



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**
Oxiris Barbot, MD
Commissioner

October 16, 2019

Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc
Assistant Commissioner
Bureau of Immunization

42-09 28th Street, CN21
Queens, NY 11101-4132

Dear Colleague:

We are writing to inform you that the New York City (NYC) Vaccines for Children (VFC) program re-enrollment for 2019 has started. Please initiate steps to complete re-enrollment now. We are also sending you a reminder about VFC policy updates and secure access to the Citywide Immunization Registry (CIR) Online Registry. We encourage you and/or your staff to sign up for one of the webinars on VFC re-enrollment and VFC policies and procedures (see registration link below).

I. VFC Re-enrollment is Now Open

The NYC VFC program's 2019 re-enrollment is now open. You need to complete annual re-enrollment by **November 30, 2019** to maintain your ability to order vaccines distributed through VFC. By re-enrolling, you agree to comply with the terms and conditions of the attached NYC VFC program Vaccine Recipient Agreement.

To re-enroll, you need to complete and submit your 2019 VFC re-enrollment form in the Vaccine Inventory Management (VIM) section of the CIR Online Registry, at www.nyc.gov/health/cir. Prior to completing this form, the physician-in-charge, vaccine coordinator, and back-up vaccine coordinator at your facility will need to take the two required annual web-based trainings developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): '*Keys to Storing and Handling Your Vaccine Supply*' (Course #WD2886) and '*You Call the Shots: Vaccines for Children*' (Course #WB4098). Course completion certificates must be saved onto your computer and uploaded to the "Training Requirement" section of your re-enrollment form. Only certificates with a date in 2019 will be accepted. For instructions on completing the trainings, obtaining certificates, and uploading certificates, refer to the attached document entitled "Accessing the VFC Training Modules Instructions-2020."

II. VFC Policy Reminders

In accordance with CDC policy, effective January 1, 2020, providers who choose to bill for the vaccine administration fee of a non-Medicaid, VFC-eligible child after the date of service may issue only a single bill to the patient within 90 days of vaccine administration. This policy does not apply to vaccine administration fees billed to Medicaid for children who meet the Medicaid eligibility criteria for VFC. Unpaid administration fees may not be sent to collections, and the provider may not refuse to vaccinate an eligible child whose parents have unpaid vaccine administration fees.

VFC providers are required to have a back-up digital data logger (DDL) thermometer available in case the primary DDL fails or calibration testing is required. The back-up DDL should have a different calibration retesting date than the primary DDL to avoid requiring all DDLs to be sent out for recalibration at the same time. If the back-up DDL has the same calibration retesting date, providers must have the device retested prior to expiration, ensuring that a valid DDL is available for required temperature monitoring.

III. Secure Access to the CIR

The immunization records found in the CIR are legal health records. Secure access to the CIR is of utmost importance. Staff accessing the CIR Online Registry must have unique IDs and passwords. Each user must sign a Confidentiality Statement and agree to the Acceptable Use Protocol, including giving each staff member a separate log-in to report immunizations, add or look up patients, and for all other activities performed online. Additionally, the Online Registry accounts of staff who have left your facility must be inactivated promptly. Bureau of Immunization staff will be reviewing your adherence to these policies during VFC compliance site visits and will also be bringing CIR confidentiality statements for your staff to sign.

IV. Immunization Quality Improvement Project (IQIP)

The CDC has implemented the Immunization Quality Improvement for Providers (IQIP) program nationally. IQIP replaces the previous quality improvement program called Assessment Feedback Initiative eXchange (AFIX). VFC providers may receive an IQIP visit during the year that the VFC compliance visit is not due. Providers will be selected for an IQIP visit based on several factors including size of the practice and immunization coverage level. The purpose of IQIP is to promote and support the implementation of provider-level quality improvement strategies designed to increase vaccine uptake among children and adolescents in adherence to the Advisory Council on Immunization Practices (ACIP)-recommended routine schedule.

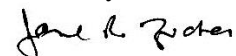
V. VFC Webinars

Webinars focusing on VFC re-enrollment and VFC policies and procedures will be given on two different dates. To register, click the registration link for your preferred date:

1. **Tuesday, October 29, 2019 from 12:30pm – 1:30pm**
[REGISTER HERE](#)
2. **Tuesday, November 12, 2019 from 10:00am – 11:00am**
[REGISTER HERE](#)
3. **Wednesday, November 20, 2019 from 3:00pm – 04:00pm**
[REGISTER HERE](#)

Should you have questions, please email nycimmunize@health.nyc.gov or call 347-396-2404. We thank you for helping to protect NYC children from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Sincerely,



Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc