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## **Tuberculosis (TB) Screening Policy for Students in K-12 Schools**

November 1, 2024

This letter replaces the previous TB screening policy issued by the Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD) on August 15, 2014<sup>1</sup> and is aligned with the California TB Controllers Association (CTCA) [Position on TB Evaluation of School-Age Children](#). The CTCA continues to recommend risk-based school entry TB screening using the [California Pediatric Tuberculosis Risk Assessment](#). The major benefits of TB screening are: 1) identifying students who would benefit from latent TB infection (LTBI) treatment; 2) encouraging screening of families in which children have LTBI; and 3) providing information about tuberculosis and promoting LTBI treatment. Testing of *all* children using skin or blood tests, independent of risk of exposure, has not been recommended for over a decade.

Given that Alameda County is a very high TB burden jurisdiction ( $\geq 100$  new cases every year), **the ACPHD recommends that school districts require TB risk assessments for school entry**. Assessments should be performed within one year before, and up to 90 days after, the date of entry into the district from TK through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Students should NOT be excluded from school during the evaluation process unless they have symptoms concerning for infectious TB, including cough for more than 2-3 weeks, fevers, night sweats, and weight loss.

Ideally, the TB risk assessment process should be done in the medical home where other care is provided, including vaccines and anticipatory guidance. Documentation should be submitted by the medical home to the school district using the California Department of Public Health risk assessment form (linked above) or a visit summary indicating that there are no new TB risk factors. For students who do not have a primary care provider, the risk assessment could be performed by a school nurse or in an alternative health care setting, with urgent referral to a medical home to establish care and follow up on a positive screen.

If you have any questions about these recommendations, or need to report a case of TB, please contact the [TB Program](#) at 510.667.3096. For information on requirements for screening employees, volunteers and contractors, [please visit this link](#).

<sup>1</sup>The requirement for students entering first grade to undergo a health screening under CA Health and Safety Code 124085 (section 124040) is no longer in effect as of July 1, 2024.