

# Childhood Vaccine Program

Office of Immunization | (360) 236-2829 | [doh.wa.gov/cvp](http://doh.wa.gov/cvp) | [wachildhoodvaccines@doh.wa.gov](mailto:wachildhoodvaccines@doh.wa.gov)

## Vaccine Transfer FAQ

**Question:** What is the Childhood Vaccine Program vaccine transfer policy?

**Answer:** Our vaccine transfer policy is aligned with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) requirements around the transfer of Vaccines for Children (VFC) vaccines. CDC discourages transferring vaccines except in the case of soon to expire vaccine. CDC policy says where practical, and if the cold chain is maintained, transfer of short-dated vaccine can occur between Childhood Vaccine Program providers to avoid wasting vaccine. Providers must coordinate a vaccine transfer using the [provider map](#) and submit their transfer request for approval in the IIS. This should be a rare practice if providers are appropriately managing inventory.

**Question:** Under the transfer policy when can I transfer vaccine?

**Answer:** Ideally vaccines should only be transferred if they are within 90 days of expiration, and you will not be able to administer the vaccine before expiration.

**Question:** If I'm out or low on vaccine can I transfer vaccine, so I don't miss any opportunities to vaccinate?

**Answer:** If you are low or out of a vaccine, place an order in the IIS even if it's outside of your scheduled ordering window. Place an order for enough vaccine to get you through to your next ordering period. In addition, you can also submit a transfer request for the vaccine needed until your order arrives. The transfer requests will be approved on a case-by-case basis.

**Question:** Do I need to have pre-approval for a vaccine transfer?

**Answer:** Yes, vaccine transfers need to have pre-approval using the IIS system and following the [Vaccine Online Transfer Guide](#) provided by DOH before transferring vaccine to another facility except when emergency transport is required due to a power outage for vaccine storage unit failure. For non-emergency transfers, please remember to send in the current month's temperature log when you submit your transfer request in the IIS. If emergency transfers are necessary, follow your clinic's Vaccine Management Plan.

**Question:** How can I locate a clinic enrolled in the Childhood Vaccine Program to contact about receiving a vaccine transfer?

**Answer:** The [provider map](#), is a resource located on the [Childhood Vaccine Program website](#). This map can be used to identify providers who receive publicly supplied vaccines through the Childhood Vaccine Program.

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**Question:** Do we have to accept vaccine transfers?

**Answer:** No, you don't have to accept vaccine transfers. However, we highly encourage clinics to accept transfers if they can administer the vaccine before expiration to help reduce vaccine waste.

**Question:** Once my transfer is approved how long do I have to complete the transfer?

**Answer:** Please have the transfer completed within seven (7) days of approval. This will ensure the receiving clinic has ample time to use the vaccine before expiration.

**Question:** Does the clinic I'm transferring to have to be enrolled in the Childhood Vaccine Program?

**Answer:** Yes, only clinics actively enrolled in the Washington State Childhood Vaccine Program can receive a vaccine transfer. Z

**Question:** What type of transport container should I use for vaccine transfers?

**Answer:**

Type of Unit	Emergency Transfer	Routine Transfer	Off-site Clinic
Portable Vaccine Refrigerator or Freezer	Yes	Yes	Yes
Certified Container and Packout*	Yes	Yes	Yes
Conditioned Water Bottle Transport System	Yes	Yes	No
Manufacturer's Original Shipping Container	Yes (Last resort only)	No	No
Hard-sided cooler	Yes	Yes	No
Pre-approval Required	No	Yes	Yes

**\*Qualified Container and Packout:**

A type of container and supplies specifically designed for use when packing vaccines for transport. They are "qualified" through laboratory testing under controlled conditions to ensure they achieve and maintain desired temperatures for a set amount of time.

**Question:** What happens if I don't transfer out my soon to expire vaccine?

**Answer:** If Childhood Vaccine Program doses expire make sure to record the dose(s) on the [Vaccine Loss Log](#) and start the online return process by adjusting the vaccine from your inventory as expired. To complete the vaccine return please complete the second step in the process and verify the return on the Create/View

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Orders>Vaccine Return screen. The expired vaccine will be included in your yearly waste total. For more information please see the [online vaccine return](#) process.

**Question:** What if I can't find another clinic to transfer the vaccine to?

**Answer:** Email [WChildhoodVaccines@doh.wa.gov](mailto:WChildhoodVaccines@doh.wa.gov) and notify us you are having trouble finding another enrolled Childhood Vaccine Program provider. An email can be sent to surrounding providers on your behalf. Enrolled providers are not required to accept vaccine transfers and there may be instances where a clinic can't be located, and your vaccine will expire. Therefore, it is important to order vaccine appropriately. Please see our [Recommended Order Quantity Guide](#) for more information on ordering. Vaccine stock should be rotated based on the expiration date to ensure doses expiring soonest are used first.

**Question:** Can we use the Vaccine Advertisement feature in the IIS under Orders/Transfers to help transfer short-dated vaccine?

**Answer:** Yes, you can advertise short-dated vaccines. Advertising can be one strategy, but it shouldn't be your only strategy as this feature is not widely utilized by Childhood Vaccine Program providers. You still need to actively contact providers using the [provider map](#) to transfer the soon to expire vaccine.

**Question:** Can I transfer varicella containing vaccines that are stored in the freezer such as varicella and MMRV?

**Answer:** Frozen varicella containing vaccine can only be transported with a qualified container and pack out and/or portable freezer.

**Question:** Can I transfer COVID-19 vaccine that is stored in the freezer (including ultra-cold storage)?

**Answer:** Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine multi-dose and single dose vials can be transported at ultra-cold temperatures (-90°C to -60°C or -130°F to -76°F) or at refrigerated temperatures (2°C to 8°C or 36°F to 46°F). The vaccine can be stored for 10 weeks at refrigerated temperatures and up to the expiration date at ultra cold temperatures. This vaccine should not be stored at regular freezer temperatures.

Moderna COVID-19 vaccine can be transported at regular freezer temperatures (-50°C to -15°C or -58°F to 5°F) or at refrigerated temperatures (2°C to 8°C or 36°F to 46°F). The vaccine can be stored for 30-days at refrigerated temperatures and up to the expiration date at freezer temperatures.

For both vaccines: If vaccine is thawed and transported at 2°C to 8°C (36°C to 46°F), vials should not be refrozen and should be stored at 2°C to 8°C (36°F to 46°F) until use. The refrigerated beyond use date should be recorded on the carton after the transfer.

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**Question:** I have a partially used vial of IPV (Flu or COVID-19) that is about to expire, can I transfer a partially used vial to another clinic?

**Answer:** No, partially used multi-dose vials (IPV, some flu & some COVID-19 vaccine) cannot be transferred from one provider to another. Only unused or unopened multi-dose vials can be transferred.

**Question:** What if we lose power or my vaccine storage unit fails do I need to fill out a transfer request to move my vaccine?

**Answer:** No. Emergency transport should be in accordance with your facility's Vaccine Management Plan. A transfer request **does not** need to be completed or require pre-approval for emergency transport.

**Question:** Do I need to record temperatures during a vaccine transfer?

**Answer:** Yes, a digital data logger with a current certificate of calibration must be used to record temperatures during a vaccine transfer. The buffered probe should be placed directly with the vaccines. Review our [Vaccine Transport Guidelines](#) for further instructions.

**Question:** What should I do if my temperatures go out of range during a vaccine transfer?

**Answer:** If temperatures go out of range follow the instructions in the [Vaccine Temperature Excursion Guide](#). Ensure that the temperatures are monitored, the vaccine is placed under proper storage unit temperatures as soon as possible, the vaccine is labeled "do not use," and the manufacturers are called to determine viability of the vaccine.