

**Department of State Health Services
Disease Prevention & Intervention Section
Immunization Branch**

POLICY STATEMENT

1.0

Completion of hepatitis B vaccine series prior to direct patient care

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) rule §97.64, "Required Vaccinations for Students Enrolled in Health-Related and Veterinary Courses in Institutions of Higher Education" [25TAC§97.64, April 2004], requires students enrolled in health-related courses, which will involve direct patient contact in medical or dental care facilities to complete a three-dose series of hepatitis B vaccine prior to direct patient care. This rule applies to all medical interns, residents, fellows, nursing students, and others who are being trained in medical schools, hospitals, and health science centers and students attending two-year and four-year colleges whose course work involves direct patient contact regardless of the number of courses taken, number of hours taken, and the classification of the student.

The DSHS Rule on "Required Vaccinations for Students Enrolled in Health-related and Veterinary Courses in Institutions of Higher Education" is clarified as follows:

DSHS RULE

Students may be enrolled provisionally for up to one semester or one quarter to allow students to attend classes while obtaining the required vaccines and acceptable evidence of vaccination. (§97.64(b))

Students shall receive a complete series of hepatitis B vaccine prior to the start of direct patient care or show serologic confirmation of immunity to hepatitis B virus. (97.64(i))

DSHS INTERPRETATION

- Students **may** enroll in health-related courses in two-year and four-year colleges.
- Although the student may enroll in the school or course, completion of the hepatitis B vaccination series must be completed prior to direct patient care as defined below.
- Direct patient care is defined by DSHS, for purposes of this rule, as students whose course work involves contact with patients in a manner that can result in direct contact with blood, blood-contaminated body fluids, or other bodily fluids from the patient

