

## **ELIGIBILITY**

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Immunization Section—Vaccines for Children Program

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## MODULE 2: Eligibility

### VFC Eligibility Categories

The Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program offers vaccines at no cost to enrolled providers for eligible children. In order for children to receive their vaccinations through the VFC program, eligibility screening and documentation must take place at each immunization visit. Children through 18 years of age who meet at least one of the following criteria are eligible to receive VFC vaccine:

- **Medicaid-eligible:** A child who is eligible for the Medicaid program. (For the purposes of the VFC program, the terms “Medicaid-eligible” and “Medicaid-enrolled” are used interchangeably and refer to children who have health insurance covered by a state Medicaid Title XIX program).
- **Uninsured:** A child who has no health insurance coverage.
- **American Indian or Alaska Native:** As defined by the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603).
- **Underinsured:**
  - A child who has health insurance, but the coverage does not include vaccines, or
  - A child whose insurance does not cover all Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)-recommended vaccines. The child would be eligible to receive those vaccines not covered by the insurance.

**Please note:** Underinsured children are eligible to receive VFC vaccine only through a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), or Rural Health Clinic (RHC), or under an approved deputization agreement. For a list of Florida’s FQHCs, visit the Florida Association of Community Health Centers website at [www.fachc.org](http://www.fachc.org). For a list of Florida’s RHCs, visit the Florida Department of Health’s website at: [www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health/rural-health/rural-health-networks.html](http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health/rural-health/rural-health-networks.html) or see **Appendix 2**.

**Children whose health insurance covers the cost of vaccinations are not eligible for VFC vaccines.** This applies even when a claim for the cost of the vaccine and its administration would be denied for payment by the insurance carrier because the plan’s deductible had not been met.

Children enrolled in the Florida KidCare Program, including MediKids and the Healthy Kids Program, are insured and therefore not eligible to receive VFC Program vaccine. The KidCare (health insurance) programs cover vaccines and administration fees.

**Please note:** Underinsured, limited coverage, and “caps” should be rare instances with the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

### Eligibility Determination and Documentation

To ensure VFC Program vaccine is given to eligible patients only, a *Patient Eligibility Screening Record* (PESR) (see **Appendix 2** or [http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/immunization/vaccines-for-children/\\_documents/patient-eligibility-screening-record-vfc.pdf](http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/immunization/vaccines-for-children/_documents/patient-eligibility-screening-record-vfc.pdf)) must be completed for all children at each immunization encounter, and verified

during subsequent visits. Each PESR must be kept in the patient's medical record for three years. If an eligible child becomes ineligible, the PESR record must reflect the change and the date of change.

Per *Federal Law 42 US Code 300aa-25*, the following must be documented in the patient's medical record for each vaccine administered:

- Vaccine name
- Date administered
- Publication date of Vaccine Information Statement (VIS)
- Date VIS provided to patient
- Name of vaccine manufacturer
- Vaccine lot number
- Name and title of vaccinator
- Clinic address

Providers who utilize Florida State Health Online Tracking System (SHOTS) to document vaccine administration data should enter the patient's eligibility status and vaccine administration information within 14 days of the visit.

## Fee Policies

Providers may not charge VFC-enrolled patients for the cost of a vaccine provided by the VFC Program. However, providers may bill office visits and Medicaid and/or Medicaid Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) for vaccine administration fees.

Families not covered by Medicaid or Medicaid HMOs may be charged a vaccine administration fee. This administration fee should not exceed the maximum regional charge (see [Appendix 2](#) or [http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/immunization/vaccines-for-children/\\_documents/max-region-charges.pdf](http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/immunization/vaccines-for-children/_documents/max-region-charges.pdf)). Providers may not refuse the administration of a vaccine to a VFC-eligible client due to an accompanying adult's inability to pay an administration fee.

## Special Populations

The VFC Program recognizes several situations where the use of special VFC eligibility screening forms may improve the efficiency of the provider's implementation of the VFC Program, or are necessary because of the individual's situation.

### 1) Comprehensive Certifications

If a provider exclusively serves children through 18 years of age who are American Indian or Alaska Native, or serves Medicaid enrolled patients only, he/she may use the appropriate comprehensive certification form (See [Appendix 2](#) or [http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/immunization/vaccines-for-children/\\_documents/comp-cert-form-medicaid.pdf](http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/immunization/vaccines-for-children/_documents/comp-cert-form-medicaid.pdf)). These certification forms would be in lieu of individual VFC screening forms, and must be signed annually.

The VFC Program will verify the information against the most current provider profile, and ensure the provider's VFC eligible and non-eligible population does not change during the 12 months covered by the certification.

## 2) Minors Under 19 Years of Age at Family Planning Clinics

Another population requiring specialized VFC screening is minors under 19 years of age without insurance, presenting at Title X family planning clinics. The Title X Family Planning Program was enacted in 1970 as Title X of the Public Health Service Act. Title X is the only federal grant program dedicated solely to providing individuals with comprehensive family planning and related preventive health services.

A person under 19 years of age who may have insurance, but does not have access to the insurance because of confidential circumstances for seeking services in a family planning clinic/sexually transmitted disease clinic, is considered uninsured for the purposes of the VFC Program.

- a. The family planning clinic must screen these adolescents for VFC eligibility using the *Patient Eligibility Screening Record for Children in Family Planning Clinics* (see **Appendix 2** or [http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/immunization/vaccines-for-children/\\_documents/patient-eligibility-screening-family-planning.pdf](http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/immunization/vaccines-for-children/_documents/patient-eligibility-screening-family-planning.pdf)).
- b. In addition, each family planning clinic must document all VFC vaccines administered to unaccompanied minors without insurance information on the administration log titled *Family Planning Clinic Unaccompanied Minor without Insurance Information VFC Vaccine Log* (see **Appendix 2** or [http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/immunization/vaccines-for-children/\\_documents/family-plan-clinic-unaccomp-minor-wo-insurance.pdf](http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/immunization/vaccines-for-children/_documents/family-plan-clinic-unaccomp-minor-wo-insurance.pdf)).
- c. Each clinic should submit the completed logs to the VFC Program monthly.
- d. The VFC Program will review each clinic's log, and
  - 1) Collect aggregate information annually on the number of children without insurance who are provided VFC Program vaccine in family planning clinics.
  - 2) This information must include the type and number of VFC Program vaccines administered to these children.

The VFC Program does not in any way regulate the issue of medical consent for the provision of medical care to minors. The assumption is that the clinic provides any such care in accordance with Florida's medical consent laws as they pertain to minors.