



Bacterial Meningitis Vaccination

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S.B. 1107 required all first time students at an institution of higher education to be vaccinated against bacterial meningitis

In 2011, the 82nd Texas Legislature, Regular Session passed Senate Bill 1107 (SB 1107), which directed the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to write rules that require all entering students to be vaccinated against bacterial meningitis *within the past five years* and *at least 10 days prior to the first day of the semester* in which the student initially enrolls at an institution of higher education.

Stop-outs

The student must show evidence of being vaccinated following a break in enrollment of at least one fall or spring semester at the same or another institution.

Exceptions to meningitis requirement:

- 1) The student is 30 years of age or older by the first day of the start of the semester; or
- 2) The student is enrolled only in online or other distance education courses; or
- 3) The student is enrolled in a continuing education course or program less than 360 contact hours, or continuing education corporate training; or
- 4) The student is enrolled in a dual credit course taught at a public or private K-12 facility not located on a higher education campus; or
- 5) the student is incarcerated in a Texas prison.



Institutional Responsibilities

Each institution must:

- ✓ designate a department or unit to receive from the student evidence of receipt 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 enrolls, or following a break in enrollment of at least one fall or spring semester; and

Institutional Responsibilities (cont.)

- ✓ Provide to a student with the registration materials that the institution provides to a student before the student's initial enrollment:
 - ✓ Written or electronic notice of the right of the student to claim an exemption from the vaccine requirement; and
 - ✓ Written or electronic notice of the importance of consulting a physician about the need for the immunization to prevent the disease

Institutional Responsibilities (cont.)

- ✓ An institution may grant extensions to individual students to extend the compliance date to no more than 10 days after the first day of the semester, *under justifiable circumstances*.
- ✓ There is no requirement in the rules for a waiting period.

No Vaccine Required IF:

- ✓ The student submits an affidavit or certificate from a physician who is duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the USA stating that in the physician's opinion, the vaccination would be injurious to the health and well-being of the student.
- ✓ There is no requirement that this needs to be resubmitted annually. It would only have to be resubmitted if a student stops-out for a fall or spring semester, or transfers to another institution.

Conscientious Objection: Two Forms

- ✓ Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board form for students age 18 and older and not living in the dorm
- ✓ Department of State Health Services form for students living in the dorm and/or under 18 years of age.

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Form

- ✓ The form can be downloaded from the THECB website:
www.thecb.state.tx.us
- ✓ The student must have it notarized and submitted to the INSTITUTION.

Department of State Health Services Form

- ✓ Form must be requested from DSHS.
- ✓ Can take up to two weeks for a student to receive the form by mail.
- ✓ Website:
(<https://webds.dshs.state.tx.us/immco>).
- ✓ Form must be notarized and submitted to the INSTITUTION.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is there still a requirement for obtaining student confirmation of receipt of bacterial meningitis information/message?

Community, State, & Technical College Liaison Meeting

A: The 77th Texas Legislature (2001) required all public institutions of higher education in Texas to notify all new students about bacterial meningitis, starting January 1, 2002 (Chapter 51, Education Code, Section 51.9191; Chapter 38, Education Code, Section 38.0025). The requirement is still in effect. Institutions are also required to obtain confirmation from those students that they have received information about the disease:

- ✓ The Admissions Office is the most likely location for responsibility in obtaining student confirmation of receipt of Bacterial Meningitis message.
- ✓ Early notification is preferred, but all institutions must have confirmation of message receipt from each new student within two months of the student's first enrollment at the institution.
- ✓ Multiple methods are suggested to ensure message receipt (e.g., postcards, electronic and paper application forms, student orientation, advisor forms, posters, etc.), especially for students who live in dorms and other types of close conditions.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Since the requirement for new students to show evidence of being vaccinated against bacterial meningitis is a state law, is there a way for colleges and universities to get a supply of the vaccine at a reduced rate from the state?

A: Currently there are two manufactures of the vaccine (see contact information below). Institutions may be able to get the state of Texas contract price using their institutional procurement system.

- ✓ Novartis Texas Representative: Del Negrón, Regional Market Access Manager, Novartis Vaccines & Diagnostics, 512.574.2808 delis.negron@novartis.com
- ✓ Sanofi Texas Representative: Jennifer Jackson, Deputy Director Public Health – Texas, sanofi Pasteur, 956.605.1649, jennifer.jackson@sanofipasteur.com

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Our admissions office is getting immunizations records from students in all different types and forms. We have had receipts from pharmacies, school immunization records, etc. Will there ever be a standard form for all institutions to use?

A: There are no current plans to have a standard form for all institutions to use. There are 3 types of acceptable evidence of vaccination:

- ✓ The signature or stamp of a physician or his/her designee, or public health personnel on a form showing the month, date and year the vaccination dose or booster was administered;
- ✓ An official immunization record generated from a state or local health authority; or
- ✓ An official record received from school officials, including a record from another state.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What have been some of the common issues or concerns with implementation of the legislation?

- A:
- ✓ Cost of vaccine
 - ✓ No funding in Adult Vaccine Safety Net Program for meningitis vaccine
 - ✓ No funding for staff at institutions to oversee mandate, including student notification, compliance, and documentation

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What has the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board done to notify high schools students of this new vaccine requirement?

A: A joint letter was sent from the Commissioners of Higher Education, Texas Education Agency, and DSHS to all high school counselors in Texas in April. The letter requested that counselors inform all college bound students about the vaccine requirement, and encouraged them to be vaccinated while they are still in high school.

Students under 19 years of age may be eligible for low-cost vaccine through the Texas Vaccines for Children Program.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Will there eventually be a waiver for students who are currently active duty military?

A: A waiver from the bacterial meningitis vaccine requirement was not included in the legislation (SB 1107), which it would need to be in order for active duty military to be exempt from the requirement.

Contact Information

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