

# Skills Checklist for Vaccine Administration



During the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDC recommends additional infection control measures for vaccination (see [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pandemic-guidance/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pandemic-guidance/index.html)).

The Skills Checklist is a self-assessment tool for healthcare staff who administer immunizations. To complete it, review the competency areas below and the clinical skills, techniques and procedures outlined for each area. Score yourself in the Self-Assessment column. If you check **Needs to Improve**, you indicate further study, practice, or change is needed. When you check **Meets or Exceeds**, you indicate you believe you are performing at the expected level of competence, or higher.

**Supervisors:** Use the Skills Checklist to clarify responsibilities and expectations for staff who administer vaccines. Give staff the opportunity to score themselves in advance. Next, observe their performance as they administer vaccines to several patients, and

score in the Supervisor Review columns. If improvement is needed, develop a Plan of Action (see bottom of page 3) to help them achieve the level of competence expected; circle desired actions or write in others.

## Capital Region Hub - Regional Vaccine Network

This skills verification checklist may be completed by agency Medical Director designees such as FTOs, a Public Health Registered Nurse, NYS Certified CIC or CLI, or Public Health Department designees. Evaluator should initial under Supervisor Review.

| COMPETENCY                               | CLINICAL SKILLS, TECHNIQUES, AND PROCEDURES   | Self-Assessment  |                  | Supervisor Review |                  |                |
|--|---|------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
|  |   | NEEDS TO IMPROVE | MEETS OR EXCEEDS | NEEDS TO IMPROVE  | MEETS OR EXCEEDS | PLAN OF ACTION |
| <b>A</b><br>Patient/Parent Education     | 1. Welcomes patient/family and establishes rapport.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 2. Explains what vaccine will be given and which type of injection will be done.  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 3. Answers questions and accommodates language or literacy barriers and special needs of patient to help make them feel comfortable and informed about the procedure. |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 4. Verifies patient received Vaccine Information Statements (VISs) for indicated vaccine and has had time to read them and ask questions.                             |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 5. Screens for contraindications.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 6. Reviews comfort measures and aftercare instructions with patient, and invites questions.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
| <b>B</b><br>Medical and Office Protocols | 1. Identifies the location of the medical protocols (e.g., immunization protocol, emergency protocol, reference material, standing order).                            |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 2. Identifies the location of epinephrine, its administration technique, and clinical situations where its use would be indicated.                                    |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 3. Has up-to-date CPR certification.  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 4. Understands the need to report any needlestick injury.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 5. Demonstrates knowledge of proper vaccine handling, e.g., maintains vaccine at recommended temperature.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |

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Adapted from California Department of Public Health, Immunization Branch

| COMPETENCY                                     | CLINICAL SKILLS, TECHNIQUES, AND PROCEDURES   | Self-Assessment  |                  | Supervisor Review |                  |                |
|--|---|------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
|  |   | NEEDS TO IMPROVE | MEETS OR EXCEEDS | NEEDS TO IMPROVE  | MEETS OR EXCEEDS | PLAN OF ACTION |
| <b>C</b><br><b>Vaccine Preparation</b>         | 1. Performs proper hand hygiene prior to preparing vaccine.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 2. When removing vaccine from the refrigerator or freezer, looks at the storage unit's temperature to make sure it is in proper range.                  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 3. Checks vial expiration date. Double-checks vial label and contents prior to drawing up.  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 4. Prepares and draws up vaccine in a designated clean medication area that is not adjacent to areas where potentially contaminated items are placed.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 5. Selects the correct needle size for IM based on patient weight, site, and recommended injection technique.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 6. Maintains aseptic technique throughout, including cleaning the rubber septum (stopper) of the vial with alcohol prior to piercing it.                |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 7. If applicable, properly reconstitutes and mixes using the diluent supplied. Inverts vial and draws up correct dose of vaccine. Rechecks vial label.  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 8. Prepares a new sterile syringe and sterile needle for each injection. Checks the expiration date on the equipment (syringes and needles) if present. |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 9. Labels each filled syringe or uses labeled tray to keep them identified.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
| <b>D</b><br><b>Administering Immunizations</b> | 1. Rechecks the provider's order or instructions against the vial and the prepared syringes.  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 2. Utilizes proper hand hygiene and disposable gloves (changes gloves for every patient).   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 3. Demonstrates knowledge of the appropriate route for vaccine.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 4. Positions patient.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 5. Correctly identifies the injection site (e.g., deltoid, vastus lateralis).   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 6. Locates anatomic landmarks specific for IM injections.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|  | 7. Preps the site with an alcohol wipe, using a circular motion from the center to a 2" to 3" circle. Allows alcohol to dry.                            |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |

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| <b>D</b><br><b>Administering Immunizations</b><br>(continued) | 8. Controls the limb with the non-dominant hand; holds the needle an inch from the skin and inserts it quickly at the appropriate angle (90° for IM).                |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|   | 9. Injects vaccine using steady pressure; withdraws needle at angle of insertion.  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|   | 10. Applies gentle pressure to injection site for several seconds (using, e.g., gauze pad, bandaid).   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|   | 11. Uses strategies to reduce anxiety and pain associated with injections.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|   | 12. Properly disposes of needle and syringe in “sharps” container.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|   | 13. Properly disposes of vaccine vials.  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
| <b>E</b><br><b>Records Procedures</b>                         | 1. Fully documents each vaccination: date, lot number, manufacturer, site, VIS date, name/initials.  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|   | 2. If applicable, demonstrates ability to use state/local immunization registry or computer to call up patient record, and update computerized immunization history. |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |
|   | 3. Asks for and updates patient’s vaccination record and reminds them to bring it to each visit.   |                  |                  |                   |                  |                |

**Plan of Action**

Circle desired next steps and write in the agreed deadline for completion, as well as date for the follow-up performance review.

- a. Watch video on immunization techniques and review CDC’s Vaccine Administration eLearn, available at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/resource-library.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/resource-library.html).
- b. Review office protocols.
- c. Review manuals, textbooks, wall charts, or other guides.
- d. Review package inserts.
- e. Review vaccine storage and handling guidelines or video.
- f. Observe other staff with patients.
- g. Practice injections.
- h. Read Vaccine Information Statements.
- i. Be mentored by someone who has demonstrated appropriate immunization skills.
- j. Role play (with other staff) interactions with parents and patients, including age appropriate comfort measures.
- k. Attend a skills training or other appropriate courses/training.
- l. Attend healthcare customer satisfaction or cultural competency training.
- m. Renew CPR certification.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

File this Skills Checklist with the EMS Provider’s primary agency.

**Capital Region Hub - Regional Vaccine Network**  
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EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_