



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES

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County Superintendents of Schools
District School Superintendents
School Nurses

This is the guidance for the New Jersey Department of Education regarding tuberculosis screening of students as a condition for admission to a New Jersey school. The guidance also addresses the screening of employees and other adults having direct contact with the student population. This guidance was provided by New Jersey's Tuberculosis Medical Advisory Board to the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services.

New: An interferon gamma release assay (IGRA) blood test or a Mantoux TB skin test (TST) is acceptable for tuberculosis screening in schools.

Students and/or employees with a "positive" IGRA result have latent TB infection, a "negative" IGRA result indicates no latent TB infection and an "indeterminate" IGRA test shall be repeated. A "positive" IGRA or "10mm" or greater induration on a TST shall be considered a "significant reaction" and requires a subsequent medical evaluation to rule out active disease. Any person with symptoms of pulmonary TB should be evaluated regardless the result of the IGRA or TST and excluded from school until disease is ruled out or they are no longer considered infectious, as indicated in writing by a licensed physician.

The current recommendation is for testing in only two groups of students;

- Those entering a school system in the United States for the first time, if born in a high TB incidence country (**not** listed on page 3 of the guidance), and
- Those transferring to the New Jersey school system directly from a high TB incidence country (**not** listed on page 3 of the guidance).

All other students are exempt from TB testing as a requirement for school entry in New Jersey.

School districts are strongly urged not to require testing of any students not included in this guidance. Such activities would be of limited or questionable value to the public's health or protection of the student population. The local health department will be under no obligation to provide screening and/or evaluative services for any student excluded from the TB testing requirements in this guidance. New Jersey Department of Health

and Senior Services funding will be unavailable to support such expanded screening or evaluative activities.

Important Change

Schools are no longer required to submit the "Annual Report of TB Testing in Schools" (TB-57 form) to the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, TB Program. The TB-57 should be current and kept on site at each school. The report should only include testing done during the current calendar year. The TB-57 form and instructions are available online at:


<http://web.doh.state.nj.us/apps2/forms/subforms.aspx?pro=aids#tb>.

It remains the responsibility of the school nurse to gather the chest X-ray results and treatment recommendations for latent TB infection (LTBI) prescribed by a private physician or local chest clinic and retain this information on site.

In addition, the Office of the Attorney General has advised that religious exemption cannot be denied for TB testing in schools. See TB-8 Form for alternate testing protocol if religious exemption is claimed by a student or employee required to be tested under this guidance.

If you have questions concerning the application of the TB testing guidance, please call the TB Program at (609) 826-4878.

Sincerely,



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Cc: Thomas D. Privett, Tuberculosis Program Manager
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