



September 30, 2016

Dear VFC Providers,

Current California VFC Program requirements indicate that VFC-supplied vaccine must be stored in separate refrigerator-only and freezer-only units. Use of household combination units, dormitory style units, or household grade compact under-the counter units (11 cubic feet in capacity and under) for the storage of VFC Supplied vaccines is not allowed at any time. Adherence to VFC's storage unit requirements is certified by participating providers as part of VFC's annual recertification process. Compliance with program requirements is verified during routine and unannounced site visits.

VFC vaccine storage equipment requirements and specifications are listed on the [Storage and Handling page](#) of EZIZ.org. Please review them to ensure your practice is using the proper vaccine storage units.

Standalone refrigerators and freezers are available in different grades (household, commercial, and biological/pharmaceutical). Acceptable standalone unit grades are dependent upon the provider volume category as listed on the [Storage and Handling page](#) of EZIZ.org

- **Best: Pharmacy-grade or biologic-grade units** are the preferred choice for vaccine storage at VFC provider offices. Use of these units is a requirement for Very High Volume VFC providers. These units are designed specifically for storage of biologics. They maintain consistent temperatures throughout the unit, and nearly all of the internal space can be used for storing vaccines. Provider offices with space limitations may choose to use compact under-the-counter refrigerator-only units (11 cubic feet in capacity and under); however, these must be pharmacy-grade or biologic grade units.
- **Good: Commercial stand-alone units** are usually intended to store food, beverages, and other products such as flowers in commercial settings. They are often larger and more powerful than household refrigerator-only units. However, these units are not specifically designed to store biological materials and may be prone to some temperature fluctuations with routine use.
- **Ok: Household stand-alone units are** usually smaller than commercial units, and are intended for food storage in household settings. Like commercial units, they are not designed to store biological materials. These units have frequent temperature cycling in order to compensate for increased opening and closing of the unit. Frequent temperature fluctuations may lead to temperature excursions above or below the recommended range.

The California VFC Program is conducting a review of vaccine storage equipment information on file for VFC providers in preparation for VFC's 2017 recertification. Providers will be notified in a separate communication if their current vaccine storage unit(s) does not meet VFC requirements, or if an update on information on file may be needed.

If you have any questions, including whether a new unit you are considering to purchase meets VFC specifications, please do not hesitate to contact your VFC Field Representative.