

Vaccine Transport and Handling – Courier Services

Cold chain refers to the process used to maintain optimal temperature and light conditions during the transport, storage and handling of vaccines. This starts at the manufacturer and ends with the administration of the vaccine to the individual.

Vaccines may become less effective or destroyed when exposed to temperatures outside the recommended range and/or inappropriate exposure to light. Any loss of vaccine effectiveness is permanent and irreversible. Loss of effectiveness may result in failure to create an adequate immune response, leading to ineffective vaccine being given and potential for increased disease.

Required practices for couriers transporting COVID-19 Vaccine for AHS:

- Confirm with Vaccine Depot or Public Health staff on pickup that temperature monitors are in range for the vaccine being transported.
- Handle transport containers carefully, avoiding unnecessary movement or jostling.
- Keep transport container upright at all times.
- Transport containers must be secured in the vehicle so they do not move around. As much care as possible should be taken to minimize movement during transportation both within the container and the vehicle as excessive movement can reduce effectiveness of vaccine.
- Keep transport containers away from vents within vehicle and do not place in the vehicle trunk. This is to avoid vaccine from being exposed to high/low temperature variations.
- Vaccine should not be left unattended in vehicle.
- Vaccine must be delivered within 6 hours of leaving the Vaccine Depot, except in extenuating circumstances.
- If there will be any delay or divergence from the requested schedule and delivery time, the receiving site must be contacted and made aware
- On arrival at each destination, remove transport container for delivery and allow receiver to look at temperature monitoring device to confirm product has arrived within cold chain.
 - If site is concerned that the vaccine delivered is not in cold chain, DO NOT take the delivery back, the site must keep the vaccine and notify their zone contact for further direction.
- Temperature monitoring device needs to be returned with transport container to Vaccine Depot, or originating Public Health site.
- Return all transport containers and temperature monitoring devices back to the Vaccine Depot following deliveries, either the same day or the following day.

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KEY POINTS

DO NOT:

Jostle or shake vaccine transport containers

Place vaccine transport containers in the vehicle trunk

Place vaccine transport containers near vents

Leave vaccine unattended at any time

ALWAYS:

Handle vaccine transport containers carefully

Keep vaccine transport containers upright and secure at all times

Keep vaccine transport containers in main compartment of vehicle, away from vents