

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Vaccines for Children (VFC) is a federally funded entitlement program that provides vaccines at no cost to children who might not be vaccinated because of inability to pay. It was created through federal law ([42 USC § 1396](#)) and is administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as a component of each state's Medicaid plan. Children through 18 years of age who meet eligibility requirements can receive VFC vaccine.

Since its inception in 1994, the VFC Program has improved vaccine availability, increased immunization coverage, and reduced disparities in access to health care.



### ***VFC in Montana***

The Montana Immunization Program implements the VFC Program within the state. We manage the budget, order vaccines, enroll and educate providers, and ensure compliance through periodic site visits. Our two main goals are to make sure VFC vaccine is at your clinic when you need it and that you are complying with the program's federally mandated requirements.

### ***Funding***

Montana's publicly supplied vaccines are funded through four main sources: VFC, Section 317 of the US Public Health Service Act (317), State appropriations, and occasionally, Federal grants. As a Medicaid entitlement program, the VFC budget adjusts annually to cover all recommended childhood vaccines for Montana's VFC-eligible children. Vaccine programs funded from other sources, however, may vary year to year due to budget changes and public health concerns. Contact the Immunization Program for information on current publicly funded vaccine programs in Montana (444-5580 [hhsiz@mt.gov](mailto:hhsiz@mt.gov)).

### ***imMTrax – Ordering and Managing Publicly Funded Vaccine***

Montana VFC providers order and manage publicly supplied vaccine through the State's web-based immunization registry, imMTrax. To gain access to imMTrax, providers must sign an imMTrax Memorandum of Agreement for their facility and System Access Requests for each person wanting access to the system.

When setting up your account in imMTrax, you must decide whether your facility will be an integrated or aggregate provider. See below for definitions:

Integrated providers manually enter patient immunization records directly into imMTrax. Patient VFC eligibility status is documented during this process and doses administered are automatically decremented from inventory.

Aggregate providers must track doses administered and VFC eligibility status outside of imMTrax (see Section 4 for approved tracking methods). Once per month during inventory reconciliation, aggregate providers must enter doses administered by lot number and age cohort. Patient immunization records may be entered through an electronic data feed or manually entered as historical records.

This handbook does not provide in-depth imMTrax training. Detailed imMTrax instructions can be found in the *imMTrax Provider Handbook* (<https://immtrax.mt.gov/documents/imMTraxProviderHandbook.pdf>) or contact imMTrax Training and Support at 444-2969 ([hhsiz@mt.gov](mailto:hhsiz@mt.gov)).

## ***Document Retention Requirements***

### **VFC-Related Documents**

VFC providers must retain all VFC-related documents and electronic information for three years. This includes VFC screening and eligibility records, temperature logs, data logger (digital thermometer) data, borrowing forms, **billing records, medical records that verify receipt of vaccine, and vaccine purchase and accountability records.**

### **Immunization Records**

Montana law requires hospitals to retain immunization records for at least 10 years ([ARM 37.106.402](#)) and health care facilities other than hospitals to retain immunization records for at least 6 years ([ARM 37.106.314](#)).

### **Medicaid Billing Records**

Montana law requires health care facilities to retain Medicaid (Healthy Montana Kids Plus) billing records for at least 6 years and 3 months from the date of service ([ARM 37.85.414](#)).

## ***This Document***

This handbook is organized in numbered sections and divided into two main parts: the ***VFC Provider Handbook*** (Sections 1–10) and the ***Vaccine Management Plan*** (Sections 11–17). Forms used in the VFC Program change frequently and are not included in this handbook. You can find current forms at [www.immunization.mt.gov](http://www.immunization.mt.gov) under the VFC link or contact the Immunization Program at 444-5580. Forms provided on our website are listed in Section 10 – Immunization Resources.

The Montana Immunization Program provides a paper copy of this document to all enrolled providers and posts the most current version on our website. Sections are revised individually and have a revision date at the bottom of each page. When revisions are made, the Montana Immunization Program notifies providers through an all-provider memo, provides a copy of the revised section(s), and posts the revised section(s) to our website. It is your responsibility to keep your handbook up to date by discarding outdated sections and replacing them with current versions. This document is designed for duplex (2-sided) printing.