



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

JOSH STEIN • Governor

DEVPUTTA SANGVAL • Secretary

KELLY KIMPLE • Director, Division of Public Health

June 1, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: North Carolina Immunization Program (NCIP) Participants

FROM: Jenny Myers, MPH, Immunization Branch Director
North Carolina Division of Public Health

SUBJECT: 2026 Inclement Weather Preparedness

The 2026 hurricane season begins June 1, 2026, and continues through November 30, 2026, however, inclement weather can occur throughout the year. Now is the time to prepare for events that could impact vaccine storage, such as storms, flooding, power outages, and equipment failures. Take the following steps and precautions to protect your vaccines before an emergency occurs.

Review and update your [routine](#) and [emergency vaccine management plans](#) annually or as changes occur. Confirm the emergency vaccine plan remains current with updated contact information and alternate storage locations. A clear, written, and documented plan helps avoid delays and protects your vaccine supply during emergencies. Remember, in flood-prone areas, disaster threats to your facility may continue for days after the initial storm has passed.

Preparedness Recommendations Before an Event:

- Ensure staff are familiar with emergency management plans including after-hours roles and responsibilities.
- Suspend vaccination activities before the onset of emergency conditions to allow sufficient time to pack and transport vaccine.
- Prepare to transport vaccine to an alternative storage facility if it is apparent emergency conditions will last for an extended period.
- Ensure vaccine supplies are stored off the floor to prevent damage from potential flooding.
- Create and implement a monitoring/notification system during times of inclement weather or other conditions that might cause a power outage.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

LOCATION: 65 Moore Dr., Durham, NC 27703

MAILING ADDRESS: 1931 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1931

www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-707-5000 • FAX: 919-870-4829

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

- Test emergency generators quarterly and have them serviced annually. Keep sufficient fuel on site to continuously run generators for at least 72 hours.
- Review and print the [NCIP Vaccine Transport Guidance](#) to verify you have appropriate packing materials to safely transport vaccine temporarily.
- Have at least one case of 24 bottles of either 8 fluid ounces or 16.9 fluid ounces of frozen water bottles on-site that can be conditioned for transport.
- Use a NCIP approved digital data logger (DDL) with a current and valid certificate of calibration to monitor temperatures.
- Place new batteries in your primary and backup digital data loggers to ensure temperature monitoring continues in the event of power failure.
- Confirm that staff are up to date on Tdap vaccination.
- Contact your alternate storage facility to confirm that contact information is current and that they remain available to serve as your back-up location.

If a Power Failure Occurs:

- Determine the cause of the power failure and estimate the time it will take to restore power. If a timeframe for the restoration of power cannot be determined, do not leave vaccine in a non-working unit.
- Monitor your digital data logger to determine when additional action should be taken.
- Maintain thermal conditions; do not open the storage unit door until power is restored or it is determined that vaccines must be packed in separate storage containers and/or transported. Storage unit temperature may be maintained with the proper amount of water bottles in a refrigerator and frozen water bottles in a freezer.
- Prepare to shelter in place or transport to your back-up location by pre-chilling the on-site coolers and ensure vaccines remain stored at appropriate temperatures.
- Consider the type of vaccine being transported and the storage capacity at the back-up location.
- Monitor the data logger thermometer to ensure vaccines remain within the appropriate temperature range(s) during transport.
- Do not wait for refrigerator temperatures to reach above 8°C (46°F) or freezer temperatures to reach above -15°C (5°F) to begin emergency vaccine procedures.
- Take immediate action when temperatures fall outside the recommended range(s).
- Document date and time vaccines were moved to the back-up location and monitor temperatures in the back-up refrigerator/freezer where vaccines are stored. Back-up storage units must adhere to the same requirements as the primary storage units.

When Power is Restored:

- Continue to monitor temperatures until units reach the normal 2°C to 8°C range in the refrigerator, or -15°C to -50°C in the freezer.
- Record duration of increased temperature exposure and maximum temperature observed.
- Do not discard or administer affected vaccine. Properly store and mark vaccine with “**DO NOT USE**” sign and call the NCIP for further instruction about the viability of the vaccine.

[Additional guidance](#) on vaccine storage and handling is available from the CDC.

How to Contact Us

For assistance, please contact the NCIR Help Desk by phone: 1.877.USE.NCIR (873-6247) by [email](#), or submit a ticket through the [NCIP Help Desk Portal](#).

Note: NCIP may be closed during times of inclement weather. All voicemail messages left during closure will be returned the following business day or as soon as possible.

Regularly check our [website](#) or NCIR for announcements and up-to-date information.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and dedication to improving immunization outcomes in North Carolina.

In Health,
NC Department of Health and Human Services