

# Intake Process for Reporting COVID-19 Vaccine Cold Chain Incident for Community Pharmacies

## SCENARIO 1: Temperature Excursion Occurs While Vaccine En Route to Pharmacy

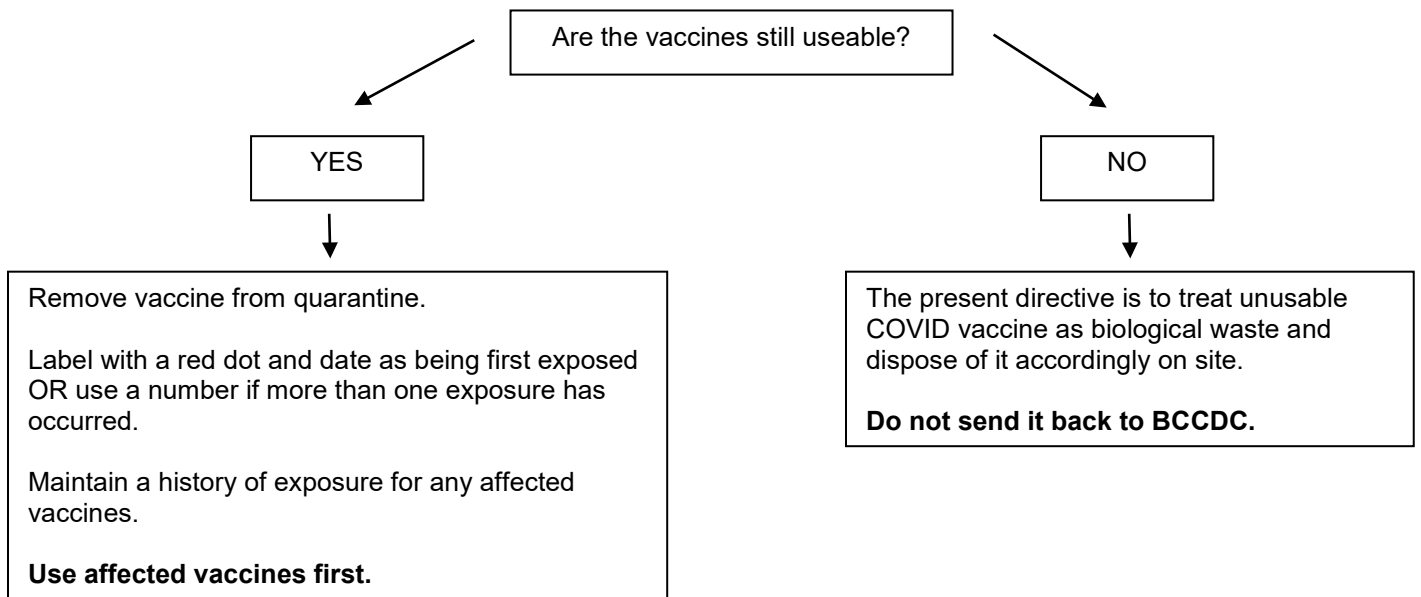
Follow this process if cold chain excursion occurs when vaccine is in transit to pharmacy from distributor

- 1) Pharmacy contacts distributor to notify of Cold Chain Incident
- 2) Distributor reviews cold chain incident, completes and submits Cold Chain Incident Form to IBCOC email address
- 3) Once cold chain incident is resolved, distributor notifies pharmacy of recommendation/vaccine usability and provides a copy of cold chain incident information

## SCENARIO 2: Temperature Excursion Occurs While Vaccine in Custody of Pharmacy

Follow this process if cold chain excursion occurs after vaccine has been received by pharmacy from distributor/BCCDC/Health Unit

1. Quarantine affected vaccine and label as "Do Not Use"
  - Document current, minimum, maximum and room temperatures. Stop or reset device.
  - Note: When vaccine is stored in a fridge or cooler, **0°C to +2°C** is considered refrigeration conditions, considering accuracy of the temperature monitoring device, it does **not** constitute a cold chain incident and does **not** need to be reported.  
Cold chain excursion must be reported when minimum temperature is:
    - $< +1^{\circ}\text{C}$  when monitored with device with known accuracy of  $\pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$
    - $< +0.5^{\circ}\text{C}$  when monitored with device with known accuracy of  $\pm 0.5^{\circ}\text{C}$
    - If device accuracy is not known, accuracy is considered to be  $\pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$
  - If vaccine has been exposed to a previous freeze-thaw cycle – **do not refreeze**. Quarantine in vaccine fridge at  $+2^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $+8^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Freeze/thaw cycles must be tracked.
2. Initiate cold chain consultation process
  - Complete [Cold Chain Incident Form](#) in full, include as much detail as possible (e.g. duration of exposure, fridge temperature when vaccine was found, visual inspection of vials if vaccine may have experienced a thaw-freeze cycle etc)
  - Email cold chain incident form and temperature logs to Biological Products Consultant (BPC) at: [PublicHealthImmunizationSupport@islandhealth.ca](mailto:PublicHealthImmunizationSupport@islandhealth.ca)
    - Indicate 'COVID-19 Vaccine Cold Chain Incident' in email subject and use high priority flag as appropriate
    - Include name of pharmacy and contact number in body of email
      - BPC may need to contact pharmacist with follow-up questions prior to providing a recommendation
    - If urgent response is required (e.g. within 1hr or less as clinic is scheduled) phone BPC at 250-519-5300 local 32628 after sending email
      - Note: BPC is available Monday – Friday 08:30-16:30 (excluding statutory holidays)
      - If weekend/afterhours assistance is required contact 1-250-686-6061
    - BPC will usually provide direction within 1 business day, but may take longer if consultation with BCCDC Pharmacy or manufacturer is required
3. Once vaccine usability has been determined, BPC will communicate recommendation to Pharmacist:
  - If urgent direction is required, BPC will phone submitting Pharmacist and provide verbal instructions (e.g. vaccine is usable, vaccine is not usable) followed by written recommendation.



4. Once incident has been resolved and the vaccine usability recommendation has been received, Pharmacist must submit a report to [IBCOC\\_Operations@phsa.ca](mailto:IBCOC_Operations@phsa.ca) with the following information:

- Date of incident
- Location of incident
- Situation surrounding incident:
  - Excursion temperature(s) and duration(s)
  - Lot number, expiry
  - Detail description of event
- Recommendations:
  - Number of affected doses
  - Number of doses wasted
  - Impact on clinic (e.g. cancelled, clients redirected to alternate site)

Upon receipt of this report, the Immunize BC Operations Centre will be responsible to report the incident to the National Operations Centre.

5. If vaccine is deemed not usable, record wasted inventory in the ImmsBC system