



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
College of Science & Health
Physician Assistant Program

Health Requirements & Immunizations

General:

The Charles R. Drew University Physician Assistant Program has several health requirements that students must comply with prior to starting class **each year**. All required health and immunization documents **must** be completed by the designated deadline. Students failing to provide required health & immunization information or failing to meet designated deadlines will not be allowed to start the program.

Health/Medical Insurance:

All incoming physician assistant students must obtain health/medical insurance through the University. **At the start of classes and clinical rotations, students must show proof of health care coverage to enter classes. Health care insurance is required for the entire 27 months of the program.** Students must purchase health insurance through the university insurance agent unless they can show proof of other adequate coverage. A student may opt out of the University health care coverage only if they can provide documentation of valid medical insurance that will cover them for the **duration** of the PA program. The policy regarding health insurance is located online and in the University Catalog.

The university policy states: "Based on CDU student input in December 2011 and effective Fall 2013, **CDU requires all full-time undergraduate and graduate students to maintain adequate health insurance that covers them every day of their higher education career while enrolled at CDU.** CDU's health insurance plan is underwritten by United Insurance Company and serviced by Gallagher Koster."

For further information on Health Insurance visit the University website at: <https://www.cdrewu.edu/students/Insurance>. Additional information is also available in the most current University Catalog.

Health Information:

Students will receive an e-mail notification from CastleBranch.com with instructions to sign up and upload the required health documents prior to entry into the PA program. Please **DO NOT** send any health information to the PA program. Student health records are confidential and must **NOT** be accessible to or reviewed by faculty or staff except for immunization and tuberculosis screening results, which may be maintained at the PA Program and confidentially released to clinical sites with written permission from the student. Needle stick/sharp reports, results of drug screening, or criminal background checks are **NOT** considered part of the student health record.

Students will be required to provide information on immunizations & titers as well as a health history and recent physical examination. These documents are available on www.CastleBranch.com once an account has been established. Uploaded documents will be



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
College of Science & Health
Physician Assistant Program

reviewed by CastleBranch.com to verify compliance with PA Program requirements. These documents will either be accepted or rejected. Once accepted, you are considered in compliance for that specific requirement.

Annual Requirements: The following requirements must be completed by every PA student **annually** while in the PA Program:

- tuberculosis screening
- physical examination
- influenza vaccination

Please note that the deadline for completion of annual requirements may differ for each student based on the date the initial requirement was completed. It is the **student's responsibility** to remain vigilant as to when their annual requirements are due, and every effort should be made to complete the requirements prior to their expiration. Students are notified if there are any deficiencies in required documentation or if their documentation is rejected from CastleBranch. It is then up to the student to correct any deficiencies and provide proof of the corrections to remain in compliance.

Students who fail to comply with these requirements will **not** be allowed to attend class, labs, or clinical rotations. Unexcused absences are applied to any absences obtained secondary to health requirement incompliance. Students will additionally be subject to referral to the Student Support and Progression Committee (SSPC).

Clinical year students may be required to complete additional tuberculosis screenings based on the onboarding requirements for individual sites. The PA Program is unable to override individual clinical site requirements.

Immunizations:

As required by the State of California, Charles R. Drew University, Clinical Affiliation Agreements and the PA Program, ALL students entering the PA program must document proof of immunizations and in some cases, **proof of titer** (see below for details), for the following:

- **Current Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis** (Tdap within 10 years)
- **Polio:** dates of primary series and booster
- **Hepatitis A:** dates of primary series
- **Hepatitis B*:** positive lab titers confirming immunity. Vaccination dates if known.
- **Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR):** positive lab titers confirming immunity. Vaccination dates if known.
- **Varicella:** positive lab titers confirming immunity. Vaccination dates if known.
- **Meningococcal Vaccine:** dates of primary series and booster
- **Tuberculosis Testing.** Complete **ONE** of the following:

PPD: **Two-Step** method performed 1-3 weeks apart (per CDC guidelines)

- Interferon-gamma release assay (IGRA) testing: *QuantiFERON®* TB Gold blood test: Must be completed in the USA within 2 months of entering the program. Submit copy of lab report.

AND

- Chest Radiograph: if IGRA or PPD positive. Submit chest radiograph performed in the USA within 2 months of starting the program.



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
College of Science & Health
Physician Assistant Program

- **COVID-19: Full vaccination with booster as recommended by vaccine type. Requirement is subject to change based on ongoing national, state, and local guidelines.**

Please note: dates of disease and dates of immunizations are **NOT** acceptable when **proof** of titer is required. Students must provide the program with **PROOF OF TITER** by uploading results to www.castlebranch.com

Titer Requirements:

The following immunizations REQUIRE proof of titer:

- Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR)
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella

All titers will require the upload of laboratory results; documentation from a medical provider is not accepted as proof of immunity. The deadline for health information submission is between June – August of the admission year. The program will send specific deadline requirements to accepted students. If there are any problems or questions with uploading information, please contact CastleBranch.com.

Students should save their log-in and password information as it is needed during the clinical year when students will be required to release information to clinical sites that require it.

***Hepatitis B Vaccine and Titer Information:**

All incoming physician assistant students must have either started or completed the Hepatitis B vaccine series and show proof of titer. The Hepatitis B titer must be provided **no more than 6 months prior to entering the PA program and will need to be repeated for entry into the clinical year**. If a student is in the process of receiving the Hepatitis B series (3 immunizations), they must provide the program with the date(s) of immunizations received. These students will be allowed to start the program but must complete the series at the designated times, as well as provide the titer.

If you are Hepatitis B positive: Incoming students who have **tested positive for Hepatitis B** (for which immunization would otherwise be required) are strongly recommended to consult with an Infectious Disease specialist for management of Hepatitis B. Viral load and other testing, as well as recommended treatments, allow for appropriate infection control procedures to minimize exposure of others (patients, health care colleagues, etc.). Appropriate infection control procedures may include, for example, use of double-gloves and/or use of “hands-free” technique. Each clinical site has its own institution-specific infection control policies and procedures to which the student must adhere.

Due to privacy restrictions, the University is unable to share information about positive test results with the student’s clinical rotation sites or otherwise intervene for a student who may have Hepatitis B or another blood borne pathogen. Thus, any student who may have a communicable disease is **strongly** recommended to be proactive and obtain the support needed



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
College of Science & Health
Physician Assistant Program

to ensure their educational experience and enrichment, as well as the safety of patients and colleagues.

For more information, please see the recommendations set forth in the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America ("SHEA") Guideline for Management of Healthcare Workers Who Are Infected with HBV, HCV, and/or HIV:

https://www.sheaonline.org/images/guidelines/BBPathogen_GL.pdf

***Please note*:**

- For those students who have not previously received certain immunizations, it may take **up to 6 months** to receive the full series and have titers drawn. Students should allow themselves enough time to complete this requirement.
- Federal and state laws allow students and employees to decline certain vaccinations. If a vaccination is declined, an Immunization Declination Form with CDU must be completed, and students must additionally comply with policies & procedures specific to each clinical site regarding vaccine declination. Immunization declination may interfere with the student's ability to enter clinical year, complete their required clinical rotations and graduate.
- If a student has a nonresponse to the Hepatitis B vaccine series (i.e. you have had the vaccine, but your titers do not show immunity to Hepatitis B), the student should contact their medical provider for CDC (Centers for Disease Control) recommendations regarding immunization status.

Clinical Site Requirements:

Students will be required to sign an authorization permitting the University to share their immunization status with third parties, including clinical rotation sites, as necessary to address classroom, lab and clinical site rotation requirements and any safety issues and occupational exposure risks.

Each clinical site has its own institution-specific infection control policies and procedures to which the student must adhere. The information shared will be based upon the compliance and records the student has uploaded to www.castlebranch.com and EXXAT. It is imperative that the students remain current with uploading information to the website. If a student does not maintain compliance with the requirements **they may be removed from the clinical rotations until they comply**. It is imperative that the students remain current with uploading information to the website and pay attention to when certain items are set to expire. If a student does not maintain compliance with the requirements, **they may be removed from the clinical rotations until they comply**.

Students will be given access to their clinical year portal on Exxat in the spring-summer of didactic year. Students must closely follow directions to upload all necessary health documentation in EXXAT by the required deadline as provided by the program and are responsible for scheduling doctor's appointments and lab visits to meet the deadlines. Students who do not complete their EXXAT profile by the provided deadline and maintain the profile throughout the clinical year, may be referred to the Student Support and Progression



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
College of Science & Health
Physician Assistant Program

Committee (SSPC) and be unable to start clinical rotations on time and delaying graduation.

Immunization Standard:

If a student is unable to confirm immunization status or unable to obtain immunizations due to personal, religious, or medical reasons, the Charles R. Drew PA Program **cannot guarantee your placement at a clinical site**. Completion of all clinical rotations is required for successful completion of the program.



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
College of Science & Health
Physician Assistant Program

CDC Pink Book

Please follow the link for detailed information:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/index.html>

The Epidemiology and Prevention of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases, a.k.a. the "Pink Book," provides physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, pharmacists, and others with the most comprehensive information on routinely used vaccines and the diseases they prevent.

This document contains a wealth of reference materials including: vaccine minimum ages and intervals, current and discontinued vaccines, vaccine contents, foreign vaccine terms, and more.

PA Program Technical Standards:

The Physician Assistant Program's Master of Health Science degree signifies that the holder is prepared for entry into the practice of medicine. It follows that the graduate PA student must have skills and knowledge to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care. It is essential for good patient care to require minimum standards for the education of the physician assistant. In the educational process, the university must judge not only the scholastic accomplishments and potential of the student, but also considers the student's current physical and emotional status, cumulative and progressive disability, and drug-induced impairments that may pose obstacles to the safe application of the student's knowledge and skills or prevent effective interaction with patients.

All students entering the graduate physician assistant program must be able to fulfill the PA Program *Technical Standards*. Students are required to thoroughly review the *Technical Standards* with their medical provider. **Both the student and medical provider must sign the document and return it to the PA program prior to the start of classes.**

See policy on drug screen and criminal background checks.

Important Note: The Charles R. Drew University PA Program Principal Faculty, Program Director and Medical Director is not allowed to participate as health care providers for students in the program.



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
College of Science & Health
Physician Assistant Program

