

**MODULE**

**2**

## **ELIGIBILITY**

---

Bureau of Immunization-Vaccines for Children Program

This page is intentionally left blank.

## MODULE 2 – Eligibility

### Overview

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 enrolled in the Medicaid Program (for the purposes of the VFC Program, the terms Medicaid-eligible and Medicaid-enrolled are equivalent and refer to children who have health insurance covered by a state Medicaid Program).
- **Uninsured:** A child who has no health insurance coverage.
- **American Indian or Alaskan Native:** As defined by the Indian Health Services Act (25 U.S.C. 1603).
- **Underinsured\*:** Children:
  - Who have commercial (private) health insurance but the coverage does not include vaccines.
  - Whose insurance covers only selected vaccines (VFC-eligible for non-covered vaccines only).
  - Whose insurance caps vaccine coverage at a certain amount—once that coverage amount is reached these children are categorized as underinsured.

**\*Underinsured:** Underinsured children are eligible to receive VFC vaccine only through a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) or Rural Health Clinic (RHC) (see Appendix 1).

### What is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)?

A Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) is a center designated by the Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC) of the Health Services and Resources Administration (HRSA) to provide health care to a medically underserved population. FQHCs include community and migrant centers, special health facilities, such as those for the homeless and persons with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) that receive grants under the Public Health Service (PHS) Act and "look-alikes", which meet the qualifications, but do not actually receive grant funds. They also include health centers within public housing and Indian health centers. For a list of FQHC locations, visit their website at <http://www.fachc.org/>.

### What is a Rural Health Clinic (RHC)?

A Rural Health Clinic (RHC) is a clinic located in a Health Professional Shortage area, a medically underserved area, or a governor-designated shortage area. RHCs are required to be staffed by physician assistants (PAs), nurse practitioners (NPs),

or certified nurse midwives (CNMs) at least half of the time that the clinic is open. For a list of Rural Health Clinics visit the Department of Health link at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Workforce/RuralHealth/ruralhealthhome.html>.

Children whose health insurance covers the cost of vaccinations are not eligible for VFC vaccines, even when the insurance carrier would deny a claim for the cost of the vaccine and its administration for payment because they have not met their plan's deductible.

Children enrolled in the Healthy Kids Program or in MediKids, which is part of the KidCare Program, are insured and not eligible to receive VFC vaccines. These programs already cover vaccines and administration fees.

There is no income restriction imposed by the VFC Program, as long as the child meets all other enrollment criteria.

### **Provider Responsibility to Screen for VFC Eligibility**

Screening to determine a child's eligibility to receive vaccines through the VFC Program must take place with each immunization visit. The ***Patient Eligibility Screening Record*** should be updated if the status of the patient changes. Maintain patient eligibility screening records on file for a minimum of three years after the last shot date on record. The ***Patient Eligibility Screening Record*** provides a means of recording parent responses to VFC eligibility questions. The parent, guardian, or provider may complete this form (see Appendix 2). Verification of parent/guardian responses is not required.

### **Charges and Fees for Immunization of VFC-Eligible Clients**

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 administration charge (see Appendix 2). The provider will adjust this fee based on the family's ability to pay. Providers may not refuse the administration of a vaccine to a VFC-enrolled client due to an accompanying adult's inability to pay an administration fee. You can access a copy of the ***Maximum Regional Charges for Vaccine Administration*** at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/fee-fedreg.htm>.

### **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 office or clinics related to the implementation of the VFC Program, or are necessary because of the individual's situation. If a provider exclusively serves patients from birth through 18 years of age who are American Indian or Alaskan Native or serves only

Medicaid-enrolled patients, he/she may use the appropriate **Comprehensive Certification Form for Children Who are Enrolled in Medicaid** (see Appendix 2).

- Please remember that these comprehensive certificates are only acceptable substitutes for individual VFC screening forms if that provider's patient population is 100% American Indian or Alaskan Native or Medicaid enrolled. The provider must sign this certificate annually and the VFC Program must verify it against the current provider's profile.

Another population that requires a specialized VFC screening form are 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. By law, priority is given to persons from low-income families.

A person under 19 years of age, who may have insurance, but because of the circumstances for seeking services does not have access to that insurance coverage, is uninsured for the purposes of the VFC Program. The Title X clinic must screen these adolescents for VFC eligibility using the form **Patient Eligibility Screening Record Vaccines for Children Program in Family Planning Clinics** (see Appendix 2). In addition, each Title X 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). The provider should submit the completed logs to the VFC Program on a monthly basis.

**Please Note:** The VFC Program in no way regulates the issue of medical consent for the provision of medical care to minors. The assumption is that the clinic provides any such care in conformance with the state's medical consent laws as they pertain to minors.

This page is intentionally left blank.