



# Managing Vaccine Shipments During COVID-19

## **Immediately Report Temporary Clinic Closures**

If your clinic will be closed due to COVID-19 or has limited hours, immediately notify the VFC Program and update your clinic hours to reflect any changes. If you expect to be closed for an indefinite amount of time, please review and complete the Temporary Clinic Closure form with your Provider of Record to inform us of this change.

With many clinics closing their doors during this pandemic, it will be more important for those that stay open to continue providing immunization services.

- As a reminder, if your clinic is open, patients should not be referred outside of the medical home for vaccination (including influenza), especially during this pandemic. Every opportunity to provide all immunizations due during a visit will be important to catch up patients and reduce burden on families and providers.

Due to COVID-19, some offices are locking their doors and restricting entry. If your office chooses to do this, please ensure you have signs that are highly visible and legible, like [this one](#)! It should provide clear instructions for the delivery driver on what to do with any packages, especially temperature sensitive vaccine packages (e.g. knock on the door or leave the package on the doorstep).

Furthermore, there may be health screening requirements prior to entry into offices. If there is limited access to your lobby, separate processes should be in place to allow vaccine deliveries to be dropped off without delays. Again, vaccine packages are temperature sensitive and must be stored in vaccine refrigerators and freezers immediately upon arrival!

### **UPS Shipping**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, UPS has temporarily adjusted their signature guidelines for all shipments within the United States. Signatures may not be required, meaning vaccine orders may be left unattended at provider offices or delivered outside of specified hours. In order to prevent the loss of vaccine, we ask that providers actively monitor their local guidelines (as signature requirements may vary and evolve depending on phased re-openings) and practice extra vigilance when expecting an order delivery. We encourage all providers that are expecting vaccine deliveries to routinely check drop-off locations throughout the day, as well as, prior to leaving the office. Additionally, please be sure to allow ample time for your vaccine orders and ensure there is sufficient inventory on hand to cover if there is a delay.

### **Merck Shipping Containers**

Since June 22, 2020, all vaccines shipped by Merck have been sent in reusable shipping containers to reduce waste and negative impacts on our environment. Please refer to the [Merck letter](#) for further details, as well as their [short video](#) with instructions on how to return the reusable shipping containers.

### **Upcoming Customer Service Center Holiday Closure**

The VFC Program Customer Service Center will be closed for the Labor Day holiday on Monday, September 7, 2020.

**Thank you,**



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