



# TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

## Operating Policy and Procedure

**HSCEP OP:** 75.11, **Health Surveillance Program for TTUHSC El Paso Institutional Health and Infection Control Program**

**PURPOSE:** It is the policy of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC) to maintain a health program that conforms to the guidelines and recommendations established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Texas Education Code and the Texas Administrative Code (TAC). This program is directed toward primary prevention, early detection, and diagnosis of exposure-related illnesses. The program targets those who (1) have contact with patients and/or human body fluids/tissues, (2) work in the Laboratory Animal Resource Centers (LARCs), or (3) work with animals or infectious materials in any laboratory.

**SCOPE:** This program applies to TTUHSC El Paso. Attachments to this policy delineate processes addressing Tuberculosis (TB) surveillance, immunizations, and exposure management for all TTUHSC employees, students and volunteers.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The president appoints an institutional health officer to oversee the Occupational Health Department for it to work with the dean or dean's designee in each school to implement the program.

**REVIEW:** The appointed health officer or designee will review this HSCEP OP and attachments on June 1 of every odd-numbered year.

### **POLICY/PROCEDURE:**

#### **I. Definitions:**

- A. **Covered Individuals:** All TTUHSC El Paso employees, students, and volunteers at risk for exposure to diseases by virtue of interacting directly with patients, animals or potentially infectious material are covered under this program.
- B. **Exposure(s):** An event (e.g., needle stick, splash, cut, or puncture) where blood; body fluid; or potentially infectious material comes in contact with the eyes, mouth, mucous membranes, or non-intact skin during performance of assigned duties by a covered individual.
- C. **Institutional Health Program:** Immunizations, TB testing, pre/post-exposure testing and monitoring, and education are arranged, coordinated, or provided by the Occupational Health (OH) Department under the direction of the OH nurse and the appointed health officer.
- D. **Laboratory Animal Resources Centers:** The campus facilities in which research animals are housed.

- E. **Post-Exposure Management:** Treatment and monitoring initiated upon report of a TTUHSC El Paso-related known or possible exposure to infectious diseases.
- F. **Pre-Exposure Management:** Covered individuals are (1) identified, (2) provided training for primary prevention of disease transmission and exposure to infectious materials, and (3) monitored for immunization compliance.
- G. **Medical Service Fee:** Student health fees paid by all TTUHSC El Paso students for basic health services.
- H. **Volunteer Services/Volunteer Representative:** The office or designee responsible for orienting and tracking all volunteers working on campus and associated off-campus clinics.
- I. **Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (or Bacille Calmette-Guérin, BCG):** A vaccine against TB that is prepared from a strain of the attenuated (weakened) live bovine tuberculosis bacillus.
- J. **Screening and Immunization Fee:** Fees paid by all TTUHSC El Paso students covering the cost of TB screening, annual flu vaccine administration, blood-borne pathogen exposure, immunization validation and record maintenance, and other related costs.

## II. Institutional Health Program

### A. Program Components References:

1. **Tuberculosis Surveillance:** TB surveillance for covered individuals is based on current recommendations of the CDC: Guidelines for Preventing the Transmission of Mycobacterium Tuberculosis in Health-Care Settings.
2. **Immunizations:** Covered individuals must comply with Healthcare Worker Vaccination Recommendations from the CDC, the Texas Education Code and with the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) as applicable for each individual..
3. **Exposure Management:** Institutional management of exposure to (1) blood-borne pathogens, (2) body fluids, and (3) other potentially infectious material is based on guidelines and recommendations available from the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Rule 96.203, Health and Safety Code Chapter 81, Subchapter H and analogous to OSHA Blood Borne Pathogen Standard.
4. **LARC Employee and Animal Handler Program:** Health surveillance guidelines are designed to protect both people and laboratory animals, and are based on the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (NRC 1996) Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories, 5th Edition (2007) and other relevant published information.
5. **Surveillance Activities:** Periodic review/rounds are conducted to proactively identify risks and implement process improvements.

### B. Identification of Covered Individuals:

1. **All TTUHSC El Paso Students** are covered under the Screening and Immunization Fee.
2. **All TTUHSC El Paso employees and volunteers (who have patient contact or work directly with animals):** Updated lists of covered individuals will be provided to the OH Department as requested and in a timely manner.
3. **Individuals working with animals through LARC.**

**C. Health Records:**

1. **Employees and Volunteers:** The OH Department shall maintain a separate health record, including immunizations, titers, baseline TB testing/annual screening forms, vaccination consent/declinations, and exposure investigation documentation.
2. **Students:** The OH Department shall receive, validate, and maintain required pre-matriculation immunization and/or immunity titer documentation. Baseline TB testing/annual TB screening form, vaccination consent/declinations, and exposure management documentation will be coordinated and records maintained through the OH Department.

**All health records will remain confidential.**

**D. Education/Training Program:**

1. Education on primary prevention, early detection, and management of exposure will be coordinated through the Occupational Health Department.

**III. Responsibilities:**

- A. **Senior Vice President for Research:** Responsible for compliance with this policy in the area of research and for implementing disciplinary action, if necessary, in matters of non-compliance involving personnel working in research laboratories and other non-clinical areas.
- B. **Covered Individuals:** Responsible for attending mandatory screening by Occupational Health upon joining the institution, reporting any exposure incidents to their immediate supervisors, or as otherwise designated per campus protocol, and for providing all information and obtaining all immunizations/tests as required under the program.
- C. **Deans or Dean's Designee in Each School:**
  1. Responsible for designating an entity or individual at each school for communication with the Occupational Health Department to ensure that the program operates in accordance with this policy.
  2. Must require personnel under their supervision to attend scheduled training sessions and keep follow-up appointments as delineated by the Occupational Health Department.

3. Responsible for implementing disciplinary action, if necessary, in matters of non-compliance involving covered individuals under their supervision.

**D. Director of Volunteer Services:**

1. Responsible for informing all volunteers of Occupational Health protocols and ensuring compliance.

**IV. Attachments to this policy include:**

Attachment A – Exposure Management  
Attachment B - Immunizations  
Attachment C – Tuberculosis Surveillance