

REFERENCE: Purpose-Built Vaccine Storage Units

Purpose-built storage units are designed and tested specifically to maintain appropriate vaccine temperatures. These units may resemble traditional stand-alone units or vending- or dispensing-style units (with or without doors). Although similar to pharmaceutical-grade units, purpose-built units are unique in their design for vaccine storage.

VFC providers and other health professionals who administer vaccines purchased with public funds should ask their immunization program which purpose-built units meet VFC program requirements. Always check with your [immunization program](#) before purchasing any unit that will be used to store VFC vaccines.

Key features and considerations include

Temperature Monitoring

- Many units have multiple temperature probes or sensors, each requiring a current Certificate of Calibration.
- Many purpose-built closed or doorless units may utilize air sensors (non-buffered probes). Because these units have very limited exposure to ambient air, buffered probes are not essential.
- Many units include built-in digital data loggers (DDLs) with electronic interfaces that provide continuous temperature data and/or provide min/max readings. VFC providers must verify that these built-in DDLs meet VFC data logger requirements.

Vaccine Storage

- These units are tested and temperature-mapped to ensure the probe is placed in the optimal location.
- Even when units with multiple built-in probes are used, providers still need a backup DDL for transporting vaccines to a backup facility during an emergency.
- Many purpose-built units do not need water bottles to maintain thermal stability.

VFC Vaccine Management

- Units must allow users to separate public and private vaccine stock physically or virtually.
- If stock is separated virtually, an inventory printout must be accessible upon request.*
- If expired vaccines cannot be removed immediately, it must be possible to make them inaccessible inside the unit.

*The inventory printout should be used to complete storage and handling and inventory sections of the site visit reviewer's guide.