



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health – Women’s & Children’s Health Section

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Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
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Laura Gerald, MD, MPH
State Health Director

November 13, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: North Carolina Immunization Program (NCIP) Participants
FROM: Beth Rowe-West, RN, BSN, Head *BRW*
Immunization Branch
SUBJECT: 2012 Holiday Shipping Schedule

The purpose of this memo is to provide important details regarding the upcoming holiday vaccine shipping schedule. Adherence to this schedule will help avoid delayed shipments and the risk of damaged vaccine during the upcoming holiday season. Please carefully review the schedule below, and plan to order enough vaccine in November and/or December to vaccinate your patients through at least **the first week in January, 2013**.

November 2012 Ordering and Shipping

- With the exception of state government holidays (November 12, 22, and 23), NCIP will accept vaccine orders throughout the month of November.
- Providers will **not** receive vaccine from McKesson Specialty or Merck from Wednesday, November 21 through Friday, November 23, 2012.

December 2012 Ordering and Shipping

- To accommodate McKesson Specialty and Merck shipping practices, Monday, December 3 through Monday, December 10 are the **ONLY** days that the North Carolina Immunization Branch will be accepting vaccine orders **for the entire month of December**. Unfortunately, orders received after 3pm on Monday, December 10 cannot be processed until Wednesday, January 2, 2013.
- Vaccine shipments *may* arrive at your office as late as Friday, December 21. Providers will **not** receive vaccine from McKesson Specialty or Merck from Monday, December 24 through the end of December.

January 2013 Ordering and Shipping

- The North Carolina Immunization Branch will resume regular order processing on Wednesday, January 2, 2013.

Safeguarding Vaccine

Please take special precautions to safeguard your vaccine as **replacement orders will be difficult and/or impossible to process during this time**.

- Post a current Disaster Recovery Plan on the front of your refrigerator and/or freezer.
- Check your temperatures twice a day. Document the temperatures on your log.
- Maintain refrigerated vaccines at 2° to 8°C (36° to 46°F), with an optimal temperature of 5°C (40°F).
- Maintain frozen vaccines at -15°C (5° F) or colder (that is, -16°C, -17°C, -18°C, etc.), at all times, but no lower than -50°C, with an optimal temperature of -20°C (-4°F)
- Line the bottom and sides of your freezer with ice packs and fill empty space in your refrigerator with jugs of water.
- Keep refrigerated vaccines in the middle shelf with a thermometer. Never store vaccines in the door.
- Rotate your vaccine, using the shortest expiration date first.
- Never order more vaccine than you are capable of storing with proper air circulation in your refrigerator and/or freezer.

With the exception of state government holidays (*November 12, 22, and 23, 2012; December 24, 25, and 26, 2012; and January 1, 2013*), the Immunization Help Desk staff will be available at **1-877-873-6247** throughout the months of November, December, and January to answer your questions and offer assistance.

CC: SMT Regional Immunization Staff Central Office Staff Vaccine Manufacturers Steve Shore Peter Graber
Terri Pennington Maelyn Powell Taryn Edwards Joy Reed

Location: 5601 Six Forks Road • Raleigh, N.C. 27609

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