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2026 Thimerosal Exemption in the Mercury-Free Vaccine Act Memorandum

TO: Local Health Department Administrators
All Illinois Vaccine Providers

FROM: IDPH Immunization Section

DATE: September 24, 2026

RE: **Mercury-Free Vaccine Act**

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is providing annual notice about the requirements of the Mercury-Free Vaccine Act (410 ILCS 51/1 et seq.).

Under the Act, no person shall be vaccinated with a vaccine or injected with any product that contains, or prior to dilution, had contained as an additive, any mercury-based product, whether at preservative or trace amount levels.

Decades of scientific evidence demonstrates that thimerosal is safe at the levels used in vaccines. In accordance with the Act, if an actual or potential public health emergency arises, including a bioterrorist incident, epidemic, or vaccine shortage,

IDPH may issue temporary exemptions of vaccines from this Act. You will be notified if this occurs. IDPH continues to procure and distribute only thimerosal-free influenza vaccines for the Vaccines for Children (VFC) and Adult Immunization Programs and will maintain annual notifications to providers and the General Assembly on thimerosal-free vaccine availability as required by the Act.

Health care providers are recommended to discuss and offer influenza vaccination to all individuals ages 6 months and older. IDPH's respiratory virus season and other immunization guidance can be found at dph.illinois.gov/immunization.

For questions, contact the IDPH Immunization Section at dph.vaccines@illinois.gov or 217-785-1455, option 3.