

Temporary Changes to Tuberculosis Requirements

12/15/2020

In order to reduce person-to-person interactions for health care personnel (HCP) and the personal protective equipment (PPE) used for these encounters, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is making the following temporary changes to tuberculosis (TB) testing requirements for health care facilities due to the global coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic:

Extension of timeframe for the baseline tuberculin skin test (TST) or TB blood test.

- Health care personnel (HCP) may begin working with patients after a negative TB symptom screen (i.e., no symptoms of active TB disease). The baseline TB blood test or first step of the baseline TST blood test can be deferred until after the date of hire to reduce interaction with additional healthcare settings and non-urgent use of PPE required during these visits. **This change was effective starting April 1, 2020, and will remain in effect until March 31, 2021.** At that time, all facilities will have 90 days to complete baseline testing on those personnel who had been deferred. MDH will notify health care facilities by March 15, 2021 if the timeline will be extended. If facilities are currently able to maintain internal new hire screening, please continue to do so.
- All health care facilities must document the date they began modifying their baseline TB screening protocol.
- All health care facilities must continue to screen all newly hired HCP for symptoms of TB.
- HCP with a positive TST or TB blood test must continue to follow the requirements on pages 12 and 13 in [Regulations for Tuberculosis and Control in Minnesota Health Care Settings: A Guide for Implementing Tuberculosis \(TB\) Infection Control Regulations in your Facility](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/tb/rules/tbregsmanual.pdf) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/tb/rules/tbregsmanual.pdf>).
- The change in requirements for the TB test also applies to facility volunteers and HCP who are due for an annual screening as well as residents of boarding care homes, residential hospice, and long-term care settings licensed by MDH.

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STD/HIV/TB Section
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To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5414.