

**CENTRAL NEW MEXICO COMMUNITY COLLEGE
POLICY ON REQUESTS FOR RELIGIOUS (OR OTHER) EXEMPTIONS
TO IMMUNIZATIONS**

I. Introduction

As an institute of higher learning and as a clinical education partner in the community, Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) has an obligation to uphold and enforce expectations for each and every clinical site where students are placed during their educational tenure with CNM.

II. CNM's Institutional Obligation

CNM Clinical Education Agreements specify that the School and Training Site will comply with all federal and local laws, which are applicable to activities carried out under the Agreement.

The School will, upon request, supply necessary documentation of results of tuberculosis testing, evidence of current immunization status (including Hepatitis B antibody testing or proof of vaccination or written proof of School refusal), cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training, and training in infection control (e.g. blood-borne pathogens).

The School shall comply with and advise assigned students of their obligation to comply with all applicable Training Site standards, policies and procedures, rules and regulations including, but not limited to standards of regulatory, licensing, and accrediting organizations to which Training Site is bound to abide or to which Training Site deems, in its sole discretion, to subscribe.

III. Federal and State Law

According to the CDC and the State of New Mexico, there are basic immunization requirements that must be met for Hospital Employees and healthcare students in training at clinical sites.

<http://www2a.cdc.gov/nip/statevaccapp/statevaccsapp/Administration.asp?statetmp=NM#172>):

For New Mexico requirements, see N.M. Admin. Code tit. 7, § 7.7.2.21, relating to “acute care, limited services, and special hospitals.” N.M. Admin. Code tit.7, § 7.7.2.21 provides that vaccination or confirmed immunity against rubella shall be required for everyone having direct contact with rubella patients, pediatric patients, or female patients of childbearing age. No individual without documented vaccination against rubella or immunity to rubella may be placed in a position where he/she has direct contact with rubella patients, pediatric patients or female patients of childbearing age. N.M. Admin. Code tit. 7, § 7.7.2.7 defines “acute care hospitals” as a hospital providing emergency services, in-patient medical and nursing care for acute illness, injury, surgery or obstetrics; ancillary services such as pharmacy, clinical laboratory, radiology, and dietary are required for acute-care hospitals. N.M. Admin. Code tit. 7, § 7.7.2.7 defines “limited services hospitals” as a hospital that limits admissions according to medical or surgical specialty, type of disease or medical condition, or a hospital that limits its inpatient hospital services to surgical services or invasive diagnostic treatment procedures; a limited services hospital must have emergency services, inpatient medical and nursing care for acute illness, injury, and surgery, and must offer ancillary services including pharmacy, clinical laboratory, radiology, and dietary. N.M. Admin. Code tit. 7, § 7.7.2.7 defines “special hospitals” as a hospital that treats patients that have diagnosis-related group classifications for two-thirds of all its patients that fall into no more than two major diagnosis categories, or if at least two-thirds of its patients are classified in a specific diagnosis category; an example of a special hospital is a psychiatric or rehabilitation hospital.

Clinical facilities may seek to enforce additional immunizations above and beyond the basic CDC and State of NM requirements.

When CNM students seek a religious (or other grounds) exemption to immunization, they are bound in part to this administrative code (<http://www2a.cdc.gov/nip/statevaccapp/statevaccsapp/Administration.asp?st atetmp=NM#174>):

[174] For New Mexico, for religious exemptions to the immunization requirements of N.M. Admin. Code tit.7, § 7.8.3.41, see N.M. Admin. Code tit.7, § 7.8.3.41, providing that exemptions on religious or other grounds are only accepted if approved by the Department of Health. While this provision is meant to restrict exemptions, the existence of such restrictions suggests that, under some circumstances, religious exemptions are possible. However, no statute or regulation affirmatively provides for religious, philosophical or medical exemptions to immunization requirements.

IV. Procedure and Process for seeking immunization Exemption

1.) Students must get blood tests to check for immunity for the following:

- a.) Titer results for MMR and Varicella (blood test to check for immunity)
- b.) TB Gold (blood test instead of the Tb skin test)

2.) Students may waive Hep B and flu vaccine by completing the attached forms.

3.) Students should seek a formal exemption exemptions to the immunization requirements of [N.M. Admin. Code tit.7, § 7.8.3.41](#), through the Department of Health. If granted an exemption, the student should provide documentation to the Compliance Office.

The form can be found at: <http://nmhealth.org/publication/view/form/454/>.

4.) After the student supplies the approved exemption by the DOH, the Program Entry and Compliance Office will share the approval of immunization exemption and supporting documentation with our clinical partner(s) under FERPA guidelines. The final decisions as to whether or not students are allowed access to clinical training opportunities is at the sole discretion of our clinical partners. The Training Site reserves the right to dismiss any student from Training Site premises when it is deemed in

Training Site sole discretion that the student's health or performance is a detriment to the well-being any Training Site patient or employee.

V. In Closing

Student success is very important to the Program Entry and Compliance Office and we are available to help support students as they navigate the compliance requirements of the CDC, State of NM, and our clinical partners.