

# Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit

National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases

## Vaccine Personnel

### Primary Vaccine Coordinator and Backup Vaccine Coordinator

Each practice should designate one staff member to be the primary vaccine coordinator. This person will be responsible for ensuring that all vaccines are handled correctly and that procedures are documented. Proper vaccine storage and handling procedures include but are not limited to the following tasks:

- ordering vaccines;
- overseeing proper receipt and storage of vaccine shipments; and
- at least twice daily temperature monitoring of the refrigerator(s) and freezer(s);
- at least twice daily recording on the temperature logs;
- response to storage temperatures outside the recommended range;
- maintenance of storage and handling equipment and records;
- rotation of vaccine stock so that vaccine closer to its expiration date will be used first;
- monitoring expiration dates on vaccines and ensuring that expired vaccine is not administered to patients;
- overseeing proper vaccine transport.

Each office should also designate a backup vaccine coordinator who is able to perform the same tasks as the primary vaccine coordinator in the event that the primary person is unavailable. Both the primary and backup vaccine coordinators should be fully trained in routine and emergency procedures related to vaccine shipments, storage, handling, transport, and inventory management.



Each practice should designate a Primary Vaccine Coordinator and a Backup Vaccine Coordinator.

## Other Staff

Other staff members who handle or administer vaccines should also be familiar with the site's policies and procedures for vaccine storage and handling. This includes staff

**Staff who handle or administer vaccines should be familiar with their site's policies and procedures for vaccine storage and handling.**

members, such as receptionists and mail handlers, who accept vaccine shipments. These policies and procedures should be available in writing as a reference for all staff members. Both the [Routine Vaccine Storage and Handling Plan](#) and the [Emergency Vaccine Retrieval and Storage Plan](#) (see section on Storage and

Handling Plans) should be easily accessible and should be kept near the vaccine storage units.

## Training

During new staff orientation, all staff who administer vaccines should be trained in proper vaccine storage and handling practices. This toolkit can serve as a training guide. Additional training may be available through your state health department immunization program. Vaccine storage and handling practices should be reviewed annually to update all staff members on the latest policies. Records should be kept of vaccine training sessions and attendees. All staff members responsible for vaccines should understand the importance of cold chain maintenance and the procedures to follow if there is a break in the cold chain. There is no benefit to recording the temperature in a vaccine storage unit if action is not taken when the temperature is outside the recommended range. All staff members should know that any break in the cold chain must be reported immediately to the vaccine coordinator or to the immediate supervisor. The vaccine coordinator and supervisory staff should know that  **immediate action** must be taken to correct inappropriate storage conditions (including both inappropriate light exposure and inappropriate temperature exposure).