

ForwardHealth **UPDATE**

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FORWARDHEALTH EXPANDS VACCINE BILLING PROCESS CHANGES

ForwardHealth is continuing to make changes to the vaccine policy and billing process and applying these changes to **all** covered vaccines to ensure ongoing vaccine access to BadgerCare Plus, Medicaid, and SeniorCare members.

Effective for dates of service (DOS) on and after February 1, 2026, ForwardHealth is:

- Changing the [billing](#) process for the reimbursement of vaccine product and administration.
- Requiring providers to [apply the SL modifier](#) to all claims for vaccines supplied through the federal Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program.
- Clarifying requirements for:
 - Providers who are [enrolled in the VFC program](#).
 - Providers who are [not enrolled in the VFC program](#).

AFFECTED PROGRAMS

BadgerCare Plus, Medicaid, SeniorCare

TO

All Providers, HMOs and Other Managed Care Programs

QUICK LINKS

- Vaccines topic [#12457](#)
- Immunizations and Vaccines topic [#503](#)
- Vaccines for Children Program topic [#3545](#)
- Member Payment for Covered Services topic [#86](#)

The information provided in this ForwardHealth Update is published in accordance with Executive Order #275.

Updated Vaccine Policy for Providers

Vaccine Billing Changes

Effective February 1, 2026, providers will be required to include both the vaccine product and vaccine administration procedure codes on claim details for all vaccines.

As a reminder, ForwardHealth previously published ForwardHealth Update [2025-26](#), “ForwardHealth Vaccine Coverage: New Sources of Vaccine Recommendations and Revised Billing for COVID-19, Influenza, and Measles, Mumps, Rubella, and Varicella Vaccines,” with guidance about the COVID-19, influenza, and measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella vaccines for DOS on or after October 1, 2025.

Providers should refer to the [maximum allowable fee schedules](#) on the ForwardHealth Portal (the Portal) for vaccine product and vaccine administration reimbursement rates.

Vaccines Provided Through the Vaccines for Children Program Require a New Modifier

Vaccine product provided through VFC will require modifier SL (State supplied vaccine) on the claim detail for the vaccine. Claim details for the administration of VFC vaccines do not require the SL modifier.

REQUIRED CODES AND MODIFIERS FOR CLAIMS			
	Members Aged 18 and Younger		Members Aged 19 and Older
	Vaccines for Children-Supplied Vaccine	Non-Vaccines for Children-Supplied Vaccine	Vaccines for Adults
Applicable vaccine product code	✓	✓	✓
Applicable vaccine administration code	✓	✓	✓
SL modifier (indicating state-supplied vaccine)	✓		

If a provider does not follow the appropriate billing instructions (for example, missing the vaccine administration code or SL modifier), they should resubmit their claim to ensure proper reimbursement.

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Requirements for Pharmacy Providers Enrolled in the Vaccines for Children Program Administering Vaccines to Members Aged 18 and Younger

ForwardHealth does not provide reimbursement for vaccine products supplied by the [VFC program](#).

Providers must obtain and use VFC vaccine stock for VFC-eligible members with Medicaid coverage.

Providers must document in the member's record the reason for using private vaccine stock for VFC-eligible members and include one of these reasons:

- The lack of VFC vaccine availability
- The clinical rationale for using a non-VFC vaccine product if a VFC vaccine product was available

Refer to ForwardHealth Online Handbook Vaccines for Children Program topic [#3545](#) for more information.

Requirements for Pharmacy Providers Not Enrolled in the Vaccines for Children Program Administering Vaccines to Members Aged 18 and Younger

Pharmacy providers may get vaccines at no cost and administer them to members aged 18 years and younger through the VFC program. **To receive vaccines at no cost, providers must enroll in the VFC program.**

ForwardHealth will only reimburse the administration fee for vaccines provided to BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid members aged 18 and younger.

Refer to the Vaccines topic [#12457](#) for more information.

Exceptions for Pharmacy Providers Not Enrolled in the Vaccines for Children Program Administering COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccines to Members Aged 18 and Younger

The [Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness](#) (PREP) Act authorizes Medicaid reimbursement for COVID-19 and influenza vaccines to non-VFC pharmacies through December 31, 2029.

Pharmacy providers who are not enrolled in the VFC program may use their private stock to administer COVID-19 and influenza vaccines to members aged 18 and younger.

RESOURCES

- [VFC Provider Lookup Tool](#)
- [Immunizations: Recommended Vaccination Schedules for Wisconsinites](#) webpage

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Important Vaccine Policy Reminders

For vaccines administered to BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid members aged 19 and older:

- Pharmacy providers must use vaccines from their private stock.
- ForwardHealth reimburses pharmacy providers for both the vaccine and the administration of the vaccine.

Pharmacy providers are required to submit a fee-for-service claim to ForwardHealth if a member is enrolled in a BadgerCare Plus or SSI HMO. BadgerCare Plus and SSI HMOs cannot accept claims for vaccines from pharmacy providers.

Medical providers should bill vaccines to the member's managed care organization (MCO) if a member is enrolled in a BadgerCare Plus or SSI HMO.

Members do not have any out-of-pocket expenses for vaccines. Refer to the Member Payment for Covered Services topic [#86](#) for more information.

Claims Submission

Providers may submit claims for vaccines via:

- 1500 Health Insurance Claim Form
- 837 Health Care Claim: Professional transaction
- Direct Data Entry on the Portal
- Provider Electronic Solutions claims submission software

ForwardHealth will deny compound or noncompound drug claims for vaccine services using National Drug Codes.

Documentation Retention

Providers are reminded that they must follow the documentation retention requirements per Wis. Admin. Code § [DHS 106.02\(9\)](#). Providers are required to produce or submit documentation, or both, to the Wisconsin Department of Health Service (DHS) upon request. Per Wis. Stat. § [49.45\(3\)\(f\)](#), providers of services shall maintain records as required by DHS for verification of provider claims for reimbursement. DHS may audit such records to verify the actual provision of services and the appropriateness and accuracy of claims. DHS may deny or recoup payment for services that fail to meet these requirements. Refusal to produce documentation may result in denial of submitted claims, recoupment of paid claims, application of intermediate sanctions, or termination from the Medicaid program.

REMINDER

Providers are required to enter vaccines for all members into the [Wisconsin Immunization Registry](#) within **seven days** of administering the vaccine.

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Information Regarding Managed Care Organizations

This Update applies to vaccines that members receive on a fee-for-service basis and through BadgerCare Plus, Medicaid SSI, and other managed care programs. For information about managed care implementation of the updated policy, contact the appropriate MCO. MCOs are required to provide at least the same benefits as those provided under fee-for-service arrangements.

DID YOU KNOW?

DHS has the discretion to allow ForwardHealth coverage of vaccines, which have been recommended by governing bodies that use evidence-based methodologies as determined by DHS. Examples of such governing bodies could include the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Academy of Medicine.

Note: SeniorCare will continue to cover the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended vaccines only.

The information provided in this ForwardHealth Update is published in accordance with Executive Order #275.

This Update was issued on 01/21/2026 and information contained in this Update was incorporated into the Online Handbook on 02/02/2026.

The ForwardHealth Update is the first source of program policy and billing information for providers.

Wisconsin Medicaid, BadgerCare Plus, SeniorCare, and Wisconsin Chronic Disease Program are administered by the Division of Medicaid Services within the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS). The Wisconsin HIV Drug Assistance Program and the Wisconsin Well Woman Program are administered by the Division of Public Health within DHS.

For questions, call Provider Services at 800-947-9627 or visit our website at www.forwardhealth.wi.gov/.