



Immunization Policy

1. Policy Summary

In compliance with New York State Public Health Laws 2165 and 2167 and to promote the overall health, safety and welfare of the University community, St. Joseph's University requires all students enrolled for six (6) or more semester hours to provide proof of immunization to measles, mumps, and rubella as well as respond to the meningitis information form.

2. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all registered students regardless of credit hours, matriculation status or course delivery method.

3. Policy Requirements for Proof of Immunity

A. Measles, Mumps Rubella (MMR)

One of the following is required:

1. If given as a combined dose instead of individual immunizations

Dose 1: Immunized no more than four days prior to first birthday and after 1971

Dose 2: Immunized as above and at least a minimum of 28 days after the first dose;

OR

2. If individual doses are given

Measles- Two doses at least 28 days apart, given no more than four days prior to first birthday

Mumps- One dose no more than four days prior to first birthday

Rubella (German Measles)- One dose no more than four days prior to first birthday

OR

3. Serological Evidence of Immunity-Student must provide a lab report with titer date and results for Measles, Mumps and Rubella. Equivocal titers are not acceptable.

B. Meningococcal Disease. The University must distribute information about meningococcal disease and immunization to its students, or parents/guardians of students under the age of eighteen (18), accompanied by a response form. Acceptable documentation includes any of the following:

1. A vaccine record indicating at least one (1) dose of meningococcal ACWY vaccine within the last five (5) years or a complete 2- or 3-dose series of MenB without a response form;

OR

2. A signed response form with a vaccine record (if a student submits a response form selecting this option, a vaccine record must be attached);

OR

3. A signed response form indicating the student will obtain meningococcal vaccine within thirty (30) days; or 4. A signed response form indicating that the student will not obtain immunization against meningococcal disease. If the student has not received meningococcal vaccine within the past five (5) years, then they must submit the response form.

Exemptions from Immunization Requirements

A. Medical Exemption.

1. If a licensed physician or nurse practitioner, or licensed midwife caring for a pregnant student certifies in writing that the student has a health condition which is a valid contraindication to receiving a specific vaccine, then a permanent or temporary (for resolvable conditions such as pregnancy) exemption may be granted. This statement must specify those immunizations which may be detrimental and the length of time they may be detrimental. The University shall review records of temporarily exempted persons periodically to see if contraindications still exist.
2. In the event of an outbreak, the University shall take necessary precautions to protect medically exempt individuals from exposure. This may include exclusion from classes or campus.

B. Religious Exemption.

1. A student may be exempt from vaccination if, in the sole opinion of the University, that student or student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of those less than eighteen (18) years old, holds genuine and sincere religious beliefs which are contrary to the practice of immunization.
2. The request for a religious exemption must be made in writing. A student requesting a religious exemption may be required to submit additional information including, but not limited to:
 - The length of time you have adhered to the principles and practice of your faith;
 - The impact your religious beliefs have on other medically related matters,

including whether you are opposed to all immunizations, and if not, the religious basis that prohibits particular immunizations;

- Clarification regarding whether all (or most) practitioners of this faith also adhere to the practice of refusing immunizations.
- A statement of how the student or parent (if student is under 18 years of age) feels accepting immunization would compromise their beliefs
- A letter from a qualified leader of the religious group which address/substantiates this information

You will be notified of the outcome of this request after the University Wellness Center has reviewed all pertinent information.

3. In the event of an outbreak, the University shall take necessary precautions to protect religious exempt individuals from exposure. This may include exclusion from classes or campus.

C. Date of Birth.

1. If a student is born prior to January 1, 1957 that student does not need to provide proof of immunization to measles, mumps, and rubella because they are considered to have developed immunity.
2. A student qualifying for this exemption must still submit the required meningococcal disease documentation.

D. Course Delivery Method

1. Students registered for online-only courses are exempt from vaccination requirements as long as they will not be attending any classes on campus or in any off-campus group setting with other students.
2. Students residing in St. Joseph's University off campus housing are not eligible for this exemption.

Proof of Compliance/Exemption

Records of Immunization shall be prepared by a physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner, and shall specify the vaccines and provide dates of administration. It may also show physician-verified history of disease, laboratory evidence of immunity or medical exemption. This includes documents such as a certificate from a physician, a copy of the immunization portion of the cumulative health record from a prior school, a migrant health record, a union health record, a community plan record, a signed immunization transfer card, a military dependent's "shot" record, the immunization portion of a passport, an immunization card signed by a physician, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner, or an immunization registry record.

Procedures

The Office of Enrollment Management will provide instruction to all new students on submitting the required immunization documentation to the University Wellness Center prior to or at the time of registration. The University Wellness Center will be responsible for maintaining a list of students who have failed to submit required documentation. The University Wellness Center will track students in the process of obtaining their immunization records in our Colleague software system. Students who have not submitted all required immunization forms after email correspondence at (3) weeks, two (2) weeks and one (1) week prior to the start of classes will not be allowed to attend classes and will subsequently be withdrawn from St. Joseph's University. The University Wellness Center will report these individuals to the Vice President for Student Affairs who will then notify the Registrar's Office in order to do so.

Outbreak Control Strategies

A. Measles

1. Any individual with a fever and generalized rash will be suspected as having measles and will be reported immediately to the state health department by the University Wellness Center. The state health department will determine if outbreak procedures should be initiated before serological results are available. While the state health department is confirming the diagnosis with serological studies, the University Wellness Center will review the immunization records and identify all students and employees lacking two doses of measles vaccine or documentation of physician-diagnosed disease or serological immunity ("susceptibles").
2. If the suspected case is confirmed, all susceptible students and employees will be immunized as soon as possible. Anyone born before 1957 can generally be considered immune, but will be encouraged to get the vaccine if they do not remember having measles. Any student or employee who remains susceptible will be excluded from campus until the state health department deems it is safe to return.

B. Mumps

1. Any individual with acute swelling of the parotid or other salivary glands lasting two or more days will be suspected of having mumps unless ruled out by a physician. The state health department will be notified by the University Wellness Center to evaluate the case and to determine if outbreak procedures should be initiated before serological results are available. While the state health department is confirming the diagnosis with serological studies, the University Wellness Center will review

immunization records and identify susceptibles.

2. If the suspected case is confirmed, all susceptible students and employees will be immunized as soon as possible. Anyone born before 1957 can generally be considered immune, but will be encouraged to get the vaccine. Any student or employee who remains susceptible will be excluded from campus until the state health department deems it is safe to return.

C. Rubella

1. Any individual with a rash accompanied by a mild fever and arthralgia/arthritis (aching muscles and joints) or lymphadenopathy (swollen lymph nodes) will be suspected of having rubella until ruled out by serologic testing. The University Wellness Center will notify the state health department to determine if control measures should be initiated before serological confirmation. While awaiting serological confirmation, the University Wellness Center will review records to identify individuals who may be susceptible.
2. There is no “cut-off” year to determine immunity from natural disease. All students, regardless of age, will be requested to demonstrate immunity.
3. If the suspected case is confirmed, all susceptible students and employees will be encouraged to get immunized as soon as possible. Any student or employee who remains susceptible will be excluded from campus until the state health department deems it is safe to return.

D. Meningococcal Disease

1. Common symptoms of meningococcal disease include a sudden fever, headache, stiff neck, nausea and vomiting, red-purple skin rash, weakness, feeling very ill, and eye sensitivity to light. If an individual is suspected of having meningococcal disease, the University Wellness Center will notify the state health department to determine if control measures should be initiated before serological confirmation. While awaiting serological confirmation, the University Wellness Center will review records to identify individuals who are susceptible.
2. If the suspected case is confirmed, all susceptible students and employees will be encouraged to get immunized as soon as possible. Any student or employee who remains susceptible will be excluded from campus until the state health department deems it is safe to return.

4. Confidentiality and Retention of Immunization Records

Student immunization records may contain protected health information. Therefore, immunization records are kept confidential. The University keeps both a hard copy and a Colleague computer record of students' immunization record. Hard copy records will be destroyed after the University Wellness Center has reviewed them, deemed them legitimate and an electronic record has been made. The Colleague computer record will be kept indefinitely.

5. Definitions

A. Attendance – the student's physical presence on campus (i.e., classes, dorm residence and other curricular and extracurricular activities).

B. Withdrawal – process whereby noncompliant students are not permitted continued attendance at the University

C. Immunization – an adequate dose or doses of an immunizing agent which meets the standard approved by the United States public health service for such biological products, and which is approved by the state department of health under such conditions as may be specified by the public health council.

D. Student – any person registered for one or more University courses