

Philadelphia Immunization Program

SPECIAL DELIVERY

The Philadelphia Department of Public Health Division of Disease Control

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• Vaccines for Adults at Risk (VFAAR) Program Wastage Policy Update

WHAT WE ARE ASKING YOU TO DO:

1. Read through this document that describes updates to the VFAAR Program's Wasted/Expired/Spoiled Vaccine Policy

The City of Philadelphia purchases vaccines through a discretionary federal grant and delivers these vaccines at no cost to Vaccines for Adults at Risk (VFAAR) Program enrolled providers. These vaccines are purchased by the City of Philadelphia and therefore are not free to the VFAAR Program. This federal grant has decreased in recent years and simultaneously the federal government has restricted the criteria for adult patients who are eligible for vaccine purchased through this funding. Although the majority of VFAAR enrolled providers are responsible executors of VFAAR vaccine, clear guidelines regarding negligent waste of vaccine have been established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH). The policy is outlined below.

VFAAR providers experiencing losses due to negligent storage and handling will be required to replace wasted, spoiled or expired vaccine through private purchase (see VFAAR website <https://kids.phila.gov/vfaar.aspx> document titled "VFAAR Wasted/Spoiled/Expired Reimbursement Policy" for more information). While certain losses due to equipment failure may be unavoidable, others such as: improper temperature monitoring, over-ordering, not closing a refrigerator door tightly, or failure to report and return short-dated vaccine in a timely fashion, are avoidable and considered wastage.

The VFAAR Wastage policy is designed to ensure proper accountability of VFAAR vaccines. Under this policy, providers must:

- Report all vaccine losses to the PDPH VFAAR Program promptly.
- Submit a letter to VFAAR Program describing the incident on practice letterhead, signed by the head physician.
- Purchase, through the vaccine manufacturer(s), replacement doses for wasted VFAAR vaccine, as instructed by the VFAAR Program.
- Submit to the VFAAR Program a copy of the receipt, showing the vaccines, lot number(s), NDC numbers, and number of doses purchased. Proof of payment will be required.
- Use this privately purchased vaccine to vaccinate VFAAR-eligible patients. The VFAAR Program will ask to see records documenting administration of this vaccine to VFAAR-eligible patients.

VFAAR enrolled providers are responsible for ensuring that their staff take all possible measures to prevent vaccine loss. The following procedures should be followed:

- Provide adequate vaccine storage, and monitor storage conditions.
- In the case of a vaccine storage problem, do not assume that vaccine is spoiled. Contact the VFAAR Program immediately for advice before discarding any vaccine.
- Check expiration dates regularly. Rotate vaccine stock regularly by moving the vaccine stock with the earliest expiration dates to the front, and putting the vaccines with the longest expiration dates to the back. *Never use expired vaccines! If expired vaccine is identified, remove it from your storage unit **immediately**, label it “do not use” and contact the VFAAR program.*
- Report to the VFAAR Program (via a Short-Dated/Returned Vaccine Report Form) any doses of vaccine that will expire within 60 to 90 days that you will not be able to use prior to expiration (see below for further information on short-dated vaccine below).
- Do not over-order vaccine. Providers should not attempt to stockpile vaccine as a hedge against future shortages. This frequently leads to vaccine wastage, and can contribute to vaccine shortages and limited supply patients needing vaccine in other practices. *Providers should order only enough vaccine to meet their needs for no more than 3 months.*

Short-Dated Policy and Procedures:

A Short-Dated/Returned Vaccine Report form is a tool provided to assist in prevention of costly vaccine wastage. By reporting your short-dated vaccines to the PDPH Immunization Program, we will be able to transfer the vaccine to another provider, where it can be used prior to expiration. *Providers may not transport vaccine to another location.*

If you have short-dated vaccine and want to ensure that your office is not required to reimburse the VFAAR program for future loss, you must submit a Short-Dated/Returned Vaccine Report form.

- The form must be sent to VFAAR 60 to 90 days (2 to 3 months) prior to vaccine expiration.
- These forms must be faxed to 215-238-6939.
- It is the responsibility of the provider to confirm receipt of Short-Dated/Returned Vaccine Report form.
- Vaccine that a provider assumes will not be used **MUST** be reported 60 to 90 days before the expiration date.
- Failure to report within the stated timeframe may result in your practice being financially responsible for the expired vaccine.
- Failure to reimburse the PDPH Immunization Program for wasted vaccine will result in VFAAR Program suspension.

The Short-Dated/Returned Vaccine Report form can be found at:

<https://kids.phila.gov/Docs/VFAAR%20Short-Dated%20Return%20Vaccine%20ReportDec11.pdf>

Contact Emily Gible, VFAAR Program Coordinator at PDPH with questions about this policy: 215.685.6424 or Emily.Gible@phila.gov