

## NEW LAW REPLACES MANDATORY TUBERCULOSIS TESTING REQUIREMENTS

On September 15, 2014, Governor Brown signed AB 1667 (Chapter 329, Statutes of 2014) into law which replaces current mandatory tuberculosis (TB) testing for pre-K and K-12 school employees and volunteers with a TB risk assessment administered by a health care provider. This new law requires that only those who are identified as having a TB risk factor will undergo a TB test.

According to Assembly Member Das Williams, the bill's author, this targeted approach will allow for more efficient use of TB testing drugs, which have been experiencing nationwide shortages since April 2013. It is also expected that this change will reduce the cost of TB testing for school districts, to the extent that districts have been reimbursing applicants and employees for the cost of TB tests.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, TB tests are generally not needed for people with a low risk of infection with TB bacteria. Certain people should be tested for TB bacteria because they are more likely to get TB disease, including people who have lived with someone who has TB, people who have lived in places where TB is more common, people with compromised immune systems and people with symptoms of TB.

This new law requires the State Department of Public Health (CDHP), in consultation with the California Tuberculosis Controllers Association (CTCA), to develop a risk assessment questionnaire, to be administered by a health care provider, to conduct the tuberculosis risk assessments.

Beginning on January 1, 2015, the screening and testing regime is as follows:

- A person shall not be initially employed by a school district, or employed under contract, in a certificated or classified position unless the person has submitted to a tuberculosis risk assessment within the past 60 days.
- If no risk factors are identified, an examination is not required. Employees who have not identified risk factors or who test negative for TB are required to undergo screening every four years.
- If tuberculosis risk factors are identified, the person must be administered a TB test.
- If the TB test is positive, it must be followed by a chest x-ray to exclude active infectious TB.
- If a person has a documented positive TB test for infection followed by an x-ray, the questionnaire is no longer required for that person, but the person will need to self-report to his or her primary care physician if signs of TB develop.

The questionnaire can be found at the following link:

[http://ctca.org/fileLibrary/file\\_664.pdf](http://ctca.org/fileLibrary/file_664.pdf)

A FAQ document prepared by the CDHP and CTCA can be found at the following link:

[http://ctca.org/fileLibrary/file\\_665.pdf](http://ctca.org/fileLibrary/file_665.pdf)

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