

USVI VACCINE FOR CHILDREN NEWS

SUMMER 2022

EMERGENCY VACCINES PROCEDURES AND TRANSPORT

It's that time of the year again! Hurricane season occurs from June 1st to November 30th. It is important for immunization providers to maintain up-to-date Vaccine Emergency Management Plans to ensure that they are prepared in the event of any occurrence that could jeopardize vaccine storage, including equipment failures, power outages, severe weather conditions, or natural disasters.

Here are some things to consider when developing and/or reviewing your **Vaccine Emergency Management Plan**:

BACKUP EQUIPMENT

Ensure that all staff knows where backup equipment is located:

- Certified, a calibrated, backup temperature monitoring device (temperature data logger) - if you need to transport vaccines off-site, you will need to monitor the temperatures in your transport cooler.
- Flashlight and spare batteries (in case of a

power outage)

- Vaccine transport supplies: coolers, frozen water bottles, and buffer materials
- (e.g., bubble wrap, cardboard, etc.).

Review your Emergency Plan to ensure that all staff know how to use your backup equipment and are familiar with packing vaccines in an emergency. Run through your procedures, practice packing vaccines (you can use expired vaccines as a stand-in), and monitor your "practice" vaccine cooler temperature to ensure that you would be able to maintain appropriate vaccine storage temperatures during an emergency.

GENERATORS AND BACKUP ENERGY SUPPLY

Generators: Ensure that you have sufficient fuel on hand to continuously operate the generator for at least 72 hours.

Backup Battery: Check the manufacturer's guidance for quarterly testing procedures and maintenance schedules.



Check out our updated website!

You'll find up-to-date information on the VFC program along with other great information.

We've also included the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) *How to Recommend Video Series*, please visit doh.vi.gov/programs/immunizations.



U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Health
Immunization Program

Vaccines For Children Program Coordinator

Cherise Thomas
(340) 776-1113, ext. 2225
cherise.thomas@doh.vi.gov

Ensure staff knows where backup power sources are located and know how to operate them.

ALTERNATIVE VACCINE STORAGE FACILITY

Even if you have backup equipment or a generator, it is recommended that you establish a working agreement with at least one alternative storage facility with a backup generator where vaccines can be appropriately stored and monitored during an emergency. Hospitals, long-term care facilities, and commercial pharmacies/pharmaceutical distributors are some of the facilities that may be able to assist you.

ACCESSING YOUR BUILDING AFTER HOURS

Should an emergency occur after business hours, ensure that your facility's building manager and/or security staff are aware that vaccines stored on-site may need to be accessed and moved to another facility.

Table 1 Recommended Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule for ages 18 years or younger, United States, 2022

These recommendations must be read with the notes that follow. For those who fall behind or start late, provide catch-up vaccination at the earliest opportunity as indicated by the green bars. To determine minimum intervals between doses, see the catch-up schedule (Table 2).

2022 Immunization Schedules Now Available

You can find updates to the 2022 child/adolescent and adult immunization schedules and related schedule resources, including the parent friendly schedule and new catch-up schedule to the 2022 child/adolescent and adult immunization schedules have been published on CDC's website, please visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html>

This is a quarterly publication distributed to all participating Vaccine for Children providers. Its purpose is to address VFC-related issues, provide general immunization information, and keep you up-to-date with the latest program changes.

Keep information on after-hours building access and security procedures (including alarm codes, if necessary) with your Emergency Plans and ensure that staff members have copies of this information available at home.

NOTE: If vaccines must be temporarily stored and/or transferred off-site, it is your responsibility to ensure that vaccines are maintained at appropriate temperatures throughout the temporary storage and/or transit period. Never store or transport vaccines without the appropriate coolers and packing materials (refrigerants, buffer materials, etc.). For step-by-step guides, view the following resources:

CDC "Packing Vaccines for Transport During Emergencies": <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/storage/downloads/emergency-transport.pdf>

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Immunization Resources, Storage and Handling Series, "Safe Vaccine Transport" https://www.aap.org/en-us/Documents/immunizations_vaccine_transport.pdf

For more information on Emergency Vaccine Storage, Handling and Transport Preparations, view the CDC Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit at: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/storage/toolkit/storage-handling-toolkit.pdf>