



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

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Division of Public Health

November 21, 2022

TO: North Carolina Immunization Program (NCIP) Participants

FROM: Carrie Blanchard, Interim Brach Director
Immunization Branch, Division of Public Health

RE: Important: 2022-23 Holiday Shipping Schedule

The purpose of this memo is to provide important details regarding the upcoming holiday vaccine shipping schedule for vaccines under the Vaccines for Children (VFC) and COVID-19 Vaccination programs. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that providers assess their vaccine needs and ability to store vaccine safely to vaccinate your patients through the month of January 2023, and submit orders early before limited delivery occurs. CDC recommends maintaining adequate supply of all vaccines to immunize your patients in case shipping delays occur.

If your practice is closed for more than four consecutive days or an extended length of time during the holidays, do not place an order until your practice returns to normal business hours and can accept a delivery to avoid shipment delays. Please notify the Immunization Branch Help Desk if your hours of operation and/or shipping address have changed. The Immunization Branch Help Desk is available to assist with vaccine orders or questions during normal business hours at 1-877-873-6247. If you are expecting orders to arrive before the holidays, please keep in mind that routine shipments from McKesson can take four business days to process before they are shipped.

Reminder: We strongly encourage you to cancel your signature release on file with FedEx/UPS if applicable, to prevent a 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. Vaccines and diluents must be carefully unpacked and stored at the recommended temperature immediately when they arrive. Vaccine left in shipping containers are at risk for temperature excursions that will trigger the temperature monitors in the vaccine shipping box before the provider discovers the package resulting in vaccine spoilage. **The CDC and NCIP will not replace vaccine spoiled under these circumstances. Additionally, the CDC and NCIP Restitution Policy requires providers to replace vaccines on a dose-for-dose basis at the private sector cost.**

Adherence to this schedule will help avoid delayed shipments and the risk of damaged vaccine during the upcoming holiday season. Please carefully review the schedule below, and plan to order enough vaccine in November and/or early December to vaccinate your patients at least through the month of **January 2023**.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH • IMMUNIZATION BRANCH
LOCATION: 5601 Six Forks Road, Building 2, Raleigh, NC 27609

MAILING ADDRESS: 1917 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1917
www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-707-5550 • FAX: 919-870-4824

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November 2022 Ordering and Shipping

- NCIP will accept vaccine orders throughout the month of November. COVID-19 vaccines will continue to be processed on Thursdays with the exception of Thanksgiving week. The order cutoff will be November 23rd at 10:00 AM.
- Providers will **not** receive vaccine shipments from McKesson Specialty or Merck Friday November 4, 11, 18, and from Tuesday November 22nd through Friday, November 25th, 2022.

State Government Holidays in November	November 11 and November 24 & 25, 2022
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December 2022 Ordering and Shipping

- December orders will be accepted until 3 pm December 13th. Note: Only orders received prior to the cutoff of 12/13/2022 will be shipped on December 14, 15 and 19. It is recommended to order enough vaccine prior to December 13 to get you through January 3.

State Government Holidays in December	December 23, 26 & 27, 2022
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January 2023 Ordering and Shipping

- The North Carolina Immunization Branch will resume regular order processing on Tuesday, January 3, 2023.
- Providers will not receive vaccine shipments from McKesson Specialty or Merck Monday January 2, Friday January 6, Friday January 13, Friday January 20, and Friday January 27.

State Government Holidays in January	January 2, 2023
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With the exception of state government holidays (*November 11, 24 and 25, 2022; December 23, 26, and 27, 2022; and January 2, 2023*), the Immunization Help Desk will be available at **1-877-873-6247** throughout the months of November, December, and January to answer your questions and offer assistance.

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