



Minnesota Department of Health

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January 2, 1996

Dennis L. Falenschek
Program Manager, Inspection and
Enforcement Unit
Department of Corrections
1450 Energy Park Drive
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Dear Mr. Falenschek:

In a recent conversation with Dana Baumgartner, the Tuberculosis Control Unit learned that there is some confusion regarding TB skin testing among residents and employees of residential facilities. It is our opinion that residents and employees of residential facilities are at low risk for tuberculosis; therefore, we believe that screening of either employees or residents is not warranted at this time. According to the current statute (144.445, Tuberculosis Screening in Correctional Institutions and Facilities) "the Commissioner may waive any portion of the requirements of subdivisions 1-4 if the Commissioner of Health determines that it is not necessary to protect the public health or if the screening may have a detrimental effect on a person's health status." On the recommendation of Kristine MacDonald, M.D., M.P.H., Medical Director for the Division of Disease Prevention and Control, I am writing to provide a "blanket" waiver to residential facilities indicating that screening of employees or residents of such facilities is not necessary from a public health perspective. In writing this letter, I am fulfilling the requirements for a waiver as specified in Statute 144.445. If you have any further questions on this issue, please don't hesitate to contact Dr. MacDonald at (612) 623-5414.

Sincerely,

Will Johnson, Assistant Commissioner

for Anne M. Barry
Commissioner