

Immunization Gateway Q&As for IIS Awardees

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CONNECTING TO IMMUNIZATION GATEWAY

Is participation in the Immunization Gateway (IZ Gateway) required?

Participation in the IZ Gateway is not required. However, IZ Gateway and IIS integration will serve as a critical foundation for COVID-19 vaccination administration and future immunization tracking. Connecting to the IZ Gateway is required to receive data from the Vaccine Administration Management System (VAMS) and from multistate providers. CDC strongly encourages each jurisdiction to connect to the IZ Gateway to experience its benefits, including quicker access to COVID-19 vaccine data, centralized onboarding services, and more complete and accurate immunization information in the long term.

Which IZ Gateway components should IISs prioritize to prepare for COVID-19 mass vaccination efforts?

Jurisdictions should prioritize IZ Gateway Connect and Share. IZ Gateway Connect will allow IISs to access mass vaccination data collected through VAMS. IZ Gateway Connect also enables large national and nontraditional vaccination providers to report and query immunization data from multiple IISs using the IZ Gateway, if the providers have signed the required business associate agreement (BAA) with the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL). IZ Gateway Share supports data exchange with participating IISs in other jurisdictions. Participating in IZ Gateway Connect and Share will improve IIS immunization data completeness.

If an IIS is unable to participate in the IZ Gateway, how will my jurisdiction be able to access the COVID-19 vaccine data from VAMS?

CDC's preliminary plan is for immunization data collected through VAMS to be sent to the IZ Gateway and then to the IIS. We will explore the feasibility of other options for transferring data from VAMS to IISs for jurisdictions that cannot participate in the IZ Gateway. Other methods of transferring data will be less timely and may include a manual process.

Are there costs to the programs associated with participating in the IZ Gateway?

CDC is committed to covering the costs associated with connecting to the IZ Gateway to the best of our ability. The estimated costs associated with each IZ Gateway component are outlined below:

- **Connect:** Most of the costs for the IZ Gateway are covered by CDC via agreements with the HHS Office of the Chief Technology Officer (HHS-CTO). States will have to devote staff time and, potentially, technical resources to establish a connection and implement system upgrades if needed. CDC is working to provide additional assistance to states for those costs.

- **Share:** There are some costs to upgrade to the latest STC or Envision platform if your jurisdiction is using that platform. Jurisdictions using other IIS platforms may need to develop functionality and costs would vary by platform.
- **Access:** There is no cost to exchange data with a consumer application. Jurisdictions may need to coordinate with their vendor or IT program staff to complete some custom work necessary for sharing an official certificate with a consumer-facing application.

CDC has provided additional funding to state immunization programs that can be used to support IZ Gateway onboarding. In addition, CDC is providing resources to support IIS vendors through the HHS-CTO and technical assistance through partner organizations.

DATA SHARING AND LEGAL AGREEMENTS

Do jurisdictions need to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to participate in IZ Gateway? MOUs and data use agreements (DUAs) are not required for jurisdictions to participate in IZ Gateway Connect. Jurisdictions will need to complete an MOU and DUA to participate in IZ Gateway Share.

Templates for the following three legal agreement types associated with the IZ Gateway are available on the ISD [SharePoint](#) site in the *IZ Gateway Agreement Templates* folder:

1. **DUA Template for APHL:** The DUA between the jurisdiction and APHL allows for data to move from the jurisdiction through the IZ Gateway. *(Required for IIS to participate in IZ Gateway Share)*
2. **MOU Template for Interjurisdictional Data Exchange.** This MOU sets forth the terms for use and sharing of immunization information and allows for secure, electronic exchange of immunization information among jurisdictions that operate an IIS. *(Required for IIS to participate in IZ Gateway Share and provider-initiated multijurisdictional data exchange)*
3. **Model Business Associate Agreement (BAA):** The BAA is between a multijurisdictional provider organization and the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) to allow for the movement of data to and from the IZ Gateway. Only providers sending data through the IZ Gateway to an IIS will need to sign a BAA. *(For multijurisdictional provider organizations to participate in IZ Gateway Connect)*

How will jurisdictions participate in the IZ Gateway if they are unable to get legal clearance for a memorandum of understanding (MOU)?

An MOU is not required for IZ Gateway Connect. An MOU is only required for IZ Gateway Share to allow for cross-jurisdictional data exchange. Jurisdictions can only participate in IZ Gateway Share and exchange data with other participating jurisdictions if they sign the MOU for interjurisdictional data exchange and the data use agreement (DUA) with APHL.

How does the IZ Gateway account for the data sharing policies of each jurisdiction? For example, how does the system honor requests from individuals in the jurisdiction to opt out of the IIS?

The IZ Gateway routes data from the sender to the receiver and does NOT read data. The MOU outlines your jurisdiction's agreement that data your IIS sends will be incorporated and then governed by the laws and policies of the jurisdiction that is receiving the data.

The jurisdiction that sends immunization information decides what data it can share with another jurisdiction's IIS. Jurisdictions that require "opt in" consent for an individual's participation in the IIS need to ensure that their regulatory provisions or the individual's consent allow immunization information to be sent to other jurisdictions.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS AND DATA FLOW

How will data collected through VAMS be shared with IISs via the IZ Gateway?

The IIS will receive data through the IZ Gateway as part of the connection to IZ Gateway Connect. This will work much like data exchange through a health information exchange (HIE), which recognizes the sender through the HL7 2.5.1 standard, including the Message Header (MSH) segment, and the CDC Web Services Definition Language (WSDL).

IISs that do use the CDC WSDL but are currently receiving unsolicited update of immunization record (VXU) messages through their HIE should work with the HIE to determine methods for receiving data. Sending messages via methods other than the CDC WSDL are not in scope for the IZ Gateway project.

Visit CDC's [Transport](#) web page for educational and implementation resources on CDC WSDL.

Does the IZ Gateway store data about the jurisdiction's residents?

No, the IZ Gateway does not store or read any data. The IZ Gateway serves as a data exchange hub to connect IISs across jurisdictional boundaries.

If my IIS is already connected to a large, multistate system that is also connected to the IZ Gateway, will the IIS receive duplicate data?

An IIS may receive duplicate data if providers outside of its jurisdiction send data directly to the IIS as well as through the IZ Gateway. The IZ Gateway routes data and does not deduplicate it. IISs will need to apply their jurisdictions' established data deduplication procedures to data received through the IZ Gateway.