

MENINGITIS VACCINE REQUIRED MUST BE ADMINISTERED AT LEAST 10 DAYS BEFORE REGISTERING FOR CLASSES

The 82nd Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2011, revised existing statutory requirements for higher education students related to vaccination against bacterial meningitis. The revision now requires all entering students to show evidence of an initial bacterial meningitis vaccine or a booster dose 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 an institution.

In order to comply with this State Law mandate, students will not be able to register (enroll) for classes until 10 days after the vaccination has been administered. This ten-day period is to protect vaccinated students during the 10-day period required for "onset of immunity" provided by the vaccine.

The term "entering student" includes a first-time student of an institution of higher education or private or independent institution of higher education and includes a transfer student, or a student who previously attended an institution of higher education before January 1, 2012, and who is enrolling in the same or another institution of higher education following a break in enrollment of at least one fall or spring semester.

On April 25, 2012, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) approved a policy change and revision to the Rules: Students may file an affidavit stating that the student declines the vaccination for bacterial meningitis for reasons of conscience using either a THECB conscientious objection form, or a Texas Department of Health Services (DSHS) Exemption from Immunization for Reasons of Conscience form.

THECB Conscientious Objection Form (may be used by students age 18 and older)

For students age 18 and older, the student may use the official Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's form, accessible from the website at the link below. The student must print the form, have it notarized, and file it with the institution's Registrar's Office or other designated department or unit.

[THECB Affidavit Form \(PDF\)](#)

DCHS Conscientious Objection Form (MUST be used by students under age 18)

For students under age 18, the student must use the official Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) form. The DSHS form may be ordered electronically. It is then mailed from DSHS to the student and it may take up to two weeks to receive the form. The DSHS form must be completed, notarized, and provided to the Admissions.. It is the student's responsibility to complete the DSHS form and have it notarized. Information about requesting the DSHS affidavit form is available by the following website:

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

The College/University does not provide meningitis vaccinations. In order to avoid enrollment delays, students are strongly encouraged to receive the appropriate vaccinations early.

The vaccination may be available from your personal physician.

1. State approved documentation from a physician, clinic, previous school, or government issued shot record demonstrating that the student has been vaccinated during the five-year period immediately preceding and at least 10 days prior to the first day of class; **Or**,
2. A letter from a licensed medical physician certifying that in the opinion of the physician the required meningococcal vaccination would be injurious to the health and well-being of the student; **Or**,
3. An official exemption affidavit issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services approving exception for reasons of conscience. The exemption affidavit may be requested via the [Texas Department of State Health Services website](#); **Or**,
4. An official exemption form of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), notarizing decision to not take the vaccination for reason of conscientious objection. The form may be downloaded, completed, notarized and turned into the Admissions and Registration Office.

[THECB Affidavit Form \(PDF\)](#)

Students requiring more information regarding the vaccine should consult their primary care physician and review the Vaccine Information Sheet found at the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) PDF document](#).

Students and/or family members with questions concerning the new State of Texas law (SB 1107) may visit the [Texas Legislature Online website](#).

For more information regarding the State of Texas requirements.

[Important Information about Bacterial Meningitis \(PDF\)](#)

Meningitis Notification & Instructions

Effective Summer 2012