NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

JOSH STEIN • Governor
DEVDUTTA SANGVAI • Secretary
KELLY KIMPLE • Director, Public Health

November 2, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: North Carolina Immunization Program (NCIP) Participants

FROM: Jenny Myers, MPH, Immunization Branch Director
North Carolina Division of Public Health

SUBJECT: Important: 2026-2027 Holiday Shipping Schedule Memo

The purpose of this memo is to provide important details regarding the upcoming holiday vaccine shipping schedule for the Vaccines for Children (VFC) and 317 Vaccines for Adults (317 VFA) programs.

Providers should assess their vaccine needs and ability to store vaccine safely through January 2027, and then submit orders early before limited delivery occurs. To ensure you have sufficient stock, providers should maintain a minimum of 4 weeks of inventory in case shipping delays occur.

November 2026 Ordering and Shipping

- NCIP will accept vaccine orders throughout the month of November. Orders placed after Nov. 18 (12:00 noon) will be processed immediately, however, delivery before December is not guaranteed.
- Providers will not receive vaccine shipments from McKesson Specialty, Merck, or Pfizer on Wednesday, Nov. 11 and Wednesday, Nov. 25 through Friday, Nov. 27, 2026.
- NC state government holidays in November: Nov 11, 26, and 27, 2026.

December 2026 Ordering and Shipping

- December orders will be accepted until 12 (noon) on Dec. 11. Only orders received prior to the cutoff of Dec. 11, 2026, will be shipped on Dec. 14, 15, and 16. We recommend ordering enough vaccine prior to Dec. 11 to get through January 2027.

- Providers will not receive vaccine shipments from McKesson Specialty, Merck or Pfizer from Monday, Dec. 21, through Friday, Jan. 1, 2027.
- NC state government holidays in December: Dec. 24, 25, and 28, 2026.

January 2027 Ordering and Shipping

- NCIP will resume regular order processing on Monday, Jan. 4, 2027.
- Providers will not receive vaccine shipments from McKesson Specialty, Merck or Pfizer on Friday, Jan. 1 and Monday, Jan. 18, 2027.
- NC state government holidays in January: Jan. 1 and 18, 2027.

Holiday Vaccine Handling and Order Management Recommendations

- **Signature Release**
  - We strongly encourage you to cancel your signature release on file with FedEx/UPS if applicable to prevent loss of vaccine due to shipment(s) being left on your doorstep when your practice is closed.
  - A signature release allows FedEx/UPS to drop off any FedEx/UPS package, including vaccine shipments, on your doorstep without obtaining a signature, regardless of your delivery or office hours.
  - Due to advanced email notification with tracking information, providers are expected to make every reasonable accommodation to receive all vaccine orders. This may include staying open during lunch hours if an order is expected to be delivered or having staff available to receive it until 5pm.
  - If your office will be closed on any additional days before or after the holidays, please notify the NCIP Help Desk by calling 877-873-6247.

- **Storage Upon Arrival**
  - Vaccines and diluents should be unpacked and stored immediately at the recommended temperature upon delivery to avoid temperature excursions that can trigger temperature monitors in the shipping box resulting vaccine spoilage.

- **Spoilage Policy**
  - The CDC and NCIP will not replace vaccines spoiled due to temperature excursions resulting from unattended shipments.
  - The CDC and NCIP Restitution Policy requires providers to replace vaccines spoiled due to negligence on a dose-for-dose basis at the private sector cost.
  - Notify NCIP Help Desk if your hours of operation or shipping address have changed. Routine shipments from McKesson can take up to four business days to process before they are shipped. However, they may take longer, especially if your office does not have regular business hours (Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

- **Placing Orders During Closures**
    - If your practice is closed for more than four consecutive days or an extended length of time during the holidays, avoid placing orders until your practice returns to normal business hours and can receive deliveries.

How to contact us:

For assistance, please contact the NCIP Help Desk by phone at 1.877.USE.NCIR (873-6247), by email, or submit a ticket through the NCIP Help Desk Portal.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and dedication to improving immunization outcomes in North Carolina.

In Health,
NC Department of Health and Human Services