

## Doctor of Pharmacy Program Policy and Procedure for Immunization Including Requirements & Documentation

### Rationale

As healthcare providers, pharmacy students are at risk for exposure to, and possible transmission of, vaccine-preventable diseases. Maintenance of immunity is an essential aspect of prevention and infection control programs for pharmacists. Optimal use of immunizing agents will not only safeguard the health of students but also protects patients from being infected. This policy was developed to reduce the risk that students will contract or transmit vaccine-preventable diseases.

The University of Pittsburgh also requires immunizations as described in the University of Pittsburgh Vaccinations and Immunizations Requirements Policy CS 29

[https://www.policy.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Policies/Community-Standards/Policy\\_CS\\_29.pdf](https://www.policy.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Policies/Community-Standards/Policy_CS_29.pdf).

However, given the unique professional responsibilities and activities in the Doctor of Pharmacy degree program, additional requirements, timing and reporting is stipulated in this policy and procedure.

### Policy:

1. To ensure that students can participate in required experiential learning activities at clinical practice sites external to the school, they must complete all immunization requirements before classes and/or experiences start. An updated Immunization Record Form may be required if needed to document changes since submission of the initial form.
2. Documentation of immunization, tuberculin testing and general health status will allow the School of Pharmacy and/or the student to provide required evidence of immunity to infectious diseases before caring for patients. Students must sign a release letting the school share this information with experiential learning sites that request documentation. Sites also may require students to directly share their documentation from their individual CastleBranch accounts.
3. Additional immunization requirements may be added for students, as per learning site requirements specified in affiliation agreements.

### Procedure

1. Immunization Record Forms will be provided for all new and returning students and must be completed and returned to the School of Pharmacy by the date designated **each year**. All information is to be posted on the student's individual CastleBranch profile. On the forms, the student must provide proof of immunization (or exemption) against:
  - a. measles
  - b. mumps
  - c. rubella
  - d. varicella
  - e. hepatitis B,
  - f. tetanus,
  - g. diphtheria
  - h. pertussis

- i. polio
  - j. influenza
  - k. COVID-19
2. Evidence of immunity will be accepted when:
  - a. providing the month/year of vaccination(s), and/or
  - b. by way of a positive blood titer
    - i. baseline titer is required for hepatitis B and measles/mumps/rubella
    - ii. for other immunizations, titer will suffice if the month/year of vaccination is unknown, and/or evidence of disease confirmed by medical records, as per CDC guidelines
  - c. Tuberculin Status: Each student's tuberculin status must be known before admission to the program and updated yearly. Students whose tuberculin test is positive will be asked to provide the school with medical clearance via chest x-ray and negative symptoms evaluation to participate in clinical placement.
3. Additional vaccines or assessment for communicable diseases also may be required as guided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The School of Pharmacy and the University of Pittsburgh reserve the right to update and require such changes to safeguard learners, patients, and the community at large.
4. Immunization requirements will not be waived for any student. Affiliation agreements between the school and the sites providing experiential practice rotations require that students comply with public health policies in effect for persons involved in patient care activities at those sites. Therefore, the School cannot place students in experiential learning sites without having documentation of the immunization history as outlined in Section 1, and such students will not be able to complete the course requirements for graduation from the Doctor of Pharmacy Program.

A student may be granted a medical exemption from immunization based on a written statement from a physician, or their designee, that the immunization may be detrimental to the health of the student. The medical exemption attestation statement should include the name of the student, printed name of the medical provider, signature of the provider, date of signature, and contact information for the provider.

An exemption from immunization also may be granted based on a student's written objection to the immunization on religious grounds or based on a moral or ethical conviction. The religious or moral/ethical exemption attestation statement should include a short rationale for the requested exemption (no more than 100 words), printed name of the student, signature of the student, and date of signature. The request should be submitted on-line to the university ([my.pitt.edu](http://my.pitt.edu)) and emailed to the Experiential Learning Office for consideration. Each exemption request will be individually processed and reviewed by the University and School of Pharmacy.

The decisions of the university and the school regarding immunization exception are final and may determine feasibility as to whether a student may continue in the Doctor of Pharmacy Program, given the programmatic and professional requirements for experiential learning as a core component of the curriculum.

As experiential learning sites may not accept students with documented exemptions, as dictated in the Affiliation Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding with each site, students with documented exceptions may have limited opportunities for experiential site placements.

If a site accepts a student with exemptions, mitigation measures, including masking, monitoring for symptoms, and isolation per site/university guidelines if they test positive for infection may be a condition for placement or for removal from site activities.

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