



## Health Sciences Physician Assistant Studies Immunization Requirements

All students must provide evidence of immunization to register as a full-time student. A full-time student is a student who, at the graduate level, is registered in 6 or more credits.

Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L.c. 76, §§ 15 and 15C and 15D; c. 111, §§ 5, 6 and 7) requires that all full-time college students (6 credits of graduate level per semester) provide evidence that they are immunized against **Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis B, and Varicella** (Chicken Pox) in order to register for classes. Alternatively, positive lab titers could be submitted for all of these vaccines except for Tdap. This law requires (foreign and domestic) full-time students to document immunizations, as specified in 105 CMR 220.400, CMR 220.600 within 30 days of the beginning of a semester.

### POLICY

In order to be registered at Westfield State University as a full-time student, Physician Assistant Studies students must present a certificate of immunization to the program or the College of Graduate and Continuing Education (CGCE). Students may be registered on condition that the required documentation is provided within 30 days of registration.

All full and part time students attending or visiting classes or educational programs as part of a formal academic visitation or exchange program at postsecondary institutions must comply with immunization regulations.

Physician Assistant Studies students have additional requirements for immunizations due to clinical placements.

As of this date, the immunizations required by the Westfield State University Physician Assistant Studies Program are:

1. **Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis (Tdap or Dtap)** immunization may be as many as five and must be within the last 10 years. Pregnant Health Care Workers need to get a dose of Tdap during each pregnancy.
2. **MMR (Measles/Mumps/Rubella)** immunization dates must be submitted for two doses, all given at or after 12 months of age. Laboratory proof of immunity is acceptable if immunization dates are unavailable.

3. **Hepatitis B Vaccine Series** must be completed. Documentation of both the series **and** a protective titer are required. The series can be a 3-dose series of Recombivax HB or Engerix-B (dose #1 now, #2 in 1 month, #3 approximately 5 months after #2) or a 2-dose series of Hepsiv-B, with the doses separated by at least 4 weeks. Get an anti-HBs serologic test 1-2 months after the final dose.
4. **Meningococcal Vaccination** within the last five years is required for all full time undergraduate and graduate students in a degree program, who will live in a residence hall/dormitory or comparable congregated living arrangement approved by the Institution. Those who are routinely exposed to isolates of *N. meningitidis* should get one dose.
5. **Varicella (Chicken Pox) immunity is necessary.** If you do not have chickenpox (varicella) documented, if you haven't had varicella vaccine, or if you don't have an up-to-date blood test that shows you are immune to varicella (i.e. no serologic evidence of immunity or prior vaccination) get 2 doses of varicella vaccine, 4 weeks apart.
6. **Flu (Influenza) vaccine** (1 dose) is required annually.
7. **TWO negative Tuberculosis (TB) skin tests** taken two weeks apart **or** an IGRA-test (QuantiFERON Gold test) is required prior to the start of the student's didactic year and annually thereafter. The student must provide evidence and documentation to the Director of Clinical Education. It is the student's responsibility to have the test repeated annually as long as patient contact continues. If the student has a **Positive Test**, the student must submit a report of a negative chest X-ray before the university certifies that immunizations are complete.

### **Communicable Tuberculosis**

Students with a positive X-ray for communicable tuberculosis may not attend classes until such time as a physician or the Department of Public Health documents that they are free of the disease in a communicable form. Documentation may be through submission of the report of a large X-ray film of the chest, taken not more than ninety days prior thereto, and such other laboratory and clinical examination as may be required for the exclusion in a communicable form. That documentation must be provided to the Program's Director of Clinical Education in order to show that the student is able to return to clinical practice.

In addition, be advised that some clerkship training sites may have immunization requirements beyond the general requirements noted above. It will be the student's responsibility to meet any additional immunization requirements of specific sites to which he/she is assigned.

## **HEALTH FORMS**

The College of Graduate and Continuing Education (CGCE) students are informed of immunization requirements on the CGCE registration form, in the semester catalog and through the CGCE Admission process. Students intending to register for full-time academic schedules are required to submit their immunization form in advance of registration.

CGCE will restrict enrollment to less than full-time academic schedules for students without immunization documentation. CGCE students registering for a full-time academic schedule (Graduates, 9 credits), who are tardy with their Health Form, are allowed **30 days** from the beginning of a semester to comply with immunization requirements.

The requirements of 105 CMR 220.600 shall not apply where:

- a. The student provides written documentation that he/she meets the standards for medical or religious exemption set forth in M.G.L. c. 76 § 15C.
  - i. The student may provide a statement from a physician who has examined such student and in whose opinion the physical condition of the student is such that his/her health would be endangered by any immunization/s; or,
  - ii. In absence of an emergency or epidemic of disease declared by the Department of Public Health, no student who states in writing that such immunization would conflict with his/her religious beliefs shall be required to present such medical certificates in order to be admitted to such institution.
- b. The student provides some other appropriate documentation, including a copy of a school immunization record, indicating receipt of the required immunizations; or
- c. In the case of Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Hepatitis B, Varicella the student presents laboratory evidence of immunity.

Students who do not comply with immunization mandates due to medical or religious exemptions will be requested to complete an Immunization Exemption Waiver.

**Note: WSU may exclude non-immunized students from classes if there is a campus occurrence of vaccine preventable disease.**

## **NON-COMPLIANCE**

Non-compliant students will be notified on the following schedule:

- a. CGCE students will be emailed one notification allowing 30 days to submit required documentation.
- b. CGCE will place administrative withdrawals and “holds” on the accounts of their non-compliant students, and will withdraw the student to a less than full-time academic schedule. Students may be reinstated and “holds” removed upon receipt of complete immunization documentation and/or health forms. A reinstatement fee could be charged.

## **REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Program Director and Director of Clinical Education, or as Massachusetts General Law changes.