

Nevada State Health Division Technical Bulletin



Topic:	Vaccine Storage and Handling Guidelines	Bureau/Program: Bureau of Child, Family and Community Wellness/Immunization Program
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To:	Immunization Providers	
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Vaccine Storage and Handling Guidelines

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have provided interim guidance on appropriate vaccine storage and handling practices. This guidance is intended for use by all public and private sector providers, and while recognizing that cost may be a barrier, all provider offices are encouraged to move toward implementing these recommendations as soon as possible.

The Nevada State Immunization Program (NSIP) encourages all immunization providers to begin planning to move towards compliance with these new storage and handling guidelines. All household combination units with two doors and two thermostat controls remain acceptable units for vaccine storage in Nevada. Also still acceptable are household combination units with one thermostat control, as long as vaccine is only stored in the refrigerator compartment. However, once 24 hour monitoring equipment is installed, any units shown to not maintain acceptable temperatures will have to be replaced with stand-alone units within 90 days of being notified by NSIP. **Unacceptable units now include household combination units with only one thermostat in which both compartments are being used and dorm-style units, even for temporary storage.**

With the goal of improving the way providers store and handle vaccines nationwide, several important changes have been made to previous recommendations issued by the CDC, including:

- Use of a biosafe glycol-encased probe or similar temperature buffered probe rather than measurement of ambient air temperatures, and;
- Use of digital data loggers with detachable probes that record and store temperature information at frequent programmable intervals for 24 hour temperature monitoring rather than non-continuous temperature monitoring, and;
- Use of stand-alone refrigerator and stand-alone freezer units suitable for vaccine storage rather than combination or other units not designed for storing fragile biologics, such as vaccines, and;
- Discontinuing use of dorm-style or bar-style refrigerator/freezers for ANY vaccine storage, even temporary storage, and;
- Weekly review of vaccine expiration dates and rotation of vaccine stock so the vaccine with the nearest expiration date is used first.

NSIP providers are strongly encouraged to have all staff responsible for vaccines trained in vaccine storage, monitoring, and handling. Training can be found on the CDC website, www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/storage/default.htm, under the link “Video provides guidance for proper storage and handling of vaccines.”

CAUTION: SETTING UP YOUR NEW UNIT

- Place the new unit(s) in the permanent location in a well-ventilated area away from direct sunlight.
- Place “DO NOT DISCONNECT” stickers on the front of the unit and near the electrical outlet into which the unit is directly plugged. VACCINE STORAGE UNITS MUST BE PLUGGED DIRECTLY INTO A WALL OUTLET – NO POWER SURGE CORDS.
- Label the circuit breaker that supplies power to the outlets that the vaccine storage unit(s) are plugged into with a “DO NO DISCONNECT” label.
- Place certified/calibrated thermometer probe(s) in the center of each compartment.
- **Make certain the temperature is regulated and stable within recommended range for 5 business days and send the temperature log to NSIP for approval before moving vaccines into the new unit.**
- Review the “CDC Interim Storage and Handling Guidance” for more information:
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/storage/default.htm.

Call Karissa Loper for guidance in selecting and setting up your new unit(s): (775) 684-3462

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