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REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

March 12, 2009

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 09-14

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CalWORKs PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL CONSORTIA PROJECT MANAGERS

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS
(CalWORKs) PROGRAM IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

REFERENCE: Welfare and Institutions (W&I) Code Section 11265.8(b)(1) and Manual
of Policies and Procedures 40-105.4(a)

The purpose of this letter is to inform County Welfare Departments (CWDs) of a Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) vaccine shortage and how it will affect CalWORKs recipients' ability to meet the immunization requirement for children under the age of six.

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has informed the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) that through at least the middle or end of 2009, they expect a continued nationwide shortage of the vaccine that protects against Haemophilus influenzae type b (commonly called "Hib"), previously the major cause of meningitis in young children before widespread use of Hib vaccine. As a result, CDPH advised CDSS that national vaccine recommendations are still temporarily revised to suspend, for most children, the booster dose of Hib vaccine given after their first birthday (dose #4.) Doctors will continue to give initial doses of vaccine during the shortage, but may hold on giving a booster dose to most young children (except for "high-risk" children), including those whose families are receiving CalWORKs.

As specified in Manual of Policies and Procedures Section 40-105.4(a)(1), applicants/recipients who have made a good faith effort to initiate immunizations for a child(ren) in the Assistance Unit, but whose child(ren) cannot complete the series because of a spacing requirement between vaccine doses, may be considered at that

point to have received “all age-appropriate immunizations.” A good faith effort must be found in cases in which the vaccine is not available.

Therefore, while the Hib vaccine is in short supply, CalWORKs applicant/recipient children are not required to have the booster dose of the Hib vaccine. Counties shall not penalize families for children who do not receive this dose or who do not provide verification of the fourth dose. For example, a child born June 1, 2006 who had three Hib doses at two, four and six months of age, but did not receive a booster dose on or after the first birthday, would be considered, for the time being, to have met CalWORKs requirements.

Counties should not advise families that their children may skip doses of Hib vaccine because certain children who are considered “high risk” by their doctors will still be recommended to receive the fourth dose.

The CDPH will alert CDSS of any future changes regarding the Hib vaccine, and we, in turn, will keep counties informed of those changes. CDPH representatives are not certain when adequate supplies of the vaccine will be available; therefore, until further notice, CWDs shall follow guidelines provided in this letter.

To assist you with these changes, we have included the following attachments with this letter:

- A listing of Local Health Departments; and
- The 2009 Immunization Special Schedule (Immunization Requirements and Conditional Admission Immunization Schedule).

If you have any questions or need additional information regarding CalWORKs immunization requirements, please contact your CalWORKs County Consultant. If you have questions about the Hib vaccine, you may contact your local health department.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

CHARR LEE METSKER
Deputy Director
Welfare to Work Division

Original Document Signed By:

ROBERT SCHECHTER, M.D.
Interim Chief, Immunization Branch
California Department of Public Health