

**Blastfax**

**VFC Provider Agreement and Vaccine Loss Policies**

Recent storms in Georgia have called our attention to the risk of compromise to large inventories of vaccines. Vaccines can be compromised due to mechanical failure of a refrigerator, or due to power outages.

With the ever expanding vaccine list on the AAP Periodicity Schedule, many offices are holding vaccine inventory stock that is of significant dollar value. This results in an assumption of financial risk which can be very significant. In some cases, providers can be held financially responsible for the replacement cost of VFC vaccines which have been compromised.

**We urge our members to do the following:**

- 1) Review the vaccine inventory clause of your office insurance policy and update it so that it matches your financial exposure and risk tolerance.
- 2) Review the VFC Provider Agreement Policy. Be sure that your staff understands the policy, particularly items 10 and 12. A copy can be found at <http://www.gaaap.org/Immunization%20page/VFC%20CompliancePolicy-Revised.pdf>.
- 3) Review the VFC Vaccine Loss Policy. A copy can be found at [http://www.gaaap.org/Immunization%20page/VFC%20LossPolicy-FINALNov2002%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.gaaap.org/Immunization%20page/VFC%20LossPolicy-FINALNov2002%20(2).pdf). In particular, note that any incidents which might potentially compromise vaccines must be reported immediately to VFC at 1-800-848-3868.

At that time the provider must report:

- A) Last known temperature of their refrigerator and freezer
  - B) Current temperature of the refrigerator and freezer
  - C) Duration of time the vaccines were stored out of recommended temperature range
  - D) Lot numbers, and expiration dates of all vaccines in question
- 4) Be sure your office has a Vaccine Disaster Recovery Plan. This is a procedure that your staff follows in the event of mechanical refrigerator failure or a loss of power. We urge members to develop such a plan if you do not already have one. VFC staff can assist you in developing such a plan (1-800-848-3868). A sample plan appears online at <http://health.state.ga.us/pdfs/prevention/immunization/vfc.disasterplan.04.pdf>

Practices should consider the feasibility, costs and benefits of a backup power system as a part of their vaccine storage logistics. While not all practices may find it feasible, it should at least be considered as a possibility.

**NOTES:**

- 1) Per VFC, vaccines should be kept refrigerated or frozen as appropriate (i.e., refrigerated vaccines should remain in the refrigerator, frozen vaccines should remain in the freezer) until a decision is made by VFC in conjunction with manufacturer recommendations concerning their viability.
- 2) For vaccines lost *due to provider negligence*: If the vaccines are deemed not salvageable, then the provider will be required to purchase replacement vaccines. This decision will be made by the Vaccine Manager based on past vaccine loss history and the number of vaccines lost. The provider will be required to replace VFC vaccine losses due to negligence when these losses are valued at more than 5% of the number of doses of VFC vaccines per vaccine shipped to the provider over the past 12 months.

*For questions or concerns regarding this blastfax or any other immunization information, please contact the Chapter's Immunization Coordinator, Mike Chaney at (404) 881-5094 or [mchaney@gaaap.org](mailto:mchaney@gaaap.org). You may also refer questions to the Georgia Immunization Program at (404) 657-3158.*