

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION – STUDENT AFFAIRS

POLICY NUMBER – SA 7.06

POLICY TITLE – PRE-ENROLLMENT IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

SCOPE OF POLICY – USC UPSTATE

DATE OF REVISION – OCTOBER 2024

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER – DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE – VICE CHANCELLOR OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

PURPOSE

This policy addresses immunization requirements and recommendations for new and incoming students that will minimize the sources and transmission of infections, including adequate surveillance techniques.

DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): A Federal agency whose mission is to protect America from health, safety and security threats, both foreign and in the U.S. Whether diseases start at home or abroad, are chronic or acute, curable or preventable, human error or deliberate attack, CDC fights disease and supports communities and citizens to do the same.

Conjugate meningococcal vaccine: Protects against four types of meningococcal bacteria (called types A, C, W, and Y).

Incubation period: The period between exposure to an infection and the appearance of the first symptoms.

Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR): A vaccine that is given to prevent measles, mumps, and rubella.

Measles: A highly contagious virus that starts with fever, runny nose, cough, red eyes, and sore throat, followed by a rash that spreads all over the body.

Measles outbreak: Due to the infectious nature of measles, one (1) confirmed case is considered an outbreak.

Medical exemption: A medical exemption is allowed when an individual has a medical condition that prevents them from receiving a vaccine.

Meningococcal Meningitis: A rare but serious bacterial infection that causes the membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord to become inflamed.

Mumps: A viral infection that primarily affects saliva-producing (salivary) glands that are located near your ears.

Religious exemption: An exemption from immunization requirements based on religious beliefs and practices.

Rubeola: Also called 10-day *measles*, red *measles*, or *measles*, is a viral illness that results in a

viral exanthema, which is a rash or skin eruption.

Rubella: Also known as German Measles or Three-day Measles, it is viral infection that causes a red rash on the body; it lasts for about three days once the rash appears.

Serum Titer: Blood tests that measure whether one is immune to a given disease(s). More specifically a quantitative serum titer is a titer with a numerical value indicating an individual's actual degree of immunity to a disease(s)

South Carolina Department of Health (SCDPH): A State entity charged with promoting and protecting the health of the public and the environment in South Carolina.

Vaccine-preventable illnesses: An infectious disease for which an effective preventive vaccine exists. If a person acquires a vaccine-preventable disease and dies from it, the death is considered a vaccine-preventable death.

Policy Statement

Vaccine preventable illnesses continue to occur at institutions of higher education in the United States and pose a significant threat to public health. The goal of Health Services and the university is to provide adequate protection against vaccine preventable diseases by requiring newly entering students to be vaccinated and/or screened for certain highly contagious diseases and recommending other vaccinations.

Protecting the campus community against vaccine preventable illnesses can best be achieved through a mandatory pre-matriculation immunization requirement. The University of South Carolina (USC) Upstate immunization requirements are consistent with the recommendations of the American College Health Association and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. Exceptions to the university's immunization requirements may be granted in the event of valid medical contraindications or for documented religious reasons. In the event of a measles emergency, exempted students will be excluded from campus activities until such time as is specified by the South Carolina Department of Health (SCDPH).

All incoming students residing in campus housing must provide proof of receipt of a conjugate meningococcal MCV4 vaccine given after the age of 16. A waiver form must be signed if student declines vaccination and resides on campus. Students born in 1957 or later must prove immunity to measles, rubella and mumps. One dose of Tdap is required of all students to prevent pertussis outbreaks on campus. The only exemptions are for documented medical or religious exemptions, and vaccine declination form must be submitted. International students may be required to complete a screening for tuberculosis and other screenings related to contagious illnesses.

Compliance with all immunizations, post screening tests, treatment regimens, and monitoring is mandatory. Students not fulfilling the immunization requirements, with exceptions for valid medical contraindications or documented religious reasons, will not be permitted to register for continuing classes, and may be subject to late fees. Vaccines are offered at Health Services based on availability from the manufacturer on a fee-for-service basis to individuals eligible for services.

PROCEDURES

A. Documentation pertaining to meningococcal meningitis vaccine.

1. Proof of vaccine receipt: Prior to moving into residential housing at USC, proof of receipt of a conjugate meningococcal vaccine (e.g. Menactra or Menveo) after the age of 16 is required.
2. Waiver form: A handout from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) concerning Meningococcal Disease will be provided and, after reading the risks and benefits of vaccine and hazards of bacterial meningitis, a student may sign a Meningitis Vaccine Declination Waiver form declining the vaccination. If the student is under the age of 18, a parent or legal guardian must also sign the waiver.

B. Documentation pertaining to measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine.

1. Proof of vaccine receipt: Prior to attending class at USC Upstate, students born after 1957 must show proof of immunity to measles, mumps, and rubella.
 - a. Proof of immunity for MMR requires the following:
 - i. Two doses of MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) are required for students born in 1957 or later (dose 1-given at age 12 months or later and dose 2-given at least one month after first dose).
 - b. Students born before 1957 are exempt from this requirement.
 - c. A positive serum titer (blood antibody) may also provide evidence of immunity.
2. MMR exemptions for distance learning students: Students enrolled in distance learning courses may submit the Distance Learner Immunization Exemption form each semester of attendance to request an MMR immunization exemption. Proof of immunity to measles, mumps and rubella must be submitted prior to attending on-campus courses in any subsequent semesters. Student enrolled in online only programs as determined by the office of Enrollment Services may receive an automatic exemption.

C. Exemptions to Immunization

a. Medical exemptions

- i. Medical exemptions must be signed by the individual's physician indicating that they have a condition in which the vaccine is medically contraindicated.
- ii. Exclusion from activities in the event of outbreak: In the event of an outbreak of vaccine-preventable diseases, for their own protection and others, individuals with medical exemptions to immunizations will be excluded from property owned maintained by the university, including attending classes or from other university-sponsored events on campus. This exclusion from class and on-campus activities will last until the incubation period (21 days) from the last identified case of the communicable disease has passed.

b. Religious exemptions

- i. Exemption to immunization may be granted based on individuals' religious beliefs. For purposes of this policy, "religious beliefs" include those that are theistic in nature, as well as non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as to what is right and wrong which are sincerely held with the strength of traditional religious views. Personal preferences do not constitute religious beliefs.
 - ii. Documentation required: Religious exemption forms based on religious beliefs will be accepted until age 18. At that time, individuals must sign the Vaccine Declination form documenting their informed declination of the vaccine.
 - iii. Exclusion from activities in the event of outbreak: In the event of an outbreak of vaccine-preventable diseases, for their own protection and others, individuals with religious exemptions to immunizations will be excluded from property owned or maintained by the university, including attending classes or from other university-sponsored events on campus. This exclusion from class and on-campus activities will last until the incubation period (21 days) from the last identified case of the communicable disease has passed.
- c. Quarantine due to measles outbreak: Individuals with either medical or religious exemptions to immunizations may, in the event of an outbreak of measles on campus, be excluded from property owned or maintained by the university, including attending classes or from other university-sponsored events. Residential students with medical or religious exemptions to immunizations, may, in the event of an outbreak of measles on campus, be quarantined to their residence halls until the measles outbreak has cleared. This exclusion from university property or residential quarantine will last until the measles incubation period has ended, which is 21 days from the last identified case of the communicable disease has passed; the 21-day incubation period starts over with each identified case.

D. Recommended Vaccinations for all Students

- a. In addition to the before-mentioned requirements, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Health Services recommends certain immunizations to the college population.
- b. These vaccines include:
 - i. Human Papillomavirus Vaccine (HPV) is highly recommended for all males and females between the ages of 11-26
 - ii. Hepatitis B
 - iii. Varicella
 - iv. Influenza
 - v. All other standard childhood vaccinations as recommended by CDC

E. Federal/State authority during outbreak

- a. In the event of disease-related outbreak, SC DHEC (or the CDC in extreme cases) has the authority to direct campus administrators and community members on appropriate actions based on the situation, including the ability to quarantine and/or exclude members of the community until the threat is over.

Questions should be directed to USC Upstate Health Services at 864-503-5191.

History of Revisions

- AUGUST 2012 – CREATION DATE
- OCTOBER 2024 – POLICY UPDATED TO NEW FORMAT AND CHANGES MADE TO REFLECT CURRENT PRACTICE AND STANDARDS