



March 19, 2020

RE: COVID-19 and Texas Vaccines for Children (TVFC) and Adult Safety Net (ASN) Programs Site Visits

Dear Regional and Local Health Department Staff,

As we begin this new week amidst the rapidly evolving COVID-19 outbreak, we want to thank you all for your commitment to serving as a Responsible Entity (RE) for the TVFC/ASN Programs. As the Director of the Immunization Unit, please know that your health and safety are of the utmost importance. In light of the current CDC social distancing recommendations for COVID-19, all in-person site visits for TVFC/ASN Programs have been discontinued until further notice. This includes the following:

- TVFC/ASN Compliance-only visits;
- TVFC Combination visits (IQIP and Compliance);
- TVFC/ASN new enrollment visits; and
- TVFC/ASN storage and handling visits

For providers that have already received an IQIP, compliance, or storage and handling visit, you must continue conducting follow up activities via telephone. All follow up activities must be documented appropriately.

It is important that vaccine safety remains a priority during this time. Compliance with TVFC/ASN storage and handling requirements must be maintained in accordance with the programs policies. In keeping with policy, enrolled providers must continue to monitor temperatures for all storage units that contain TVFC/ASN vaccines and continue to submit their monthly reports by the 5th of each month. Because in-person visits cannot be conducted at this time, monthly reports must be reviewed extensively to verify that providers are complying with appropriate vaccine management protocols. Those that fail to comply with protocols must have their orders placed on hold.

In addition, REs will be required to conduct spot checks on all vaccine storage units that contain TVFC/ASN vaccine as an alternative method to in-person

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compliance site visits and as a form of technical assistance to providers. Specific guidance on spot checks will be provided separately. Please refer to the 2020 TVFC/ASN Operations Manual for REs, Section 3 Vaccine Management for policies regarding proper storage and handling of vaccines at <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/Responsible-Entities/TVFC-and-ASN-Operations-Manual-for-REs/>. We will continue to provide updates to TVFC/ASN policies and procedures as information is available.

Finally, because these are new and stressful times, kindness and patience are more important than ever before. Please take care of yourself and follow all CDC and DSHS guidelines on how to protect yourself, family and co-workers from the spread of COVID-19.

Thank you,

Antonio Aragon

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Immunization Unit Director