

# Section One: Getting Started



## AFIX Overview

### What is AFIX?

AFIX is a quality improvement process for clinics to learn about and improve their immunization practices and rates. AFIX stands for Assessment, Feedback, Incentives, and eXchange.

### Purpose of AFIX:

- Increase clinic awareness of their immunization rates.
- Identify opportunities for improvement.
- Encourage clinics to use evidence-based immunization practices.
- Provide ongoing support and training to help clinics increase their rates.

### National AFIX Objectives

- Work with Vaccines for Children (VFC) providers on quality improvement processes to increase coverage levels and decrease missed opportunities using AFIX components, as appropriate.
- Move toward using Immunization Information Systems as the primary data source for provider coverage level assessments.

### Grant-Required Activity

AFIX visits are required as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) immunization grant. The Washington State Department of Health's Office of Immunization and Child Profile (OICP) applies for this grant every year and is responsible for ensuring that AFIX visits are conducted according to CDC's AFIX policies and procedures. We contract with local health jurisdictions to conduct the majority of AFIX visits in our state.

### AFIX Components:

- **Assessment**  
Assess the clinic's immunization rates and use of evidence-based practices.
- **Feedback**  
Share assessment results with clinics and recommend quality improvement strategies to improve their immunization rates.
- **Incentives**  
Recognize and reward clinics for their immunization performance.
- **eXchange**  
Follow-up with clinics to provide updated immunization rates, check on their progress implementing immunization best practices, and identify any training or support they need.

### Resources

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention AFIX Information](#)
- [WA State Department of Health AFIX Information](#)

## What Do You Need to Get Started?

Before you start doing AFIX site visits, you need access to the following systems.

### Washington State Immunization Information System (IIS)

This system is the state's central database that stores patient immunization records. In order to assess clinic immunization rates for AFIX visits, you need an IIS **County-View** account set up with the **CASA Export** permission. This account allows you to export clinic immunization records for AFIX immunization rate assessments.

#### Contact the IIS Help Desk to set up an account

- Toll-free: 1-800-325-5599
- Email: [WAISHelpDesk@doh.wa.gov](mailto:WAISHelpDesk@doh.wa.gov)

### Comprehensive Clinical Assessment Software Application (CoCASA)

This software, developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), allows you to run immunization rate reports. You will need to import the records you export from the IIS into CoCASA. CoCASA analyzes the immunization records and calculates the clinic's immunization rates.

#### Install CoCASA

You need to install CoCASA on your computer in order to run immunization rate reports for your AFIX visits. Click [here](#) to access the CoCASA installation web page.

#### Tips:

- Work with your IT department to install CoCASA on your computer.
- The first time you log-in to CoCASA, it will ask if you want to set up a password. Do not set up a password. If you forget it, there is no way to retrieve it.

### AFIX Online Tool

You need access to CDC's Secure Access Management System (SAMS) and the AFIX Online Tool to document your AFIX site visits.

#### To set up an account:

- Email the [Office of Immunization and Child Profile](#) (OICP) requesting access to SAMS. In this email provide your first and last name and your email address.
- OICP will contact CDC to request an account.
- You will receive an email from CDC with instructions on how to access your account.

## Required AFIX Training

### Policy

New AFIX site visit staff (reviewers) must participate in new reviewer training provided by OICP. All AFIX reviewers must participate in annual training provided by OICP before starting their AFIX visits for the year.

### Procedure

#### New Reviewers

- Contact [OICP](#) to let us know you are a new AFIX reviewer.
- The OICP AFIX Coordinator will provide the required training you need to complete before you start doing AFIX visits.
- It is helpful to observe an experienced reviewer before you start conducting AFIX visits. The OICP AFIX Coordinator can help you arrange an observation visit.
- New reviewer training includes:
  - A detailed review of each AFIX component.
  - Instruction on how to run clinic immunization rate assessments using the IIS and CoCASA.
  - Instruction on how to deliver the initial feedback visit and follow-up AFIX visits.
  - Instruction on how to document site visits in the AFIX online tool.
- Read the WA AFIX Policies & Procedures Guide.
- Review the suggested AFIX References listed in this document.

#### All Reviewers

- The OICP AFIX Coordinator will send the date(s) of the annual AFIX training(s) toward the end of the year.
- You are required to participate in the annual AFIX training(s) before you start conducting AFIX visits for the current year. Annual training typically includes:
  - An overview of the AFIX program.
  - Review of contract expectations and site visit due dates.
  - Summary of policy and procedure changes.
  - Review of how to run immunization rate assessment reports
  - Review of how to use the AFIX online tool to document site visits
- Review any updated sections of the WA AFIX Policies & Procedures Guide.

## AFIX References

Review the WA State AFIX Policies & Procedures Guide and the following information before you start conducting AFIX visits.

### [AFIX Policies & Procedures Guide](#)

This document is CDC's guidelines for conducting AFIX site visits. This document is mainly written for State health departments, but is good for all AFIX site visit staff to read and understand.

### [Standards for Child & Adolescent Immunization Practices](#)

This document provides information on best immunization policies and practices that health care professionals should strive to achieve.

### [The Guide to Community Preventive Services – Increasing Appropriate Vaccination](#)

This guide lists strategies proven to increase immunization rates in various settings.

### [General Recommendations on Immunizations](#)

These national recommendations provide the general “rules” for vaccine administration that apply to all vaccines.

### [WA AFIX Recommendations Guide](#)

This document is intended to help you understand what quality improvement strategies to recommend during AFIX visits, depending on the clinic's specific challenges.

### [Recommended Immunization Schedules](#)

This web page provides links to the recommended immunization schedules for all age groups. Review the immunization schedules before you start conducting AFIX visits so you understand the timing when vaccines should be given. You should also take an immunization schedule with you on all AFIX visits to use as a reference.

## Provider Site Selection

This policy and procedure describes how to select provider sites for AFIX site visits and how to choose which age group(s) to assess.

### Policy

At the beginning of every year, select which provider sites will receive AFIX visits using the selection procedure outlined below. Select enough provider sites to meet the number of AFIX visits required in your contract.

### Procedure

- **Review the number of required AFIX visits in your contract.**
  
- **Select clinics to visit using the following AFIX site visit selection criteria:**
  - Clinics who are due for a VFC compliance site visit.
  - Clinics who share data with the Washington State Immunization Information System.
  - Clinics who want to know and improve their immunization rates and use of [evidence-based immunization practices](#).
  - Clinics with lower immunization coverage rates (e.g. less than 80 percent of two-year-old patients up-to-date with recommended vaccines).
  - Clinics that use a high volume of vaccine.
  - Clinics who did not receive an AFIX visit last year.
  
- **Choose one or more age groups to assess for selected clinics.**
  - **Childhood (24-35 months)**
    - Assess this age group if the clinic has at least ten two-year-old patients.
  - **Adolescent (13 -17 years)**
    - Assess the clinic's adolescent patients if:
      - They have at least ten patients in this age group, and/or
      - They have high immunization coverage rates for 24-35 month olds (e.g. rates of 80 percent or more for the 4313314 immunization series).
    - Limit adolescent AFIX visits to clinics that provide ongoing care to patients (e.g. primary care providers, like pediatric and family practice clinics).