



# Technical Bulletin



**Date:** January 15, 2021

**Topic:** Tuberculosis (TB) Testing Interim Recommendations Around COVID-19 Vaccinations

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**To:** Nevada Healthcare Providers, Healthcare Facilities, Public Health Departments, Correctional Facilities, Infection Preventionists, and Infection Control Departments

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## Situation

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recently released interim guidance on clinical considerations for use of the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines which includes guidance on tuberculosis (TB) testing (see section "Laboratory Testing"). The full CDC *Clinical Considerations* can be accessed at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/clinical-considerations.html>.

## Summary of CDC's Interim Guidance for TB Testing Around COVID-19 Vaccine Administration:

### 1) Interpretations of TB test results in COVID-19 vaccinated persons:

- CDC Statement: "Inactive vaccines do not interfere with tuberculosis (TB) test results. There is no immunologic reason to believe either a Tuberculin Skin Test (TST)... or blood draw for interferon gamma release assay (IGRA) would affect the safety or effectiveness of mRNA COVID-19 vaccines. We have no data to inform the impact of the COVID-19 mRNA vaccines on either TB test for infection".

### 2) Considerations for the *Timing of TB testing* for TB infection of healthcare personnel, patients, and inmates around the administration of the COVID-19 vaccine:

- Perform IGRA blood draw or TST placement *before* COVID-19 vaccination, if possible.
- Post COVID-19 vaccination, defer IGRA or TST until 4 weeks after COVID-19 vaccine 2-dose series completed.
- Situations involving TB contact investigations: please refer to the CDC's [Interim Clinical Considerations](#).
- Weigh the risks and benefits of delaying TST/IGRA in potential recipients of the COVID-19 vaccine.

## Recommendations from the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health TB Program for TB Testing Around COVID-19 Vaccination:

### 1) Perform IGRA blood draw or TST placement *before* COVID-19 vaccination, if possible.

### 2) If TB testing must be delayed 4 weeks after COVID-19 vaccine 2-dose series:

- Create *interim TB infection control protocols* for COVID-19 vaccine-related TB testing delays.
- Document situations where TB testing was delayed, providing vaccination type and dates; perform the TB test no later than 8 weeks following the COVID-19 vaccine series.
- Administer a TB Symptoms Questionnaire and perform TB symptom screening for individuals who are unable to obtain TB testing.
- New hire/pre-placement situations: If IGRA (recommended) or TST cannot be performed before receiving the vaccine, additionally, obtain a physical examination or certification from a healthcare provider indicating the individual is free from active TB disease.

**Resources:**

Nevada Administrative Codes related to TB Testing, NAC 441A.370-380:

<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/NAC/NAC-441A.html#NAC441A>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention TB website: <https://www.cdc.gov/tb/default.htm>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 Vaccination website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/index.html>

Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health: <http://dpbh.nv.gov/>

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