

VFC Vaccine Storage Unit Requirements

Storage unit types

At all times, vaccine storage units must maintain the following temperatures:

- Refrigerator between 36°F and 46°F (2°C and 8°C)
- Freezer -58°F and +5°F (-50°C and -15°C)

(A fluctuation of no more than 4 degrees is preferred.)

Acceptable storage unit types include:

- ✓ Pharmaceutical stand-alone
- ✓ Pharmaceutical combination unit
- ✓ Stand-alone refrigerator
- ✓ Stand-alone freezer
- ✓ Refrigerator compartment of a commercial or household combination unit

Units must be large enough to store the year's largest inventory without crowding (e.g., influenza vaccine). Frost-free units with an automatic defrost cycle are preferred.

Self-closing doors and alarms that detect door ajar which are helpful in preventing temperature excursions.

Prohibited storage unit types include:

- ✗ Dormitory-style unit – a small combination unit outfitted with one external door and an evaporator plate (cooling coil) which is usually located inside the "freezer" within the refrigerator
- ✗ Freezer compartment of a commercial or household combination unit

Setting up a new unit

Do **NOT** place vaccines in storage unit

until you have two consecutive days of temperatures recorded within the required range.

- Place "Do not disconnect" sticker or sign on the unit, the outlet in use, and the circuit breaker
- Place unit in a well-ventilated room with space around the sides and top of the unit
- Remove any deli, fruit, and vegetable drawers
- Store water bottles in refrigerator and frozen water bottles in freezer to stabilize temperatures
- Post a temperature log that meets [requirements](#) on the unit
- Ensure temperature monitor that meets [requirements](#) is appropriately placed
- Commercial/household combination units: Freezer compartment must remain on to maintain proper temperatures in the refrigerator compartment.
- Facilities storing large vaccine inventories should consider installing back-up generators that automatically provide power to storage units in the event of a power outage

Regular maintenance

- Follow manufacturer specifications for maintenance schedules and recommended cleaning instructions. Document routine maintenance tasks and repairs.
- Check units regularly for signs of wear and tear. Ensure that seals are not torn, brittle, or have any gap.

Alaska Immunization Helpline:

Anchorage: 907-269-8088 | Toll Free: 888-430-4321 | Email: immune@alaska.gov