicella can be shipped in a 2-day or 4-day box. Contact the Vaccine Program if the date received is later than the indicated date on the shipper inserts, on the day of receipt.
- Count vaccines in shipment and compare with packing list and original MUIS order to ensure the order and delivery are correct. Check to ensure that expiration dates and lot numbers match, and that the diluent is also accounted for.
- **Retain all state-supplied packing slips for a minimum of 3 years.**
- Place vaccine in the refrigerator/freezer designated for vaccine storage immediately after an inventory of the shipment is completed.

*Describe the process for how state-supplied vaccines are received by your site.*

1. *Who is responsible for receiving vaccine shipments?*
2. *Who is responsible for unpacking and reviewing vaccine shipments?*
3. *How does your site ensure that vaccine inventory is rotated once a new shipment is received?*

### Vaccine Transportation Procedures

- **Contact the Vaccine Program whenever you are considering transporting state-supplied vaccines outside of your facility** to ensure you have the most relevant guidance and advice for your specific situation. Providers must follow the 2026 Vaccine Transport SOP when transporting state supplied vaccines. Sites must retain an adequate number/amount of appropriate transport coolers and materials (e.g. frozen water bottles, bubble wrap, cardboard) needed to pack vaccines for safe transport.

- If a site is transferring **all** of their vaccine due to a storage unit malfunction, they must ensure that the **primary data logger is always kept with the state-supplied vaccine**.
  - If only moving a smaller amount of state-supplied vaccine, a **backup** DDL must be used for the transport of the vaccines.
- Use separate packing containers for refrigerator stored vaccines and freezer stored vaccines. Label outside of packing container 'Must Store in Refrigerator' or 'Must Store in Freezer'.
  - Transport single-dose vaccine vials or pre-filled syringes whenever possible. Multi-dose vials should be unpunctured at the time of transfer to a mobile/off-site clinic. **DO NOT TRANSFER OPEN MULTI-DOSE VIALS AT ANY TIME.**
  - **Conditioned water bottles** should be placed in the container used to transport refrigerated vaccines when following the [CDC Packing for Emergency Transport guide](#). **Separate the vaccine from the conditioned water bottles with cardboard and bubble wrap. Never place frozen gel packs or ice packs with refrigerated vaccines.**
  - Frozen water bottles should be placed in the container to transport frozen vaccines. **(Dry ice is not recommended for the transport of frozen vaccines. It is too cold.)**
  - Place the glycol bottle in each transport cooler near the vaccine to monitor the temperatures. Ensure that the cord of the glycol bottle is attached to the digital data logger, so that temperatures are recorded.
- **Transport of vaccines often results in out-of-range temperatures/excursions:**
  - Record the time the vaccines were placed in the transport cooler and the time when the vaccines were removed from the transport cooler, so that temperatures during transport can be easily reviewed.
  - Do not administer the vaccine until viability is confirmed. If temperatures fall out-of-range during transit and falls under the [Vaccine Program definition of an excursion](#), please submit a Temperature Excursion Issue in the MIIS.
  - Upload the transport temperature log into MIIS to document temperatures during transit.
  - *Never discard vaccine without contacting the Vaccine Program for guidance.*

### Vaccine Ordering and Inventory Control

- Place vaccine orders through the MIIS Vaccine Management Module and upload the most recent temperature logs for all storage units holding state-supplied vaccine within one day of submitting your order. Temperature logs must contain all days of temperature monitoring data since the last temperature log upload in the MIIS.
- Complete a physical inventory count of all vaccines in the refrigerator(s) and freezer(s), checking expiration dates at least monthly and before placing an order.
- Vaccine orders may take up to 2 weeks to arrive at your site once the order is processed and approved by the Vaccine Program.
- Contact the Vaccine Program to update any changes in shipping address. Changes to shipping hours or shipping contact can be updated directly in MIIS. Vaccine shipments will be sent based on shipping information in MIIS.

*Describe your internal process for determining your site's vaccine needs when placing an order:*

1. *Outside of the pre-filled recommendation counts provided in MIIS, how does your site determine your upcoming vaccine needs?*
2. *How are the staff members responsible for placing the vaccine orders informed of any upcoming changes with your site (i.e. providers leaving, upcoming clinics, back to school seasons, etc.)*

- Provider sites that do not regularly stock respiratory vaccines (i.e. COVID, Flu, RSV), **must have a written plan to direct interested patients to another non-pharmacy provider in their area that offers the vaccine.** All plans must include guidance/recommendations for interested patients of any age.

*If your site does not regularly stock state-supplied respiratory vaccines, please describe your referral plan below:*

- Transfer soon to expire vaccines to another pediatric provider 3 months prior to expiration. Document all vaccine transfers in the MIIS Transfer Vaccine Module. If unable to locate a practice within the first two weeks of attempting to move the vaccines, contact the Vaccine Program for assistance at 617-983-6828.
- Document all vaccines that cannot be used due to expiration/spoilage, exposure to unsafe temperatures or vaccines that are wasted/damaged in the *New Order Module* or the *Storage/Handling Problem Module*. Refer to the [Quick Start Guide](#) for instructions.
- Pack vaccine marked for return in a box with the return form enclosed. A return label will either be emailed to your Primary Vaccine Coordinator or UPS will provide a label at the time of pick up (depending on the option selected when submitting the storage and handling issue).
- Do not return broken vials or syringes, opened multi-dose vials or vaccine drawn up into a syringe. Ensure these doses are documented in MIIS as wasted.

### **Temperatures Out of Range**

If an out-of-range temperature lasts a cumulative 30 minutes (within a 24-hour period) sites must contact the Vaccine Program immediately via the submission of a Temperature Excursion Issue in the MIIS, as this is considered a temperature excursion. Shorter out-of-range temperatures do not require reporting to the Vaccine Program, as viability data indicates that the vaccines will remain viable.

In the event of a temperature excursion, sites must follow the steps detailed below:

- **Immediately suspend vaccine administration of state-supplied vaccines stored in the unit** that is experiencing the out-of-range temperature until vaccine viability is determined by the vaccine manufacturer. **The vaccines should be marked as ‘Do Not Use’.**
- Upload temperature logs into MIIS and select ‘Urgent Temperature Issue’.
- Submit a Temperature Excursion Issue in the MIIS after following up with the vaccine manufacturers for viability determinations for the impacted doses.
- The Vaccine Program will review the submitted Temperature Excursion Issue and provide necessary guidance and follow-up action items for your site to complete.

### Power Failure/Refrigerator Failure

- In the event of a power outage, providers should **NEVER** move their vaccines offsite or to a backup location. It is best practice to keep the vaccines in their storage units with the door closed, being monitored by a digital data logger device. Vaccines should only be moved to an offsite/backup location if the storage unit itself is malfunctioning.

### Documentation

- Enroll annually in the Vaccine Program by completing online enrollment in the *MIIS Provider Enrollment Module*.
- Review and update all SOPs annually and when any changes in procedure or staff occur.
- Retain a record of vaccines received or transferred, including type of vaccine, manufacturer, lot number, expiration date and number of doses, for a minimum of 3 years. Keep packing slips received in shipments from both McKesson and Merck.
- Maintain temperature logs for a minimum of 3 years. Temperature logs uploaded to MIIS do not need to be maintained as physical copies on site.
- Offer the appropriate *Vaccine Information Statement (VIS)* with each dose of vaccine administered.
- Subscribe to the CDC's e-mail update for VIS at: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/index.html). **Record vaccine administration information in the patient's chart including** administration date, type of vaccine, manufacturer, lot number, expiration date, VIS publication date, date VIS is given, name and credentials of the person administering the vaccine.
- Report all state-supplied doses administered in the *MIIS Vaccine Management Module* with each vaccine order. Most EHRs are connected so that the dose will decrement from inventory and appear in your usage report as immunizations given.

### Staff Training/Provider Education Requirements

The Primary and Back-up Vaccine Coordinator must complete the current annual Vaccine Program Storage and Handling training. This training will cover all program requirements, including proper storage and handling of state-supplied vaccines. This requirement may be met by completing one of the following:

- Vaccine Program Storage and Handling Webinar training
- Onsite training session conducted by a member of the Vaccine Program
- Virtual training session conducted by a member of the Vaccine Program
- Compliance Site Visit with formal training component
- In-person training events held by the Immunization Division (e.g. Vaccine Program Storage and Handling break-out session at MIAP or Vaccine Program Immunization update seminar).

**Go to the training page of the MIIS Resource Center to view training materials, Quick Reference Guides and Webinars about MIIS.**

**For any clinical questions you can contact the Immunization Nurses at (617) 983-6800.**

This SOP was created and completed by:	
Name	
Title	
Date of Completion	
Signature	

**Please Note: All staff who are involved in vaccine management processes for your site must review and sign this SOP. At a minimum, both Vaccine Coordinators and the Medical Director must sign this SOP.**

Date	Employee Name	Employee Signature

## Exhibit A

<u>Storage Unit Name</u>	<u>Storage Unit Type</u>	<u>Storage Unit Make</u>	<u>Storage Unit Model #</u>
<i>Red Station Fridge</i>	<i>Refrigerator</i>	<i>ABS</i>	<i>XYZ12345</i>