

# Schools or School Districts Becoming Vaccines for Children (VFC) Providers

\* Some resources in this job aid are referenced by IMM number only. Visit [eziz.org](http://eziz.org) and search for the IMM number in the search bar located in the top-right corner of the webpage.

## What is the Vaccines for Children Program?

The Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program helps families by providing vaccines at no cost to providers who serve eligible children from birth through 18 years of age. Children must meet at least one of these criteria at each immunization visit to be eligible to receive VFC-supplied vaccines: Medicaid eligible or enrolled, American Indian or Alaska Native, Underinsured, or Uninsured. Enrolled providers order federally funded vaccines through their state VFC Program and receive routine vaccines (including influenza) at no cost.

## VFC Resources

Phone: (877) 243-8832

Fax: (877) 329-9832

Email:

[MyVFCVaccines@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:MyVFCVaccines@cdph.ca.gov)

- [VFC Overview](http://eziz.org/vfc/overview) ([eziz.org/vfc/overview](http://eziz.org/vfc/overview))
- [VFC Field Reps](http://eziz.org/vfc/field-reps) ([eziz.org/vfc/field-reps](http://eziz.org/vfc/field-reps))
- [VFC Enrollment](http://eziz.org/vfc/enrollment) ([eziz.org/vfc/enrollment](http://eziz.org/vfc/enrollment))

## Why Become a VFC Provider?

- Schools are a trusted source of information and service provision.
- Schools are accessible environments.
- Each year in CA, there are approximately 13,000 students excluded from school due to missing needed immunizations. Schools that become VFC providers can help keep these students in school.

## Getting Started

- **Have a plan** – consider how you'll execute the VFC program at your schools. Know how you will:
  - Vaccinate your students
  - Purchase vaccine storage equipment
  - Set up your clinic (appointments vs. walk-ins, hours, etc.)
  - Staff your clinic
  - Safely store and monitor vaccine, particularly during school breaks
  - Handle vaccine temperature excursions
  - Bill for immunization administration (if applicable)
  - Enter all doses into the Immunization Information System (CA Immunization Registry ([CAIR](http://bit.ly/CDPH-CAIR)) ([bit.ly/CDPH-CAIR](http://bit.ly/CDPH-CAIR)) or the Healthy Futures/Regional Immunization Data Exchange ([RIDE](http://bit.ly/HealthyFutures-RIDE)) ([bit.ly/HealthyFutures-RIDE](http://bit.ly/HealthyFutures-RIDE)) registries.)
- **Meet all criteria in the Provider Operations Manual (POM) (\*IMM-1248 at [eziz.org](http://eziz.org))**. Be sure to review it thoroughly. If not able to meet all requirements, your application will be delayed or rejected.
- **Be organized** – Prepare all the **VFC documents** (\*IMM-1529 at [eziz.org](http://eziz.org)) and necessary components of the application before beginning the application

process. You'll likely need dedicated personnel to oversee the VFC application process.

- **Obtain buy-in from your leadership** – Securing leadership support may be challenging. Be sure to have all your asks consolidated into one well-organized request, particularly if this request involves funding or if opportunities to make the request are infrequent.
  - Identifying supporting data can help build your case. Supportive data include:
    - Number of students excluded from school due to missing immunizations.
    - Absenteeism rates due to illness.
    - Costs associated with lost ADA funds due to student exclusion or absenteeism.
  - To determine lost school funding due to student exclusion, take the number of days students are excluded for missing immunizations and multiply it by the ADA rate for a total cost of missed days.
- **Determine how you are going to fund an immunization program**
  - Apply for/utilize existing grants to cover foundational costs of the program.
  - Consider approaching your Medi-Cal managed care plan for financial support.
  - If you are in the Local Education Agency Medi-Cal Billing Option Program ([LEA BOP](#)) ([bit.ly/LEABOP](http://bit.ly/LEABOP)), try to use your collaborative funds to pay for equipment or equipment upgrades and maintenance.
- **Get to know your VFC Field Representative**

## Executing Your Plan

- Purchase a pharmaceutical grade [fridge and freezer \(eziz.org/vaccine-storage\)](#), and continuous temperature monitoring devices (TMDs). You will need a dedicated outlet. Coolers/transportable fridges are beneficial to transport vaccines to different schools.
- Enroll in CAIR to get a registry ID for each vaccine site if not done already.
- Designate key staff who will act in these four required VFC roles:
  - Provider of Record (POR): Responsible for the practice' overall compliance with VFC Program requirements and typically licensed as a MD, DO, NP, PA, Pharmacist, or a Certified Nurse Midwife with prescription-writing privileges in the state of California.
  - Provider of Record Designee: Staff member designated to handle VFC matters when the Provider of Record is unavailable.
  - Vaccine Coordinator: On-site and fully trained staff member responsible for all vaccine management activities.
    - Backup Vaccine Coordinator: On-site and fully trained staff member responsible for all vaccine management activities when the Vaccine Coordinator is unavailable.
  - Complete EZIZ training - Provider of Record & Designee and Vaccine Coordinator & Backup must complete all required [EZIZ trainings \(eziz.org/eziz-training\)](#).

## Innovations

- If your school or district already partners with a clinic for other services, consider asking the clinic if their provider can be your VFC Provider of Record. For example, a school district in Northern California has worked closely with a Kaiser physician on several health programs and they became their VFC Provider of Record.
- Consider working with a nearby VFC site as a backup storage site in the case of emergencies. CDPH may be able to assist with matching you to a nearby VFC provider (within a 5-mile radius). Contact your local VFC Field Representative or email us at [SchoolVaxTeam@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:SchoolVaxTeam@cdph.ca.gov) for more information.
- Use the Doses Administered report from CAIR for LEA BOP billing and completing claim forms. If using a third-party biller, this generated report can likely provide all necessary information for them to submit claim forms.

### Real World Examples

A school district in southern California's primary motivation to become a VFC provider was student exclusions due to missing immunizations. The loss of average daily attendance (ADA) funding due to students being excluded for missing immunizations was greater than the costs associated with initiating the VFC program. This provided a compelling argument to the school board that becoming a VFC provider could increase immunization access for students and increase funding for the school district.

A northern California school district was able to purchase portable fridges through their LEA BOP reimbursement funding. They have a sustainable funding source by billing Medi-Cal for all services provided and IEP screenings. Their district agreed to use a portion of their collaborative funds from the LEA BOP program to purchase immunization equipment or upgrade equipment as needed.

A school district in southern California established their VFC program with a Nurse Practitioner as their Provider of Record. Their VFC program serves over 40 schools and the community beyond. They utilize Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) funding (funding awarded to school districts to address the needs of marginalized students) to support their program.

## Tips from School VFC Providers

- Keep up to date with both the federal and California rules of the VFC program.
- Find ways to automate manual processes. Data entry and manual appointment systems are time consuming. Look into digital appointment and data platforms that communicate with CAIR, such as [MyTurn \(bit.ly/MyTurnRegistration\)](https://bit.ly/MyTurnRegistration).
- Having the VFC clinic location in the same building as administration/registration can increase access and convenience.
- Small, pharmaceutical grade vaccine storage units can be found for around \$600. If you cannot invest in pharmaceutical grade vaccine storage units immediately, make sure to purchase recommended Temperature Monitoring Devices and a detailed plan in case of a temperature excursion. Consider reaching out to your local health department as potential resource for equipment. They may have refrigerators, freezers, and other equipment that they can share with you to help start your program.
- If you already have *Read Only* access in CAIR, be sure to change it to *Clinical* access before administering vaccines.
- Consider creative ways to fund your program such as LEA BOP collaborative funding, LCAP funding, Medi-Cal managed care plan funding or other examples provided in this job aid.
- Make sure your school leadership is aware that the program requires you stock all vaccines for the students you serve, beyond what is required for school entry.

## Helpful Resources

- **VFC Provider Operations Manual (\*IMM-1248 at eziz.org)**
- **VFC Provider Enrollment Worksheet (\*IMM-1243 at eziz.org)**
- **2024 Program Participation Requirements at a Glance (\*IMM-1240 at eziz.org)**
- [My Turn \(bit.ly/MyTurnRegistration\)](https://bit.ly/MyTurnRegistration)
- [CA Immunization Registry \(CAIR\) \(bit.ly/CDPH-CAIR\)](https://bit.ly/CDPH-CAIR)
- [Healthy Futures Public Health Information System \(RIDE\) \(bit.ly/HealthyFutures-RIDE\)](https://bit.ly/HealthyFutures-RIDE)
- [School and Child Care Roster Lookup \(SCRL\) tool \(bit.ly/SCRLfaq\)](https://bit.ly/SCRLfaq)

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