



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about TB Testing for Students, Children and School/Child Care Employees — Hawaii Administrative Rules 11-164.2

Do all students need a TB test?

All students, over 12 months of age, enrolling for the first time in child care, school or college need to have a TB clearance, but not everyone will need a TB test. For childcare or school, a clearance on or after 12 months of age is valid and this clearance does not expire for school attendance K-12th grade. Students taking online or off campus classes only do not need a TB clearance.

Do school or child care employees need clearance? What about volunteers?

Child care employees need to have a TB clearance within 12 months before hire. They need a new clearance if they move to a new center. School and college employees need a TB clearance within 12 months before hire or after their 16th birthday. This clearance does not expire for school employment. All child care volunteers need a TB clearance, but only those school volunteers who will be working more than 30 days in a year will need clearance.

My child had a TB clearance when she first went to school. Does she need a new clearance for high school or college?

The clearance is still good for high school. However, she will need a new clearance for college in Hawaii. Also, if she takes college courses, on the college campus while enrolled in high school, she will need a new clearance on or after 16 years of age. This clearance does not expire and is good for later college attendance.

Who needs a TB test?

Persons who have spent time in countries where TB is more common, were exposed to someone with active TB disease, have a severely weakened immune system, have TB symptoms or children who have someone in their household from a country where TB is more common need to be tested. People with TB symptoms will also need a chest x-ray to check for active TB disease.

What countries have more TB?

It is easier to list the areas where there isn't much TB disease; The United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Western and Northern Europe. All other countries are considered to have enough TB disease that spending a significant amount of time there might put a person at risk for getting TB infection.

Can I have a blood test instead of a TB skin test?

A blood test, commonly called an IGRA, can be substituted for the skin test in persons who need a TB test. Only one blood test is currently available in Hawaii, the Quantiferon Gold In-Tube test. These can be ordered through your doctor. However, these tests are not currently accepted for children under 2 years old and cannot be used for TB clearance in these children. This test can also be expensive and the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) will only be doing the TB skin tests for clearances.

How do I get a TB clearance?

You can contact your health care provider or you can go to one of the DOH clinics. The clinics and locations can be found on the DOH website at www.health.hawaii.gov/tb or by calling (808) 832-5731. All screening and testing is free and no appointment is needed. Please bring a photo ID and children under 18 years of age will need to come with a parent or guardian, or with a responsible adult and a note from the parent/guardian giving permission for testing. If your doctor is sending you to one of the DOH clinics, please bring the referral from your doctor.

Where can I get more information?

More information can be found on the DOH website at www.health.hawaii.gov/tb, or by calling the TB Control Branch at (808) 832-5731.