

## School Located Vaccine Event (SLVE) Cost Guide

### What Do School Located Vaccine Events Cost?

Ideally, vaccine events at schools are free for students and staff at that school, but there is always a cost. The biggest cost drivers for putting on vaccine events are usually the vaccine supply itself and the staff to administer the vaccine.

### Supplying Vaccine:

In California, the funding sources for vaccine include:

- **Vaccine that is privately purchased** by providers and pharmacies, to be used in patients with commercial insurance. Medical providers can bill insurance programs for the vaccine itself as well as a vaccine administration fee.
- **Vaccine that is part of the federal [Vaccines for Children \(VFC\) program](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz/downloads/pdf/11-1715.pdf) ([bit.ly/EZIZ-VFC](https://bit.ly/EZIZ-VFC)).** VFC supplies vaccine for free to medical providers, as long as providers do not charge for the cost of the vaccine and the vaccine is used only in pediatric (less than age 19) patients who meet any of these criteria:
  - Uninsured
  - Enrolled in Medi-Cal or eligible for Medi-Cal
  - American Indian or Alaskan Native
  - Underinsured and receiving services at a federally qualified health center or rural health center
- **Vaccine that is purchased by the CDPH Immunization Branch from the California State General Fund (SGF).** To date, this primarily applies to flu vaccine and limited Tdap vaccine. CDPH purchases flu vaccine and distributes it to local health departments to allocate to medical providers serving low-income, high-risk populations. The vaccine is primarily used in adults but is not limited to adults.
- **Vaccine that is part of the federal 317 program.** The federal 317 program supplies additional vaccines to US states and territories to be used in outbreak response and un- or underinsured adults. This vaccine would **not** typically be used in school setting unless it was to address a designated disease outbreak at the school.

The [Vaccine and Clinic Eligibility Guidelines](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/DCDC/DCDC/Pages/Vaccine-and-Clinic-Eligibility-Guidelines.aspx) ([bit.ly/CDPH-IMM-1142](https://bit.ly/CDPH-IMM-1142))- show the different funding streams in California.

In schools with high concentrations of students enrolled in Medi-Cal, using VFC vaccine is an economical choice. Almost all California local health departments are VFC providers and can likely supply the vaccine. A separate vaccine stream, however, would be needed for commercially insured students. In that case, it's helpful to partner with an entity that can bill insurance companies, such as a pharmacy or health care provider.

## Staffing

CDPH has a published list of [who is authorized to vaccinate in California \(bit.ly/WhoCanVax\)](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/who-is-authorized-to-vaccinate-in-california.aspx). Any vaccine event at a school must have oversight by a clinician with prescribing authority and be staffed by vaccinators licensed to vaccinate in California.

Health departments and schools often employ nurses who are licensed to vaccinate. Their participation in SLVEs can likely be considered regular work and no additional hours would have to be billed. Their staffing participation would be considered "in kind." Other in-kind staffing sources include schools of nursing, pharmacy or medicine and Medical Reserve Corps.

For larger events, it might be necessary to **hire** additional vaccination staff. Medical services staffing vendors are an option but can become expensive unless they can bill insurance plans of students and staff.

Pharmacies can bill commercial insurance plans, although there are very few pharmacies in California that can bill Medi-Cal for pediatric vaccines.

Non-vaccinating staff at school events can be volunteers from the community, parent groups from the schools, or volunteers from local non-profit organizations.

## Other Costs

- Vaccine administration supplies: gloves, needles/syringes, alcohol swabs, bandages, etc.
- Paperwork: consent form and Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) copies. Electronic/paperless registration like that in CA's [My Turn \(bit.ly/MyTurnRegistration\)](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/MyTurn.aspx) system is preferred, but most sites will always need a paper registration alternative.
- Medical waste disposal, usually charged by volume.
- Administrative staff: coordination, marketing, possible data entry.

### **Summary: Ways to reduce costs**

- Coordinate with partners for vaccine supply. Use VFC vaccine wherever possible.
- Bill, or utilize partners that can bill insurance plans for vaccines and administration.
- Look for sources of in-kind staffing such as schools of nursing, pharmacy or medicine or a local Medical Reserve Corps.
- Look for sources of in-kind supplies from local health departments or providers.
- Go green! Set up [clinics digitally \(bit.ly/MyTurnRegistration\)](https://bit.ly/MyTurnRegistration) using electronic consent forms and digital Vaccine Information Statements/Fact Sheets.
- Merge sites to give a greater number of vaccines at a time – the more vaccines given the more cost-efficient vaccine administration becomes.
- Go for consistency, systems, and sustainability. If you do the same events every year, the community will rely on them and know how to volunteer for them. If you partner with those who can bill insurance plans, they will likely return.