MDHHS, CDC, and Merck DO NOT recommend transporting frozen varicella-containing vaccines (VAR, ZVL, MMRV).

If frozen vaccine must be transported, use a portable freezer unit or qualified container and packout that maintains temperatures between -58.0°F to +5.0°F (-50.0°C to -15.0°C).

Follow these steps for transporting frozen vaccine:
- Follow manufacturer’s guidance when using a portable freezer.
- When using a qualified container and packout refer to: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/storage/downloads/emergency-transport.pdf.
- Place calibrated temperature monitoring device (preferably with a buffered probe) in the container as close as possible to the vaccine(s).
- Immediately upon arrival at the destination, unpack the vaccines and place them in a freezer at a temperature range between -58.0°F to +5.0°F (-50.0°C to -15.0°C).
- Document the time vaccines are removed from the storage unit and placed in the transport container, the temperature during transport, and the time at the end of transport when vaccines are placed in a stable storage unit. If device displays min/max temperatures, review and record information. If transport will be longer than one hour, monitor and document temperatures hourly.

If temperatures are NOT maintained during transport, please follow the guidance below:
- Label “DO NOT USE” and place varicella-containing vaccine in the freezer.
- DO NOT use or discard vaccine until the manufacturer is contacted at 1-800-637-2590.
- Contact your local health department regarding any compromised Vaccines for Children (VFC) vaccine(s) or for any additional storage and handling questions.

For more information on transportation of frozen vaccines, refer to CDC’s “Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit” at: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/storage/toolkit/index.html.

Key Points:
- If varicella-containing vaccine must be transported, a portable freezer is BEST practice. All other options may cause a vaccine excursion.
- The vaccine manufacturer, Merck, must be called immediately upon arrival for frozen varicella-containing vaccines not transported at temperatures between -58.0°F to +5.0°F (-50.0°C to -15.0°C).
- Do NOT use dry ice to transport frozen varicella-containing vaccines, even for temporary storage or emergency transport.
- Merck does NOT recommend reuse of shipping material (e.g., coolant packs, insulated box) to transport frozen varicella-containing vaccines.
- Never freeze diluents, not even during transport.
- Be sure you are prepared for emergency transport of frozen vaccines by ALWAYS having the appropriate supplies ready.