

UNIVERSITY RULE

11.04.99.M1 Required Drug Screening of Students

Approved November 17, 2014

Next scheduled review: November 17, 2019

Rule statement

All accepted applicants or students enrolled in an educational program at the Texas A&M Health Science Center (TAMHSC) that includes, or may include, assignment to a clinical health care facility with a requirement for drug screening, will be required to undergo and pass such testing.

Official rule

1. RATIONALE

- 1.1 Safety and Well-Being of Patients. Healthcare providers are entrusted with the health, safety and welfare of patients; have access to controlled substances and confidential information; and operate in settings that require the exercise of good judgment and ethical behavior. Thus, an assessment of a student's possible impairment, which may diminish his/her capacity to function in such a setting, is imperative to promote the highest level of integrity in healthcare services.
- 1.2 Accreditation Standards. Clinical facilities are increasingly interpreting standards by accreditation agencies, such as Joint Commission of Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), to require drug screening for security purposes on individuals who provide services within the facility, particularly those who supervise care and render treatment, including controlled substances. To facilitate this requirement, educational institutions have agreed to conduct drug screenings for students who participate in programs having such a requirement.
- 1.3 Licensure Issues. Clinical rotations and early experiential rotations are an essential element in certain health science curricula. Students who cannot participate in clinical rotations due to revealed illegal use of controlled or illegal substances may be unable to fulfill the requirements of the program. Additionally, many healthcare licensing agencies require individuals to pass a drug screening panel as a condition of licensure or employment. Therefore, it is in everyone's interest to resolve these issues, prior to a commitment of resources by the TAMHSC or the student.
- 1.4 Contractual Obligations. TAMHSC is obligated to meet the contractual requirements contained in affiliation agreements between the TAMHSC and various healthcare facilities.

- 1.5 Liability Issues. Given the current medical liability environment, institutions of higher learning and health care facilities are appropriately attentive to those factors that may adversely affect the security of the clinical environment and, thus, increase their liability exposure. As a result, schools and healthcare facilities, both independently and, at times, through legislative mandate, have appropriately sought to enhance their scrutiny of professional and non-professional students involved in patient care activities.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

Each TAMHSC college will develop internal policies, which must be published in the college's student handbook or on the college's website, to address drug screening of students. The internal policy, and any revisions to the policy, must be provided to the HSC Vice President for Academic Affairs. The internal policy must contain:

- 2.1 Description of the drug screening panel used for the test and method of testing
- 2.2 Process and laboratory conducting the drug screening and person responsible for payment
- 2.3 Frequency of screening
- 2.4 Confidentiality and recordkeeping procedures
- 2.5 Administrator and/or committee charged to review positive or remarkable findings
- 2.6 Process for administrative review and possible outcomes of the review
- 2.7 Students' right to review or appeal findings of the drug screening
- 2.8 Factors upon which decisions concerning positive findings will be made

3. REVISION

The rule for Required Drug Screening of Students will be reviewed no less than every five years by the TAMHSC Executive Committee.

Related rules

Supplements [System Policy 11.04](#)

Contact Office

OFFICE OF RESPONSIBILITY:

TAMHSC Vice President for Academic Affairs