IMMUNIZATION POLICY

The Mercer University Immunization Form is required. It must be completed and signed by the student and then returned to the Student Health Center along with an official copy of the student's immunization (vaccine) record. Students are encouraged to keep a copy of the documents for their personal records.

All students born after 1956 must provide a statement of immunization against Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR), giving the month, day, and year of immunization. A statement of “up to date” is not sufficient. Two doses of Measles (Rubeola) vaccine, two doses of Mumps vaccine, and one dose of Rubella are required. Students must have been at least 12 months old when the first Measles dose was received.

If a student is unable to provide dates of immunization to Measles, Mumps, and Rubella, he or she may document immunity by blood test, at the student’s expense. If this testing shows no immunity to Measles, Mumps, or Rubella, the student may register following documentation of the first dose of MMR, with the second to follow in thirty (30) days, if required.

A completed Tuberculosis (TB) screening questionnaire is required of all new students (page 2 of the Mercer Immunization form). Students at risk for TB will be required to have a PPD skin test (Mantoux). The Tine tuberculosis test is not acceptable. Students should be tested regardless of prior BCG vaccination. Any student with a positive skin test will be required to provide a report of a normal chest x-ray (done after the positive PPD) to be eligible to register. A physician should evaluate individuals with a positive tuberculosis skin test.

Do not assume that childhood immunizations are adequate; requirements have changed during the past several years. Medical facilities in the U.S. and in other countries are required to keep records of vaccinations. Additional sources of immunization information include doctors’ offices, health departments, and schools. Students should make copies of the completed health form for their own files, and then mail/email/fax the original forms. Do not rely on health care providers, family members, or other colleges to mail the forms.

Exemptions from compliance with the immunization policy include:

1. Religious exemption: The student must provide a notarized letter from an official of the religion, such as an ordained minister or priest, affirming that the required immunizations are in conflict with the beliefs or practices of the religion. The name of the organization must be specified in the letter, and the letter must be provided on the organization’s letterhead.

2. Medical exemption: Must be written on office stationery, signed by a MD (not a relative of the student), and stamped with his/her office stamp. The letter should state the reason for the exemption, and whether the exemption is temporary or permanent.

Immunizations for the following diseases are recommended, but not mandatory: chickenpox (varicella), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, polio, and tetanus. The most recent tetanus booster should have been within the past 10 years. Immunization against meningococcal meningitis is recommended for college students.

Some academic programs have additional immunization requirements. Students are advised to check with their college or school program for any additional requirements.