To protect the integrity of vaccine supply and to secure access to vaccine supply provided by federal and state entities, pharmacists should strive to adhere to these recommendations.

**Staff and Training**

- Designate a primary, and a backup, vaccine coordinator.
- Develop and maintain clearly written, detailed, and up-to-date storage and handling standard operating procedures (SOPs) as part of a vaccine management plan (include contact information, staff roles/responsibilities, training, storage, handling, temperature excursions, plan review/updating).
- Train staff on routine vaccine storage and handling and emergency SOPs.

**Vaccine Storage and Temperature Monitoring Equipment**

- Use purpose-built (pharmaceutical grade) units designed to either refrigerate or freeze.
  - Household-grade units can be an acceptable alternative to pharmaceutical-grade vaccine storage units. However, the freezer compartment of this type of unit is not recommended to store vaccines and there may be other areas of the refrigerated compartment that should be avoided as well.
  - Door-style and bar-style (small, single-door combined units) are not allowed.
- Place a storage unit in a well-ventilated room, leaving space between the unit, ceiling, and any wall.
- Temperature Ranges:
  - Before using a unit for vaccine storage, check and record the minimum and maximum temperatures each workday for two to seven days.
  - Maintain refrigerator temperatures between 2°C and 8°C (36°F and 46 °F).
  - Maintain freezer temperatures between -50°C and -15°C (-58°F and +5°F).
- Every vaccine storage unit must have a temperature monitoring device (TMD).
  - Maintain at least one backup TMD in case a primary device breaks or malfunctions.
  - CDC recommends (and VFC requires) a specific TMD called a “digital data logger” (DDL).
  - Use DDL with current and valid Certificate of Calibration Testing which includes the model/device name or number, serial number, date of calibration (report or issue date), confirmation that the instrument passed testing, recommended uncertainty of +/- °C (+/- 1°F) or less.
  - Calibration should be completed individually for each DDL every one to two years or according to the manufacturer’s suggested timeline.
Vaccine Inventory Management

- Immediately examine shipments for signs of damage.
- Order and stock only enough vaccine to meet patient needs.
- Isolate any vaccines stored out of range and contact manufacturer or health department to determine how to handle vaccine.

Emergency Vaccine Storage and Handling

- Establish a working agreement with at least one alternate facility even if you have a generator as backup equipment.

For more information on temperature excursions and storage/handling, review the CDC’s Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit


Disclaimer: Providers are responsible for ensuring compliance with all federal, state, and/or local requirements. This document is a guide and APhA is not liable for additional requirements not listed in this document. Check for additional state requirements prior to receiving, storing and handling vaccines.