

Missouri Vaccines for Children Refrigeration Requirements

1. All units must maintain proper temperatures (measured by a current certified, calibrated thermometer), be large enough to hold the year's largest inventory, and be certified by a VFC program representative before starting the program and periodically thereafter.
Temperatures:
 - a. Refrigerators: 35 to 46⁰F or 2 to 8⁰C (refrigerator temperatures preferably kept in the mid-temperature range). **Colder is not better.** Store around 40⁰F or 4⁰C. Most refrigerator vaccine exposed to **freezing** temperatures (even once) may be deemed non-viable.
 - b. Freezers: 5⁰F or colder or -15⁰C or colder, i.e., -16⁰C -17⁰C -18⁰C etc. (Freezer temperatures preferably kept below these temperatures. Here colder **is** better).
2. All providers needing refrigeration units are required to have stand-alone “**freezerless**” refrigerator or single freezer units. **Providers enrolled prior to April 2009 will be required to obtain “freezerless” stand-alone units when current units malfunction and/or need replacement.** “Freezerless” stand-alone refrigeration units are the standard reflecting ACIPs preference for *single refrigeration* or *single freezer* units over combination “household” units.
3. The standard for high volume practices with large vaccine storage needs is a purpose built refrigeration unit manufactured specifically for storing biologicals.
4. Currently a household-style, combination refrigerator and freezer unit with a separate control for each compartment storing vaccine and independent exterior doors is acceptable for providers enrolled prior to April 2009.
 - a. The freezer unit **CANNOT** be housed inside the refrigerator unit, i.e., if you open a single external refrigerator door and **see** a freezer compartment inside you cannot use this unit for storage of VFC vaccine. The unit must have separate external refrigerator and freezer doors.
 - b. ***If*** you purchase a **separate freezer**, the manufacturer should assure that the temperature can be maintained properly (see #1b above). Consider purchasing a chest type freezer as it does not fluctuate as much as a side door opening freezer.
5. A purpose-built refrigeration unit manufactured specifically for storing biologicals **is required for any under-the-counter refrigerator.**
6. All providers may be asked to place temperature data recording devices in their refrigerators and freezers periodically. At that time you will be instructed on where and how to place the devices, as well as when and how to return the devices to DHSS.
7. **All new providers.** All new providers will be required to purchase or possess (at a minimum) “**Freezerless**” stand-alone refrigeration units and shall submit two (2) weeks of temperatures readings that have been checked twice daily and entered on a temperature log to the VFC program at:

****NOTE:** If **any** storage unit(s) needs to be obtained, contact the VFC Program (800-219-3224) **prior** to purchase to assure appropriate equipment is purchased.

Vaccines for Children Program
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