

Vaccine Administration Errors

Like other healthcare situations, errors related to vaccine administration can occur. You can help prevent errors, including those related to administration, by training your staff and standardizing your workflow in advance. You may still have administration errors, even after taking preventive steps. If an error occurs, the vaccine administrator should consider taking the following important steps:

- **Determine if the dose counts or if the patient needs an additional vaccination.** You may need to contact the manufacturer to see if they consider the vaccine viable. See the [Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Authorized in the United States guidance](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for steps to follow in the event of vaccine administration errors, including manufacturer contact information. You can also check [CDC's guidance on specific administration errors](#).
- **Let the patient or parent, guardian, or other responsible adult know about the error and if the vaccination needs to be repeated.** Best practice recommends notifying the patient of the error.
- **Investigate why the error occurred to prevent it from happening again.** Your focus should be on determining the most appropriate way to prevent future errors, not blame finding or finger pointing. If the error occurred due to failure to follow policy, organization policy should be followed regarding next steps for management. If policies were followed, review identified practices to create more safeguards and prevent future errors.
- **Report the COVID-19 vaccine administration error to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS).** CDC requires this. Check the [VAERS website](#) for more information about events that require reporting and other VAERS reporting.

If you need help or a large number of individuals are impacted by the administration error, notify the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) vaccine safety coordinator, Kathy Bay, at kathy.bay@doh.wa.gov.

Training Resources

You can provide staff with adequate training to lessen the likelihood of vaccine administration errors.

- [CDC Immunization Education and Training](#): CDC offers multiple trainings and competencies for safe vaccine administration.

- [DOH Prevent COVID-19 Vaccine Administration Errors webinar](#): Dr. Andrew Kroger, a medical officer with the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases at CDC, discusses COVID-19 vaccine administration and handling, common types of vaccinations errors, and strategies for their prevention.

Liability

The Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act allows the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to declare an extension of certain liability protections to covered persons who manufacture, distribute, or administer covered medical countermeasures (including vaccines) against public health threat or emergency. A declaration from the Secretary of HHS for 'medical countermeasures' has been in place since March 2020. You can find more information on the [Public Health Emergency website](#).

While the PREP Act provides broad liability protection, it does not protect against liability for individuals who participate in willful misconduct or violate the Americans with Disabilities Act or a person's civil rights. Health care providers and organizations should continue to prioritize safety and follow federal and state level guidance for storage and handling, screening, and other vaccination processes. DOH may report events to the appropriate licensing authority for investigation if a health care provider acted outside these recommendations or made repeated errors.

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