

Policies of the University of North Texas	Chapter 07
07.025 Student Immunization and Screening/Testing	Student Affairs

Policy Statement. UNT is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for members of the University community by protecting students from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Application of Policy. Entering students who have been admitted to UNT and International students.

Definitions.

The following definitions apply for purposes of this policy only:

1. **Entering student.** "Entering student" includes:
 - a. A student entering UNT for the first-time, including a student who transfers to UNT from another public, private or independent institution; or
 - b. A student who attended any public, private or independent institution of higher education and who is enrolling at UNT following a break in enrollment of at least one fall or spring semester.

2. **High risk student.** "High risk student" means a student who is considered to be at high risk for tubercular disease (TB) as defined by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, including a student coming to the University from a country of high incidence of TB (≥ 20 cases per 100,000 population), or a student who has a history of a positive TB test, or a student who has had close contact with anyone who was sick with TB.

3. **International student.** "International student" means a student who is not a citizen of the United States or its territories and who has entered the United States on a student visa, specifically to enroll at the University including students attending the Intensive English Language Institute (IELI).

4. **Online and other distance education courses.** "Online and other distance education courses" means any course where the instructor and students are not in the same location. An online course may include web-based classes or might also include correspondence instruction. Any online or distance education classes that have any portion that includes face-to-face contact including meeting in a testing laboratory,

or meeting in a classroom to receive interactive video instruction with other students, does not qualify as an online or distance education course.

5. Tuberculosis (TB). "Tuberculosis (TB)" is a disease caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis that usually attacks the lungs or any other part of the body (i.e., the kidney, spine, and brain). If not treated properly, TB disease can be fatal.
6. Tuberculosis (TB) screening. "Tuberculosis (TB) screening" means the process for identifying persons at high risk for tuberculosis infection and disease through a questionnaire where the student identifies risk factors for TB infection and disease.
7. Tuberculosis (TB) test. "Tuberculosis (TB) test" means the accepted methods to determine if a student has developed an immune response to the bacterium that causes tuberculosis. Accepted methods include Mantoux tuberculin skin test or an Interferon Gamma Release Assay blood test.
8. University. "University" means the University of North Texas.

Procedures and Responsibilities.

1. The Director of the Student Health and Wellness Center ("SHWC") ("Director"), in consultation with the University Registrar and Office of International will administer UNT policy related to vaccinations for entering UNT students, and will develop procedures and forms to:
 - a. Designate the office to collect and maintain evidence of a student's compliance with vaccination requirements.
 - b. Designate the office to collect and maintain evidence that a student is excepted from compliance with the vaccination requirement.
 - c. Designate the office to consider requests and grant extensions in justifiable circumstances to extend the date of compliance for the bacterial meningitis vaccination requirement.
 - d. Consider appeals to decisions of the Director or designee related to the vaccination requirements as set forth in this policy.

2. Bacterial Meningitis Vaccination for Entering Students to the University

- a. Unless excepted in accordance with the terms of this policy, all entering UNT students must provide evidence of having received of an initial bacterial meningitis vaccination dose or booster during the five-year period preceding and at least 10 days prior to the first day of the first semester in which the student initially enrolls at UNT, or following a break in enrollment of at least one fall or spring semester at UNT or another

institution. Evidence must demonstrate that the vaccine was administered by a professional authorized by law to administer a vaccine and may include:

- i. the signature stamp of a physician or his/her designee, or a public health personnel on a form which shows the month, day and year the vaccination or booster was given;
 - ii. an official immunization record from a state or local health authority; or
 - iii. an official record received from school officials, including a record from another state.
- b. The Director or a designee may grant extensions to individual students to extend the date of compliance to no more than 10 days after the first day of classes of the semester or term in which the student initially enrolls under justifiable circumstances as determined by the Director. A decision of the Director or designee related to justifiable circumstances may be appealed in accordance with procedures to be developed by the Director.
- c. Registration materials provided to students prior to their initial enrollment at UNT will include:
- i. Notice of the student's right to claim an exemption from the bacterial meningitis vaccination requirements as set forth below; and
 - ii. Notice of the importance of consulting a physician about the need for immunization against bacterial meningitis to prevent the disease.

Responsible Party: Director of the Student Health and Wellness Center or a designee.

3. Tuberculosis Screening Requirements for International Students

- a. Within three (3) weeks after the 12th class day of an international student's first attendance on campus, all incoming international students must either:
 - i. Be screened and/or tested for TB; or
 - ii. Provide documentation verifying the results of a TB test administered to the student in the United States within the previous six (6) months. Documentation must include the date the TB test was administered and the date the results were read and must be verified with the signature and stamp of a physician or authorized official; or
 - iii. Request an exemption from the requirement as described below.

- b. Following the TB screening process, if an international student falls within the category of "high risk student," the student must complete the TB testing requirement by having a TB test administered and read in accordance with procedures developed by the SHWC.
- c. International students who fail to comply with the TB testing requirements of this policy will be blocked from access to UNT registration and will not be permitted to register for future terms until the requirements of this policy have been certified and filed with the SHWC. Students will be permitted to remain enrolled during their first term of study.

Responsible Party: Director, Student Health and Wellness Center,
Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President for
International Education

4. Exceptions to the Vaccination and TB Testing Requirements

- a. A student will not be required to submit evidence of having received vaccination or booster dose against bacterial meningitis if:
 - i. The student is 22 years of age or older by the first day of classes of the semester or term in which the student initially enrolls; or
 - ii. The student is enrolled only in online or other distance education courses; or
 - iii. The student is enrolled in a continuing education course or program that is less than 360 contact hours, or a continuing education corporate training; or
 - iv. The student is enrolled in a dual credit course which is taught at a public or private K-12 facility not located on a higher education institution campus; or
 - v. All course-related face-to-face interactions with the student occur outside the State of Texas; or
 - vi. The student is incarcerated in a Texas prison.
- b. A student will not be required to submit evidence of having received the bacterial meningitis vaccination or the required TB screening/testing if the student submits the following in accordance with established UNT procedures:
 - i. An affidavit signed by a physician, who is duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the United States, which states that in the physician's opinion, the required vaccination or TB testing would be injurious to the health and/or well being of the student; or

- ii. An affidavit signed by the student stating that the student declines the required vaccination or TB testing for reasons of conscience, such as religious or philosophical belief. Affidavits must be submitted on forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDHS).
- iii. During a disaster, public health emergency, terrorist attack, hostile military or paramilitary action, or extraordinary law enforcement emergency declared by an appropriate official or authority from the Texas Department of State Health Services and is in effect for the location of the University, the above exemptions do not apply.

The exception form from the TDHS must be signed and notarized no more than 90 days prior to the first day of classes to be valid.

Responsible Party: Student Health and Wellness Center

5. Recommended Immunizations for Students

In addition to vaccination requirements established by Texas law, the University recommends that all students have current immunizations for: polio, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, rubella, mumps, and measles. Consideration should also be given to vaccination against hepatitis A, hepatitis B and varicella.

6. Confidentiality of Vaccination and TB Test Records

The University will maintain all records created to comply with this policy in accordance with the *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)* and the *Health Insurance Portability and Accessibility Act (HIPAA)*.

References and Cross-references.

Tx. Educ. Code §51.9192, Subchapter Z
19 TAC Part 1, Chapter 21, Subchapter T

Forms and Tools.

All related forms are available on the SHWC web site at: www.healthcenter.unt.edu.

For information on requesting a conscientious exemption, students may see the Texas Department of State Health Services for additional information at:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm#exclusions>.

Approved: 8/1/1992

Effective: 10/7/2013

Revised: 2/2010; 11/2012; 10/13