

**American Academy of Pediatrics**  
**Report Prepared by Dana Bright, MSW, Manager, AAP Immunization Initiatives**  
**Report Reviewed by Scott Needle, MD, FAAP**  
**Policies and Procedures: Vaccine Loss Due to Disaster**

The information below summarizes the policies and processes of vaccine manufacturers and the CDC Vaccines for Children Program related to vaccine loss due to a natural disaster in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Pediatricians are encouraged to hold on to any vaccine product, not to throw it away or destroy it, and to submit an insurance claim as a first step. Private vaccine manufacturers need to see that a product is not covered under insurance before providing a credit or replacing it. Private vaccine manufacturers will usually offer a partial or full credit for vaccines lost by hurricanes for offices that meet certain conditions, but any questions should be directed to the manufacturers.

**Merck**

Available on [www.merckvaccines.com](http://www.merckvaccines.com), there is a link at the bottom of the page for “Disaster Relief Returns Program.” There are comprehensive instructions: <https://www.merckvaccines.com/DisasterRelief/Pages/home>. Additionally, customers can call the MVCC at 877.VAX.MERCK to speak to a company representative for further guidance. This guidance applies for customers in the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

**GSK**

To help support customers, GSK has a FEMA Declared Natural Disaster Policy. This Policy is designed to help customers regarding appropriate product replacement in the event of damage. For hurricane Harvey and Irma certain counties in Texas and Florida have been declared a disaster by FEMA. Below are the direct links from FEMA outlining the eligible counties at this time for Texas and Florida, respectively.

<https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4332> and <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4337>

In the event any AAP member experienced damaged product due to a product excursion and is included in an area defined as a FEMA declared disaster, GSK will provide replacement product under GSK’s Natural Disaster Policy:

AAP members may call the GSK Channel Service Centers directly. For Pharma, ViiV and Specialty medicines please call 800 877-1158 option 4. For Vaccines please call 866-475-8222 option 3. AAP members will first need to file a claim with their insurance provider and be denied coverage. AAP members can then provide the denial letter to GSK as part of their claim submission. Following a claim submission, a Channel Service Center Representative will follow up with the member directly within 48 hours regarding the status of the claim.

This process applies to the U.S. and Puerto Rico. GSK recommends that a provider hold onto the product if able, but this is not required. GSK changed its policy recently since product could be washed away in a flood.

**Pfizer**

Pfizer does have a policy in place to help customers through this time. If asked, refer the office to Pfizer Customer Service at 1-800-666-7248 to review specific circumstances and determine options / next steps. This guidance applies for customers in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. If vaccines have completely washed away, a provider can still work with customer service to find a solution. If a provider needs to

wait until cell phone coverage is reinstated, that is fine. The Pfizer policy does not have a short term expiration, so Pfizer will work with those impacted even if they call in a couple of weeks after a disaster event.

### **Sanofi Pasteur**

If a provider purchased a vaccine directly through Sanofi, the provider should contact 1-800-vaccine, and a customer service representative can help them thru the process. If a provider purchased a vaccine through Sanofi's distributor, CardinalHealth, which ships to Puerto Rico, the provider should contact CardinalHealth. For pharmaceutical distribution and supply chain customer service, call 800.926.3161. For inquiries related to medical product orders and/or assistance with placing an order, call 800.964.5227. Larger vaccine supplies are being preserved at CardinalHealth with backup generators to minimize vaccine loss.

### **Vaccines for Children Program, CDC**

AAP members are encouraged to contact their state immunization program. A list of state immunization program Web sites can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-managers/awardee-imz-websites.html>.

### Immunization Information Systems Guidance

To expedite access to immunization records on individuals displaced by recent hurricanes, the American Immunization Registry Association (AIRA) compiled information on out-of-jurisdiction record access from Florida, Puerto Rico, Texas and the Virgin Islands. This document is available on the [AIRA website](#). AIRA will update this resource as more information becomes available. Please contact [Mary Beth Kurilo](#) with any additions or edits.