

HARDIN-SIMMONS
UNIVERSITY
An EDUCATION Enlightened by Faith
Sue-Ann Biggs, RN
University Nurse

Dear Student:

Texas legislation mandates that every new student and new transfer under the age of 22 to any Texas university, regardless of living on campus or off campus, will be required to have a **Meningitis Vaccination** within the 5 years prior to the first class day and at least 10 days prior to the first class day. In addition, HSU requires every new incoming student under 22 years of age provide proof of the meningitis vaccine prior to registering for classes. (A returning student following a break in enrollment of at least one fall or spring semester is also considered a new student.) Exceptions to this law would be:

1. The student is enrolled only in online or other distance education courses; or
2. The student is enrolled in a continuing education course or program that is less than 360 contact hours, or continuing education corporate training; or
3. The student is enrolled in a dual credit course which is taught at a public or private K-12 facility not located on a higher education institution campus; or
4. The student is incarcerated in a Texas prison.

A student is not required to submit evidence of receiving the **Meningitis Vaccine** if the student submits to HSU:

1. An affidavit or certificate signed by a physician who is duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the U.S., stating that in the physician's opinion, the vaccine would be injurious to the health and well-being of the student; or
2. An affidavit signed by the student stating that the student declines the vaccine for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief.

Students must use the official Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) form. It may be ordered electronically. The form is then mailed from DSHS to the student, and it may take up to two weeks to receive it. It must be completed, notarized and provided to Hardin-Simmons University Nurse's office. It is the student's responsibility to complete the DSHS form and have it notarized. The site to request the form is:

<https://corequest.dshs.texas.gov/>

The latter exemption does not apply during a disaster or public health emergency, terrorist attack, hostile military or paramilitary action, or extraordinary law enforcement emergency declared by a Texas Department of State Health Services authority and is in effect for the location of the university the student attends. Texas law states that acceptable evidence of your **Meningitis Vaccination** must include:

1. Student's **name** and **date of birth**.
2. **Month, day, year** the vaccine was administered.
3. **Signature or stamp** of the physician or his/her designee, or public health personnel; **OR**
4. An official immunization record generated from a **state or local health authority (as from the Texas Public Health Department); OR**
5. An **official record** received from **school officials**, including a record from another state.
6. The student has to have received the **vaccine or a booster** during the **5-year period preceding** the first day of class.

The vaccine can be obtained through the health department, some pharmacies, and some private physicians.

It is important you consult your physician regarding the need for the **Meningitis Vaccine** to prevent bacterial meningitis.

Sincerely,



Sue Ann Biggs, R.N.