



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSCEP OP: 75.11B, Health Surveillance Program for TTUHSC El Paso - Immunizations

1. Reference(s):

- Immunization requirements are based on regulations, guidelines and recommendations available:
 - a. Covered individuals must comply with Healthcare Worker Vaccination Recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
 - b. 25 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 97.64 "Required Vaccinations for Students Enrolled in Health-Related and Veterinary Courses in Institutions of Higher Education."
 - c. Texas Education Code (TEC).

2. Baseline (preplacement) screening.

- All TTUHSC El Paso new employees, students and volunteers are required to complete an Infection Control Health Screening prior to beginning work or site visits.
- New personnel will be screened at the TTUHSC El Paso's Occupational Health (OH) Department prior to any patient contact. Screening should preferably be completed before new employee orientation or during first week of employment. Visitors will be screened prior to start date on campus.
- The department responsible for sponsoring a visitor, student or employee will notify the individual to go to OH for Infection Control Screening and provide immunization records.

1. Pre-Matriculation Requirements

All TTUHSC El Paso students (undergraduate and graduate), with the exception of students identified as having no direct patient care, must receive required immunizations and submit documentation prior to matriculation.

3. Annual Requirements

- OH will conduct an annual review during the individual's month of hire and will send a TB screening tool and Respiratory Medical Evaluation Questionnaire along with a notice to update any required immunizations to all TTUHSC El Paso employees, students, and volunteers having direct patient contact.
- The annual flu vaccine will be offered to all TTUHSC El Paso employees, students, and volunteers.

4. Waiver of Vaccination Recommendations

- When vaccine shortages occur at the national or organizational level, the OH Department will prioritize the immunization program towards employees and students performing activities with the highest risk of transmission of infectious diseases.

5. Cost Responsibilities

- The cost of employee titers and vaccinations for TTUHSC El Paso employees will be covered by the OH Department.

- The cost of volunteer titers will be covered by the respective clinical departments; immunization costs will be covered by the OH Department.
- The cost of titers and vaccinations for non-TTUHSC El Paso employees will be the responsibility of the individual.
- **Students:** The cost of all pre-matriculation immunizations and titers will be covered by the OH Department, when requested by the student. The cost of completing the Hepatitis B, MMR and Varicella series and updating Td/Tdap will be covered by the OH Department
- The cost of the flu vaccine will be covered by the OH Department.

6. Immunization/titers Declination

- Covered individuals may decline any or all recommended vaccines and/or titers outlined in this policy by completing a signed declination form obtained from and submitted to the OH Department.
- To fulfill assigned duties or participate in certain educational courses, covered individuals who provide care or attend training in affiliated healthcare facilities must comply with the immunization or titer requirements imposed by those facilities in accordance with applicable local, state or national regulations.
- **For Students:**
 1. Texas Education Code §51.933 permits students to claim an exclusion from vaccine requirements for reasons of conscience, including religious belief. However, claiming an exemption may prevent a student granted an exclusion from fulfilling course requirements and thus render them unable to progress or to graduate (see item 4 below).
 2. Students who are younger than 22 years of age on the first day of their first semester at TTUHSC El Paso can claim exclusion from the meningococcal vaccine for reasons of conscience, including religious belief. Students who are 22 years of age or older by the first day of their first semester at TTUHSC El Paso are not required to receive the meningococcal vaccine.
 3. To obtain an exemption from required immunizations for reasons of conscience, the student must request an affidavit from the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, have it completed by a physician stating that the student (patient) has been advised of the consequences of not receiving the required immunization(s), and submit it to the OH Department.
 4. Students who are granted exemptions from required vaccinations for reasons of conscience, including religious belief, may not participate in coursework that involves direct patient contact with potential exposure to blood and bodily fluids in educational, medical, or dental care facilities or direct contact with animals or animal remains. This restriction may prevent the student granted an exemption from fulfilling course requirements and thus render them unable to progress academically or to graduate, because TTUHSC El Paso dental, medical, and nursing course work may require students to be exposed to the above-mentioned exposures. Additionally, it is probable that affiliated entities where students fulfill the clerkships and clinical rounds component of their studies may require a complete vaccination status before permitting patient contact..
 5. Immunization requirements are not applicable for students who can provide proof of immunity from a laboratory. However, such students may not participate in coursework involving direct patient contact with potential exposure to blood and bodily fluids in educational, medical, or dental care facilities or direct contact with animals or animal remains until the appropriate laboratory documentation has been submitted and approved by TTUHSC El Paso.

7. Immunization Program Compliance

- The Office of OH will monitor compliance with this policy for all covered individuals at TTUHSC El Paso. The applicable supervisors and responsible parties described in this policy will be notified of any individuals who are not in compliance.