

# Student Immunizations and Health Records

## Policy Number: 55

**Subject:** Required immunizations and health screenings

**Scope:** Students

**Date Reviewed:** October 2022

**Responsible Office:** Student Health and Counseling Services

**Responsible Executive:** Director, Student Health and Counseling Services

## I. POLICY AND GENERAL STATEMENT

All students registering at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston ("University") are required to furnish an immunization record signed by a health care provider. Students enrolled in fully online degree or certificate programs who will not participate in any on-campus courses or events, as determined by the school and with approval from the Registrar's Office, are exempt from the requirements in this policy.

## II. PROCEDURE

### A. Bacterial Meningitis

All entering students, as defined below, must show proof of vaccination against bacterial meningitis. The vaccination must have been administered within five years of, and no later than ten days prior to, the first day of the semester.

For the purpose of the bacterial meningitis vaccine requirement only, "entering student" means any student admitted to the University for the first time; including a transfer student from any other institution including another institution within The University of Texas System, a dual enrollment student, or a returning student who previously attended the University and who is re-enrolling following a break in enrollment of at least one fall or spring semester. For purposes of this policy, the term entering student does not include:

- a student who is twenty-two (22) years of age or older on the first day of the semester;
- a student who is enrolled only in online or other distance education courses at the University.
- a student participating in a Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approved continuing education program or course that consists of less than 360 contact hours; or
- an individual attending a continuing education program or course offered by the University that does not require approval by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

"Online or other distance education course" as used above means a course in which students receive web-based instruction or a correspondence course. A course that requires any face-to-face contact, such as meeting in a testing lab or for a special presentation, is not an "online or other distance education course."

### B. Other Immunizations

The following immunizations and screening tests are required for all students:

- Tuberculosis: TB screening, consisting of an Interferon gamma release assay (IGRA) blood test with either T-spot or Quantiferon-Gold, along with a TB risk assessment questionnaire, must be done within the past 6 months, even for those who

received the BCG vaccine as a child. If the IGRA test is positive, a chest x-ray documenting no active tuberculosis must be submitted.

- Measles: Two (2) doses of measles vaccine if born after January 1, 1957, administered at least 28 days apart; **or** lab report of positive rubeola titer.
- Mumps: Two doses of mumps vaccine if born on or after January 1, 1957, administered at least 28 days apart; **or** lab report of positive mumps titer.
- Rubella: One dose of rubella vaccine administered on or after first birthday; **or** a lab report of positive rubella titer.
- Tetanus Diphtheria and Pertussis (Tdap): One "booster" dose of Tdap vaccine administered within 10 years.
- Hepatitis B virus (HBV): Three-dose series (second dose one month and third dose six months after first dose) **or** lab report of positive hepatitis surface antibody titer. The student must be vaccinated to most current status possible prior to registering for classes and have a complete series of the vaccine prior to the start of direct patient care.
- Varicella (chickenpox): Two-dose series (second dose one month after first dose) **or** lab report of positive varicella titer.

Each school may have additional vaccination or testing requirements for students.

## C. Exemptions

Certain exemptions are allowed from required immunizations. These exemptions apply to an accepted student who submits to Student Health Services:

- An affidavit or certificate signed by a physician licensed to practice medicine in the United States stating the physician's opinion that the required immunization would be injurious to the health or well-being of the student or any member of the student's household or family. Unless it is written in the statement that a lifelong condition exists, the exemption statement is valid for only one year from the date signed by the physician;
- An affidavit using an appropriate "Conscientious Exemption Form" that is signed by the student stating that the student declines to have the required vaccination based on reasons of conscience, which may include the student's religious beliefs. This exemption will not be available, at the discretion of the University, during a disaster or public health emergency, hostile or paramilitary action, or extraordinary law enforcement emergency declared by an appropriate official or authority from the Texas Department of State Health Services. With regard to the bacterial meningitis vaccine, all students must use the form promulgated by the Texas Department of State Health Services. The form must be submitted to Student Health Services no later than the 90th day after the date the affidavit is notarized; or
- For vaccinations other than bacterial meningitis, proof that the student is a member of the U.S. armed forces and is on active duty.

## D. Cost

Individuals who have been offered admission to the University must assume the full cost of the immunizations prior to receiving student status.

## E. Registration Hold

A hold is automatically placed on an applicant's record at the time an application for admission is submitted. If admitted to the University, this hold will block registration. Student Health and Counseling Services will release all immunization holds after proof of immunizations is satisfied. Student Health and Counseling Services may place a hold on a student's record at any time if a student fails to comply with the requirements of this policy.

## F. Affiliate Institutions

Students are expected to comply with the immunization policies of affiliated hospitals, clinics and/or agencies where they may be assigned as part of their educational program. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

# III. CONTACTS

### Student Health Clinic

713-500-5171

<https://www.uth.edu/studenthealth/index.htm>

Appropriate School's Office of Academic or Student Affairs (questions regarding immunizations and screening tests required by individual schools)