

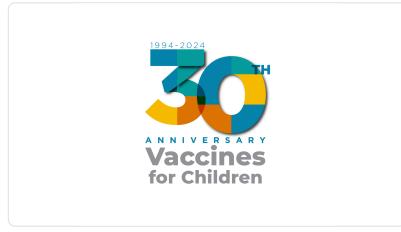


Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program: Information for Parents

JUNE 28, 2024

AT A GLANCE

Your children may be able to get no-cost vaccines through CDC's Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program at healthcare providers offices, pharmacies and health clinics that are enrolled in the VFC Program.



Overview

The VFC Program helps all children have a better chance of getting their [recommended vaccinations](#) on schedule. Vaccinating on time means healthier children, families, and communities.

Vaccines provided by the VFC Program protect babies, young children, and adolescents from [preventable diseases](#).

Children Who Are Eligible for the VFC Program

Children ages 18 years or younger who meet at least one of the following requirements:

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Medicaid-eligible
- Uninsured
- Underinsured

Additional Information on Children Who Are Underinsured

Underinsured means that your child has health insurance, but the insurance policy:

- Doesn't cover any vaccines
- Doesn't cover certain [recommended vaccines](#)
- Does cover recommended vaccines but has a fixed dollar limit or cap for payment

Underinsured children are only eligible to receive vaccines at [Federally Qualified Health Centers \(FQHCs\)](#) or [Rural Health Clinics \(RHCs\)](#). FQHCs and RHCs provide health care to medically underserved areas and meet certain criteria under Medicare and Medicaid programs.

However, through a deputization agreement, FQHCs/RHCs can choose to delegate their VFC Program authority for vaccinating underinsured children to other VFC Program-enrolled provider locations (usually public health department clinics) as agents of the FQHC/RHC.

You Do Not Need Proof of a Child's Eligibility



Children can receive no-cost vaccines from enrolled providers.

You do not have to show any proof that your child is eligible for free vaccines using the VFC Program. However, your doctor is required to ask and document the following:

- Is your child on Medicaid?
- Does your child have any health insurance coverage? Does the insurance cover vaccines?
- Is your child of American Indian or Alaskan Native heritage?

Many doctors will already have this information in your child's medical record or as a part of normal business records, but if your child's insurance or Medicaid status changes, you need to inform the doctor's office of those changes.

There is No Cost for Vaccines Provided by the VFC Program

There is no cost for the vaccines given by VFC Program providers to eligible children. This means that no one can charge a fee for the vaccine itself.

Fees That a VFC Program Provider May Charge

Although there is no charge for VFC Program vaccines, the law does allow your healthcare provider to charge what is called an "administration fee". An administration fee is similar to a patient's co-pay in that it helps providers offset their costs of doing business. Providers have the option to charge what they feel is fair, which could range from no charge at all, up to the maximum amount allowed by their state. This fee differs from state to state. Contact your [CMS Regional Medicaid office](#) for questions about the administration fee.

Disclaimer

Note: Healthcare providers cannot refuse to vaccinate your child if you are unable to pay the vaccine administration fee.

Other fees the VFC Program provider may charge include:

- Fees for non-vaccine services that occur during the office visit, like an eye exam or blood test.
- An office fee for the visit.
 - **If your child is covered by Medicaid**, that office visit is paid for by Medicaid.
 - **If your child is not covered by Medicaid**, you are responsible for making appropriate payment arrangements with your doctor in relation to office visit charges.

Vaccines covered through the VFC Program

The VFC Program covers all vaccines included in the pediatric immunization schedules that are determined by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices ([ACIP](#)):

- [Recommended immunizations for children from birth through 6 years old.](#)
- [Recommended immunizations for children from 7 through 18 years old.](#)

The vaccines offered through the VFC Program protect children from these preventable diseases:

- COVID-19
- Dengue
- Diphtheria
- Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)

- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
- Influenza (flu)
- Measles
- Meningococcal
- Mumps
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Pneumococcal
- Polio
- Rotavirus
- RSV
- Rubella (German Measles)
- Tetanus (lockjaw)
- Varicella (chickenpox)

If your child is behind on their vaccine schedule, they can catch up on their routine vaccines through the VFC Program. Call or visit your provider to discuss how your child can get caught up to schedule. Review the recommended [catch-up schedule](#) for more details.

Locations of VFC Program providers

You can get vaccines for your child at any private doctor, private clinic, hospital, public health clinic, community health clinic, schools, or pharmacy that is an enrolled VFC Program provider. Over 37,000 providers are enrolled in the VFC Program nationwide.

- **Healthcare Providers:** Most pediatricians in the United States and its territories are VFC Program enrolled providers. Birthing hospitals can also be VFC Program providers to administer RSV and Hepatitis B vaccines to infants. Talk to your child's doctor to see if they are a provider.
- **Schools:** In some states, schools are enrolled. Talk to your child's school to see if they are a VFC Program provider.
- **Departments of Health:** Your [State or Territory Health Department](#) is responsible for managing the VFC Program where you reside. Each State or Territory has a VFC Program Coordinator that is responsible for enrolling providers and monitoring the provider's participation in the program.
- **FQHCs and RHCs:** [Federally Qualified Health Centers \(FQHCs\)](#) and [Rural Health Clinics \(RHCs\)](#) may be enrolled in the VFC Program.

To find a VFC Program provider near you, contact your [state or local health department](#) to see if your state has a searchable website for VFC Program providers.

Related Pages

[VFC Operations Guide](#) (PDF)

SOURCES

CONTENT SOURCE:

National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD)