



I. Title

School of Health Professions Student Drug Testing Policy

II. Policy

UT Health San Antonio is committed to providing a safe workplace for all employees, students, and patients. Accordingly, the UT Health School of Health Professions (SHP) requires that all health professions students have a negative urine drug screen. All students will be required to provide a drug screening prior to matriculation and at other times, as deemed necessary by the School or its clinical sites. All screenings are completed at the student's expense.

Substances tested for may include amphetamines, cocaine, marijuana, opiates, phencyclidine (PCP), benzodiazepines, barbiturates, methadone, methaqualone, propoxyphene, THC, and ethanol urine; and other substances as may be required by a health care facility at which the student is assigned for a clinical rotation. Drug screen results will not be accepted from a non-UT Health San Antonio SHP approved screening vendor.

A student's drug screen is not considered positive until a Medical Review Officer (MRO) has determined that the results are not due to legally prescribed and appropriately taken prescription medications.

III. Background

Patient safety concerns have led many health care institutions and clinical facilities to require drug testing of health care providers. In addition to the SHP's belief that this is an appropriate patient safety decision, drug testing is now a prerequisite for an increasing number of facilities to accept student assignments. The SHP requires drug testing of all incoming students and at other times, as deemed necessary, such as prior to beginning clinical rotations.

This policy represents the SHP's commitment to balance the needs of students, while protecting the interests of patients. It outlines the procedures and confidentiality safeguards that are integral to the drug screen process. To this end, the School of Health Professions Faculty Council has approved these policies and procedures.

IV. Procedures

- A. The Drug Screening must be completed within the timeline indicated on the SHP website and in the Student Handbook. This information can be found on the SHP website at:
<http://catalog.uthscsa.edu/schoolofhealthprofessions/policiesandregulations/>
- B. A negative (“clear”) test is required for admission to a SHP professional program and for participation in clinical rotations and continuation in the program.
- C. Retesting may be required, if an assigned clinical facility requires a more recent test result than is provided by SHP policy.
- D. SHP has an approved vendor to conduct drug testing for all students.
- E. Students will receive instructions on how to initiate the screening process in a pre-matriculation packet.
- F. Some clinical sites may require additional testing at their facility or with their approved vendor.
- G. Prior to collection, students have the opportunity, but are not required, to disclose the use of any prescription medications they believe may result in a positive test.
- H. If a student fails to participate or fails to provide a negative drug screening he/she will not be allowed to begin or continue in the curriculum.
- I. The student may make a request to the MRO to repeat a failed drug test at their own expense.
- J. The decision of the MRO regarding test results and reporting is final and not subject to appeal.
- K. *Non-matriculated Students:* A non-matriculated student with a positive drug test will be reported to the Associate Dean of Academic & Student Affairs and may have his or her offer of admission rescinded.
- L. *Matriculated Students:* A matriculated student with a positive drug test will be reported to the Associate Dean of Academic & Student Affairs for possible disciplinary action as authorized by the [University of Texas System Regent’s Rules and Regulations](#). **
 - a. Students will be referred to one of the UT Health San Antonio Student Counseling Center approved substance abuse treatment programs. The student needs approval from Student Counseling Center prior to enrollment in a treatment program. The student is responsible for the cost of the treatment program.

- b. Following documentation of satisfactory completion of an approved substance abuse treatment program, the student may petition for re-admission or continuation to the program's Student Progress Committee.
- c. Petition for re-entry does not guarantee re-admission or continuation in the program.

V. Testing Process

- A. Process information is available on the approved vendor website. Students must be in compliance with all approved vendor policies and procedures.
- B. The Associate Dean of Academic & Student Affairs will have access to the vendor's secure database portal to view the results of the drug screening throughout the time the student is enrolled at UT Health San Antonio.
- C. If drug or alcohol use is suspected as a cause of unsafe or erratic behavior in students at any time, a drug screen may be required (at the student's expense) by a UT Health SHP faculty member or administrator.
- D. A student may not begin or continue coursework (clinical or non-clinical) until a negative ("clear") test report is received and the student has satisfactorily fulfilled requirements set forth in this policy.

VI. Related UT Health San Antonio Policies and Procedures

<https://www.utsystem.edu/board-of-regents/rules/50101-student-conduct-and-discipline>
<https://uthealthsa.sharepoint.com/RAC/Documents/HOP/Chapter14/14.1.1.pdf>

VII. Definitions

Medical Review Officer (MRO): A licensed physician responsible for receiving laboratory results, who has knowledge of substance abuse disorders and has appropriate medical training to interpret and evaluate an individual's positive test result together with that individual's medical history and any other relevant biomedical information.

** students enrolled in a contract program (SAFD or US Army) have previously established drug screening regulations and are not included in this policy.