

Receiving & Storing Vaccines

Receive and store vaccine shipments promptly and maintain vaccines under manufacturer-recommended temperatures at all times. Use the myCAvax provider system to [report shipment incidents](#) the day of receipt for resolution.

Proper vaccine storage and handling practices play a very important role in protecting individuals and communities from vaccine-preventable diseases. Failure to store and handle vaccines properly can reduce vaccine potency, resulting in inadequate immune responses in patients and poor protection against disease.

For specific, detailed storage and handling protocols for individual vaccine products, always refer to the manufacturers' product information. For CDC's storage and handling recommendations and best practices, go to CDC's [Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit \(PDF\)](#). (See Receiving & Storing [Pfizer](#) | [Moderna](#) | [Janssen](#) job aids.)

Vial and Carton Labels under Emergency Use Authorization (EUA)

Providers must provide the recipient/caregiver with the vaccine's EUA fact sheet, which communicates vaccine benefits and risks to the recipient, via hard copy or electronic means. An EUA means that a COVID-19 vaccine has been authorized for use. The scope of authorized use is specified in the EUA Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers (similar to a package insert for licensed vaccines). (See [Emergency Use Authorization, section Vaccines](#), to download separate fact sheets for healthcare providers and recipients.)

Vial and carton labels for vaccines authorized under an Emergency Use Authorization will contain slight variations from labels typical of *approved* Food and Drug Administration (FDA) products, including:

- **Expiration Date:** CDC has set up an expiration date of 12/31/2069 to serve as a placeholder date. Such vaccines have a dynamic expiration date, which can change over time as additional stability data become available.
- **Manufactured Date:** A manufactured date will be on the packaging and should not be used as the expiration date when documenting vaccine administration. This date is provided to help with managing stock rotations; however, expiration dates should also be considered (see above) as using manufactured date alone could have some limitations.
- **2D Barcode:** The 2D barcode available on the vaccine carton (also on the vials for some vaccines) will include NDC, lot number, and a placeholder expiration date of 12/31/2069.
- **QR Code:** Each vaccine manufacturer will include a Quick Response (QR) code on the vaccine carton for accessing FDA-authorized, [vaccine product-specific EUA fact sheets](#) for COVID-19 vaccination providers and COVID-19 vaccine recipients.

Managing Expiration Dates

Do not prepare or administer vaccines without first checking the expiration date. Determining when a vaccine or diluent expires is a critical step in proper storage and handling. All vaccines have expiration dates. For COVID-19 vaccines, expiration dates may change as more stability data become available.

When the current expiration date gets close, contact the manufacturer before discarding vaccine. Use [CDC's expiration date tracking tool \(PDF\)](#) to record updated expiration dates for COVID-19 vaccine. Document the current date, the vaccine lot number, and the updated expiration date. Do not discard vaccine without ensuring the expiration date has passed.

Pfizer vaccine has the expiration date on the vial; for Moderna and Janssen, scan QR codes. (See [COVID-19 Vaccine Product Comparison \(PDF\)](#) for other available options to look up expiration dates by vaccine product.)

Beyond Use Date (BUD)

Some routinely recommended vaccines have a beyond use date (reduced expiration date), which is calculated based on the date the vial is first punctured and the storage information in the package insert. Vaccine shelf life may be shortened by storage method (e.g., ULT freezer or routine refrigerator or freezer). In these instances, products cannot be used until the expiration date. The [vaccine product-specific EUA fact sheets](#) for Healthcare Providers or manufacturer websites will provide more information about expiration dates and beyond use dates.

Track dates carefully and label products to ensure vaccines aren't used past these dates. Beyond Use Dates are listed below. Product-specific BUD labels can be found on EZIZ's [Vaccine Management: Pfizer](#) | [Moderna](#)

Product	Refrigerator	Freezer	Thermal Shipper	ULT Freezer
Pfizer	up to 120 hours/5 days	up to 2 weeks	up to 30 days	till expiration
Moderna	up to 30 days	till expiration	N/A	N/A
Janssen	till expiration (3 months)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Vaccine Transport

Vaccine should be delivered directly to the facility where it will be administered to maintain the vaccine cold chain. However, there may be circumstances where COVID-19 vaccine needs to be transported. In these instances, appropriate precautions should be taken to ensure the cold chain is maintained. Vaccines must be transported following product-specific guidelines in CDC's [Vaccine Storage & Handling Toolkit \(PDF\)](#) COVID-19 Addendum or [Transporting Janssen Vaccine \(PDF\)](#).

Document all vaccine transport events using the [COVID-19 Vaccine Transport Log \(PDF\)](#).

Redistribution

Redistribution is the routine transport of vaccines to additional clinic locations responsible for vaccine administration. In these instances, healthcare organizations, third-party vendors, and vaccination providers—primary organization or secondary location—must apply and receive authorization from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to routinely redistribute COVID-19 vaccines to other provider locations. The receiving location must be an enrolled and approved COVID-19 vaccination provider.

Refer to [Redistribution Agreement: Before You Apply \(PDF\)](#) to see if redistribution is an option for you. For approved redistribution entities, refer to [Redistributing Vaccines \(PDF\)](#) for step-by-step guidance and reporting to the myCAvax provider system.

Repositioning

Repositioning is the transport of doses to another setting for administration when unused doses will be returned to the original facility at the end of the day. Satellite, temporary and off-site clinics are authorized to transport vaccines without prior authorization because ownership is not changing hands. However, these situations require additional oversight and enhanced storage and handling practices. The repositioning entity will report their doses administered and on hand at the end of the clinic day.

Refer to [Repositioning Vaccines: Guidance for Satellite, Temporary, and Off-Site Clinics \(PDF\)](#) for details.

Transfers

Transfers are the transport of vaccines in response to an emergency or other unplanned event (e.g., excess supply or imminent expiration of doses). In these instances, the receiving location takes ownership of transferred vaccines and must be an enrolled and approved COVID-19 vaccination provider.

Refer to [Transferring Vaccines \(PDF\)](#) for step-by-step guidance and reporting to myCAvax.