

VACCINES FOR CHILDREN PROGRAM NEWS BULLETIN

Chicago Department of Public Health – Immunization Program

Issue Number 8: May 7, 2020

The news bulletin serves to keep you aware of emerging VFC program, vaccine, and vaccine-preventable disease updates.

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Please Continue Vaccinating!

CDC, AAP, and AAFP have all released guidance on best practices to continue vaccinating during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Click the links below to learn more!

- [CDC](#)
- [AAP](#)
- [AAFP](#)

COVID-19 UPDATE FOR VFC PROVIDERS

CDPH greatly appreciates your tireless work to protect the health of all Chicagoans. We've included guidance to assist with well visits, testing, and public health reporting.

Well Visit Guidance

As widespread COVID-19 community transmission continues, CDPH continues to recommend that **pediatricians limit in-person well visits**, consistent with AAP guidance on providing pediatric ambulatory services.

- **Please prioritize in-person well-child care whenever possible**, if there are appropriate infection control protections in place for your patients and staff. **Updated COVID-19 outpatient setting guidance is attached to support you.**
- Depending on your setup, you may not be able to provide well visits safely to all patients in your practice. If so, please **prioritize in-person newborn care, and well visits and immunization of infants and young children** (through 24 months of age) when possible.
- If you are unable to provide immunization services to all or a portion of your patient population at this time, **make plans for how you will identify and bring patients in for missed immunizations once you are able to open and/or expand your services.** There are several approaches and tools to help. Consider keeping track of cancelled appointments (or ones conducted via telemedicine) where vaccines were due, and set up new appointments once you see patients in your office again, or are very close to reopening.
- Your clinic may conduct well visits for children through telehealth, recognizing that some elements of the well exam should be completed in clinic once circumstances allow. Please see the [AAP COVID-19 resource page](#) for more detail.

Testing Updates

To support testing for those in outpatient settings with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19, laboratory capacity to diagnose COVID-19 infections has increased. You now have more options to **collect different types of specimens beyond a nasopharyngeal (NP) swab** (see new [CDC clinical testing guidelines](#)).

As we all work to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, identifying and reporting cases to public health is fundamental for investigation and isolation of cases. Please **submit specimens to a contracted reference laboratory or the IDPH lab for testing.** For more information on testing, please reference the [Chicago COVID-19 HAN](#). **See attached health alert for more details.**

Please note: Providers should not refer patients to the [CDPH Hotline](#) for testing or results.

Public Health Reporting

To support case investigation and isolation, **your practice should report individual cases** by electronic laboratory reporting feed **within 24 hours of a lab result** using one of the following methods:

- Illinois National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (“I-NEDSS”)
- Health Level Seven (HL7) electronic data feed
- Submit through an established REDCap electronic case submission form.

To establish an HL7 feed, please reach out for assistance at: CDPHCovidDataHub@rush.edu.

A REDCap case report form can be submitted at: <https://redcap.dph.illinois.gov/surveys/?s=FR7MAJAY84>.