



State of Louisiana

Louisiana Department of Health Office of Public Health

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TO: Vaccines for Childrens Providers

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SUBJECT: **COVID-19 and Routine Immunizations**

Below you will find guidance from CDC on maintaining childhood immunizations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic is changing rapidly and continues to affect communities across the United States differently. Some of the strategies used to slow the spread of disease in communities include postponing or cancelling non-urgent elective procedures and using telemedicine instead of face-to-face encounters for routine medical visits.

Ensuring the delivery of newborn and well-child care, including childhood immunization, requires multiple strategies. Healthcare providers in communities affected by COVID-19 are using [strategies to separate well visits from sick visits](#). Examples include:

- Scheduling well visits in the morning and sick visits in the afternoon.
- Separating patients spatially, such as by placing patients with sick visits in different areas of the clinic or another location from patients with well visits.
- Collaborating with providers in the community to identify separate locations for holding well visits for children.

Because of personal, practice, or community circumstances related to COVID-19, some providers may not be able to provide well child visits, including provision of immunizations, for all patients in their practice. **If a practice can provide only limited well child visits, healthcare providers are encouraged to prioritize newborn care and vaccination of infants and young children (through 24 months of age) when possible.** CDC is monitoring the situation and will continue to provide guidance.

If healthcare facilities do close or decide to discontinue vaccination, all storage units that contain Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program vaccines must still have adequate storage and handling to ensure vaccine viability. In the event of a facility closure, providers should implement their **Emergency Storage and Handling Plans**. If the plan cannot be implemented due to the immediacy of the closure, Digital Data Loggers must still be in place and min/max temperatures be checked and recorded at a minimum of two days per week or when someone will have access to the clinic.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate contacting your Immunization Program Consultant or the Immunization Program at 504-568-2600.