

Policy SL-SO-PO2

Requirement for Vaccination Against Bacterial Meningitis for Entering Students

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I. **Title**

Subchapter 13-1000 Requirement for Vaccination Against Bacterial Meningitis for Entering Students

II. **Policy**

- A. The University of Texas at Arlington (University) complies with Texas Education Code Section 51.9192, "the Jamie Schanbaum Act and Nicolis Williamson Act", which requires all entering students of Texas institutions of higher education, including transfer students, to show evidence of immunization for bacterial meningitis prior to attending on-campus classes.
- B. General Requirements
 - 1. For purposes of this policy, no entering student will be considered to be enrolled in the University unless the entering student has first registered for classes for the semester.
 - 2. No entering student shall be permitted to attend class for the semester until the entering student provides or causes to be provided upon his or her behalf, written documentation acceptable to the responsible party. Written documentation must establish that the covered student has either:
 - a. received a required vaccination during the five year period prior to but no later than ten (10) days prior to the first day of class, or
 - b. meets one of the exceptions set forth in Section II.G of this policy.

3. An entering student who fails to provide proof of either the required vaccination or compliance with one of the exceptions set forth in Section II.G of this policy at least ten (10) days before the first day of class shall not be permitted to attend classes for the semester.
4. Failure to submit documentation of a required vaccination or compliance with one of the exceptions set forth in Section II.G of this policy does not alleviate the entering student's responsibility under any contractual relationship between the University and the entering student relating to payment of on-campus housing or other similar responsibilities.
5. Documentation of the required vaccination or an exception set forth in this section must be approved by the responsible party or the responsible party's designee for approval before an entering student can be permitted to attend classes for the semester.

C. Acceptable documentation includes:

1. the signature or stamp of a physician or the physician's designee or the public health official that administered the vaccination that shows the month, day and year the required vaccine was administered.
2. an official immunization record issued by a state or local health authority, or
3. an official record received by the University directly from a Texas school official or a school official in another state.

D. Form of Documentation

The documentation submitted must:

1. be in English,
2. state the name and other information sufficient to identify the individual who received the required vaccination, and
3. clearly identify that the required vaccine was administered to the individual.

E. Acceptance of Certified Copies

The University, via its agents, will accept copies of documentation of a required vaccine that meets the requirements of Section II.C directly from a school official of another institution of higher education at which an entering student was previously enrolled if the institution of higher education is willing to provide certified copies of the required documentation to the University upon the request of an entering student. An entering student that wishes to comply with this policy by exercising this option is solely responsible for requesting the documentation and providing any necessary consent to effectuate his or her request directly to the institution of higher education.

F. Maintenance of the Documentation

The documentation shall be securely maintained by the responsible party on behalf of the University in compliance with applicable state and federal confidentiality laws and regulations, including the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act.

G. Documentation of Permitted Exceptions

An entering student is exempted from the requirements of this policy if the entering student submits one of the following to the responsible party: an affidavit or certificate signed by a physician licensed to practice medicine in the United States. The affidavit must indicate that the physician is of the opinion that the required vaccination would be injurious to the health and well-being of the entering student; or an affidavit using the "Conscientious Exemption Form" promulgated by the Texas Department of State Services and signed by the covered student, stating that the covered student declines to have the required vaccination based on reasons of conscience, which may include the entering student's religious beliefs. However, this exception 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 and affecting the University. Documentation supporting the requested permitted exception must be approved by the responsible party or the responsible party's designee before an entering student is permitted to attend classes for the semester. The University shall not recognize or grant any other exceptions to the vaccination requirements of this policy. The documentation submitted in support of an exception under Section II.G shall be securely maintained by the responsible party on behalf of the University in compliance with applicable state and federal confidentiality laws and regulations, including the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act. The Office of Admissions, Records and Registration shall include as part of the materials provided to individuals applying for admission to the University: Written or electronic notice of the right of a student, or if the student is a minor, the right of the minor student's parent or guardian, to claim an exemption from the required vaccine as provided in Section II.G of this policy; and Written or electronic notice of the importance of consulting with a physician about the need for immunization against bacterial meningitis to prevent the disease.

III. **Definitions**

Enrolled means that a student has registered for classes during the semester and is otherwise eligible to attend classes during the semester pending compliance with this requirement.

Entering Student means any student admitted to the University on or after January 1, 2012 for the first time; including transfer students from any other institution including another UT System institution, a dual enrollment student other than a high school student described in subsection 3 of this section, or a returning student who previously attended the University and who is re-enrolling on or after January 1, 2012 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 thirty (30) years of age or older on the first day of the semester,

- a student who attends entirely 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 three hundred sixty (360) contact hours, or
- an individual attending a continuing education program or course that is offered by the University and that does not require approval by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Online or other distance education course 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".

Register, Register for Classes means the act of registration.

Required Vaccination means an initial vaccination or booster dose recognized by the U.S. Center for Disease Control as effective for the immunization of an individual against bacterial meningitis.

Responsible Party means the Senior Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services in the Office of Student Enrollment Services designated by the University President to receive documentation required under this policy of required vaccination by each entering student, or that person's designee.

Semester means the first semester, or a term of enrollment used in lieu of a semester by the University, in which an entering student seeks to be enrolled at the University.

IV. **Relevant Federal and State Statutes**

[19 TAC Part 1, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Chapter 21, Student Services, Subchapter T, The Vaccination Against Bacterial Meningitis for Entering Students at Public and Private or Independent Institutions of Higher Education](#)

[Texas Education Code, Chapter 51, Section 51.9192, Bacterial Meningitis Vaccination Required for Certain Students; Exceptions](#)

V. **Relevant UT System Policies, Procedures and Forms**

N/A

VI. **Who Should Know**

This policy applies to all first time University students who have been admitted to the University.

VII. **UT Arlington Office(s) Responsible for Policy**

The Senior Associate Vice President for Student Enrollment Services

VIII. **Dates Approved or Amended**

April 18, 2012

IX. Contact Information

All questions concerning this policy should be directed to The Division of Student Enrollment Services, 817-272-5401.