

HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER HANDBOOK OF OPERATING PROCEDURES

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| Chapter 8 | Health and Safety | Effective: | September 2014 |
| Section 8.5 | Environmental Health and Safety Office | Revised: | October 2015 |
| Policy 8.5.8 | Pre-Employment Immunizations | Responsibility: | Executive Vice President for Facilities Planning and Operations – Environmental Health & Safety |

PRE-EMPLOYMENT IMMUNIZATIONS

Policy

The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio (Health Science Center) is committed to protecting the health and safety of patients, employees, patient and employee family members, and the community as a whole by providing a consistent testing and immunization standard for all individuals who are offered positions of employment or training within the Health Science Center. This policy is applicable to faculty, employees, fellows, post-docs, visiting scientists or clinicians and volunteers of the Health Science Center who are offered a position or are participating in a program that requires:

1. Any patient or research subject contact; or
2. Potential exposure to human blood or body fluids as part of an applicant’s involvement with research or patient care;
3. Individuals involved with animal contact or animal blood or body fluids are to follow the current [Animal Work-related Occupational Health Policy](#) regarding immunization requirements.

A pre-employment [Pre-Hire Adult Immunization and Testing Form](#) must be completed for any applicant, internal or external, who is under final consideration, following the normal screening and selection processes.

Immunization requirements are based on current regulations, guidelines and recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Definitions

ANTIBODY TITER: A blood test which can demonstrate immunity or susceptibility to certain diseases, such as measles, rubella, varicella, and hepatitis B.

PPD: A tuberculin skin test using purified protein derivative.

TST: Tuberculin skin test.

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WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION: Photocopy of a medical record or immunization record signed by physician, nurse or health care provider, which may not be signed by the individual submitting the pre-employment assessment.

Procedures

Staff: An individual who is offered employment for a position that requires any contact with patients, research subjects, or has the potential for exposure to human blood or body fluids as part of the duties and responsibilities of the offered position at the Health Science Center will be identified in the Online Employment System (OES). These individuals will be required to have a [Pre-hire Adult Immunization and Testing Form](#) completed, approved and maintained on file with the Health Science Center’s Employee Health and Wellness Clinic. An applicant or candidate, internal or external, who refuses to submit a completed [Pre-hire Adult Immunization and Testing Form](#), will be removed from further consideration for the position.

The hiring authority will be responsible for indicating whether a position at the Health Science Center requires pre-employment immunizations and must select the appropriate criteria when creating a job requisition in the OES.

For those jobs that require immunizations and testing, Human Resources will direct candidates to the Health Science Center’s Employee Health and Wellness Center for processing those candidates requiring pre-employment immunizations.

Faculty: An individual who is offered a faculty appointment position that requires any contact with patients, research subjects, or has the potential for exposure to human blood or body fluids as part of the duties and responsibilities of the offered faculty position at the Health Science Center will be identified during completion of the “Notification of Faculty Vacancy” process. These individuals will be required to have a [Pre-hire Adult Immunization and Testing Form](#) completed, approved and maintained on file with the Health Science Center’s Employee Health and Wellness Clinic. An applicant or candidate, internal or

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external, who refuses to submit a completed [Pre-hire Adult Immunization and Testing Form](#), will be removed from further consideration for the position.

Fellows and Post-Docs: An individual who will be participating in a training program that requires any contact with patients, research subjects, or has the potential for exposure to human blood or body fluids as part of the duties and responsibilities of the offered position at the Health Science Center will be identified on the [Faculty, Fellow, and Student Hire](#) form and/or the [Fellowship Award Authorization](#) form and will be required to have a [Pre-hire Adult Immunization and Testing Form](#) completed, approved and maintained on file with the Health Science Center’s Employee Health and Wellness Clinic. An individual who refuses to submit a completed [Pre-hire Adult Immunization and Testing Form](#) will be removed from further consideration for the program.

Visiting Scientists or Clinicians: An individual who has been approved by a department to visit the Health Science Center and the purpose for their visit requires any contact with patients, research subjects, or has the potential for exposure to human blood or body fluids will be required to provide appropriate written documentation of Tuberculosis (TB) Screening and Hepatitis B Immunization. The individual will be responsible for providing the testing and immunization records. If the individual refuses to provide these records they will not be allowed to visit the campus. The department providing the approval for this visiting individual will be responsible to verify and maintain the documentation of the testing and immunization records.

The department will ensure the immunization records are reviewed and approved by the Employee Health and Wellness Clinic. When additional testing or immunizations are required it will be at the cost to the individual.

Staff, faculty, fellows and post-docs: An applicant may have the pre-employment required immunizations and the [Pre-hire Adult Immunization and Testing Form](#) completed by a health care provider of their choice and submit with proper written documentation to the Health Science Center’s Employee Health and Wellness Clinic or they may

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obtain the immunizations directly from the Employee Health and Wellness Clinic at no charge to the applicant. The Employee Health and Wellness Clinic will complete the [Pre-hire Adult Immunization and Testing Form](#) only; an office visit will not be conducted. The department extending an offer to an applicant is responsible for payment related to obtaining the required immunizations.

At a minimum, the applicant must receive the following pre-employment immunizations, with appropriate written documentation and completion of the [Pre-hire Adult Immunization and Testing Form](#):

Tuberculosis (TB) Screening:

1. A TST with negative results, by using the Mantoux technique (with PPD intradermally applied) within the past 12 months;
2. A whole blood interferon gamma release assay (IGRA) from a documented Quantiferon TB Gold In-Tube test or T-Spot TB test within the past 12 months; or
3. Provide written documentation of a negative TB skin test or a report from a physician indicating that a chest x-ray was taken within the previous 12 months and was negative for TB.
4. A candidate who has never received a TST must undergo 2-step testing.

Any applicants with a positive TB skin test will be scheduled for a TB evaluation. Any follow-up, treatment, or referral to the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District will be coordinated and documented by the Employee Health and Wellness Clinic. Any cost associated with a referral or treatment is the responsibility of the candidate; no cost(s) will be paid by the Health Science Center. The Employee Health and Wellness Clinic will communicate to Human Resources at hr-employment@uthsca.edu for staff, Dr. Blankmeyer at Blankmeyer@uthsca.edu for faculty, and the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs at opa@uthsca.edu for fellows and post docs whether these individuals may be cleared to begin employment or training.

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Hepatitis B Immunization:

Immunization or immunity is required and may be demonstrated for applicants with potential for exposure to human blood, bodily fluids or tissue by:

1. Providing documentation of three doses of Hepatitis B vaccine in the past AND a positive antibody titer after at least one month from the third vaccine dose;
2. Providing documentation of a laboratory report showing a positive Hepatitis antibody titer in the past; or
3. Providing documentation of the first injection of the vaccine.

For applicants who receive the first injection of the hepatitis vaccine, Employee Health and Wellness will schedule the remainder of the series which will be at no charge to the applicant. Those applicants who refuse to obtain Hepatitis B vaccine must sign a declination statement, found at <http://research.uthscsa.edu/safety/hbvform.pdf>. Information regarding Hepatitis B may be found at <http://research.uthscsa.edu/safety/BBPEXposureControlPlan.pdf>.

The Employee Health and Wellness Clinic will review all [Pre-hire Adult Immunization and Testing Forms](#) completed by the Clinic or received from external medical providers. The Employee Health and Wellness Clinic will maintain all pre-employment immunizations on file and will communicate to Human Resources at hr-employment@uthscsa.edu for staff, Dr. Blankmeyer at Blankmeyer@uthscsa.edu for faculty, and the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs at opa@uthscsa.edu for fellows and post docs whether an applicant is cleared to begin employment or training; within 1 business day of receiving a [Pre-hire Adult Immunization and Testing Form](#).

In the event that an individual has started work pending completion and submission of a [Pre-hire Adult Immunization and Testing Form](#), the individual will be removed from duty without pay until form is complete and the applicant deemed fit for employment. The applicant will be

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given five (5) days to provide the required documentation and obtain approval from the Employee Health & Wellness Clinic or they will be terminated from employment or the training program.

Record Retention: Immunization documentation for applicants who do become employees will be maintained by the Employee Health & Wellness Clinic as a permanent record, per the Health Science Center record retention schedule.

Immunization documentation for applicants who do not become employees will be maintained by the Employee Health & Wellness Clinic, for 2 months and then destroyed.

References

UTHSCSA “TB Exposure Control Plan”, Environmental Health and Safety Department (June 2012).

Centers for Disease Control (CDC): Healthcare Worker Vaccination Recommendations (2009).

Joint Commission Standard 1C.02.04.01 Influenza Vaccination for Licensed Independent Practitioners (November 2001).

Frequently Asked Questions may be viewed at <http://research.uthscsa.edu/safety/>