

## Admissions, Enrollment Management and Student Affairs Operating Policy and Procedures

### SON OP 60.115 - STUDENT DRUG TESTING

**PURPOSE** TTUHSC School of Nursing is committed to providing a safe academic environment for all employees, students and those who we serve. In order to uphold the highest standards of the nursing profession, students must remain free from the use of illicit drugs, alcohol or other drugs with the potential for impairing clinical judgment and performance. Therefore, the TTUHSC School of Nursing requires that all nursing students have a negative urine drug screen.

**REVIEW** The OP shall be reviewed by the Executive Associate Dean by October 1<sup>st</sup> of each even numbered year (ENY), with recommendation for revision forwarded to the Dean of the School of Nursing. Final approval of the OP is provided by the Dean.

### INTRODUCTION

All students enrolled at the TTUHSC School of Nursing and who participate in clinical and/or research activities must complete a mandatory drug screening test. This requirement is in support of TTUHSC OP 77.15. Clinical rotations are an essential element in certain degree programs' curricula. Students who cannot participate in clinical rotations due to a positive drug screening may be unable to fulfill the requirements of a degree program.

### Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- A. "Drugs" means all of those drugs included in a current Medical Professional Panel Drug Screen. These include, but are not limited to:
1. Amphetamines (including Methamphetamine)
  2. Barbiturates
  3. Benzodiazepines
  4. Cocaine
  5. Metabolites
  6. Cannabinoids (THC, Marijuana)
  7. Methadone
  8. Opiates (Codeine, Morphine, Heroin, etc.)
  9. Phencyclidine (PCP)
  10. Propoxyphene
  11. Narcotics
  12. Meperidine
  13. Oxycodone
- B. "Student" means any student enrolled in a nursing program at the School of Nursing who participate in clinical and/or research activities.
- C. "Medical Review Officer (MRO)" is a nationally certified, licensed medical doctor or osteopath responsible for receiving laboratory results under this policy who has knowledge of substance abuse disorders and has appropriate medical training to interpret and evaluate confirmed positive test results, medical history, and any other relevant biomedical information. Access to the MRO is through the agency completing the drug screen testing.
- D. "Test positive for drugs" refers to the presence of drugs found in the test sample as identified by the MRO in accordance with guidelines established for healthcare workers.

## **POLICY/PROCEDURE**

1. The use of illicit drugs, alcohol or other substances with the potential for impairing clinical judgment and performance by students is prohibited. Failure to comply with this policy will subject the student to disciplinary action up to and including academic dismissal from the School of Nursing.
2. Drug screens will be conducted prior to placement in all clinical settings, as well as at random times and/or for cause during a student's time with the School of Nursing. Students sign the Drug Testing Consent Form (Attachment A). Health care facilities affiliated with the School of Nursing require that students have a negative drug screen prior to beginning clinical experience in their facility, to ensure a climate of safety for their patients, families, and staff. Therefore, students passing a drug screen prior to engaging in clinical courses is a requirement of the clinical facility and the School of Nursing.
3. Substances tested for include but are not limited to the drugs listed above in the definitions section. Testing for other substances may also be required by a health care facility at which the student is assigned for a clinical rotation.
4. 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 and the student has been offered the opportunity to have their original sample retested at the student's expense.
5. All mandatory requests for drug screening will be sent to the student from the designated School of Nursing staff member. Students have a period of three days from the date of receipt to complete the screening; unless otherwise noted from nursing administration, i.e., Associate Dean/Department Chair.
6. A negative ("clear") test is required for continuation in the program. Retesting may be required if a facility requires a more recent test result than is provided by School of Nursing policy.

### **Consequences:**

#### **A. Negative Test Result**

If the drug test is negative, the student will be allowed to participate in clinical and other educational activities on campus.

#### **B. Positive Test Result**

A student who has a positive drug screen will be prohibited from attending clinical assignments and on campus activities as determined by the Assistant Dean for Admissions and Enrollment in consultation with the Associate Dean/Department Chair. Subsequent to due process and failure to be placed in the clinical setting, the student may be administratively withdrawn from all clinical coursework and may be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal from the School of Nursing.

#### **C. Dilute Test Results**

A dilute test result will require further testing. If a student received a second negative dilute test result, a third test will be required at the student's expense. If a student received a third negative dilute result, the student will be treated as if the result is positive.

#### **D. Refusal to Test**

If a student fails to produce the requested sample by the date and designated time, the student will be treated as if the test result was positive.

The student with a positive drug test will be suspended from enrollment in all clinical coursework for a period of time as determined by the Associate Dean/Department Chair and the Assistant Dean for Admissions and Enrollment; up to a period of one calendar year. In order to be reinstated to clinical coursework, the student must submit a letter requesting re-enrollment. Re-enrollment, if approved by the programmatic faculty, may include additional stipulations, such as:

- Student being required to submit for a blood screen prior to re-admission.

- Student being placed on probation during the remainder of time in the program.
- Consent to random drug screens as ordered by the Assistant Dean for Admissions and Enrollment at the expense of the student;
- Mandatory counseling through the Program of Assistance for students enrolled at TTUHSC or other licensed counselor upon approval by the Assistant Dean for Admissions and Enrollment.

Repeated failure of a drug screen at any point after re-admission following the initial positive drug screen may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Students will be provided access to the TTUHSC School of Nursing Drug Screen Policy and Protocol via Student Handbook and will be informed of this during New Student Orientation (whether Face to Face or Virtual).

## **TTUHSC School of Nursing Drug Screen Protocol**

### ***Traditional BSN and Accelerated BSN Students***

#### **Initial Screening**

Prior to the start of clinical placement, student must pass a mandatory drug screening analysis in order to begin the clinical course. The students will not be made aware in advance when they are being tested.

#### **Random Screening**

Random periodic drug screening will occur on campus/site as determined by the School of Nursing administration throughout the academic year for Traditional and Accelerated BSN students. Failure of drug screen and/or refusal for drug screening will subject the student to actions described under Consequences.

### ***Graduate Students***

#### **Initial Screening**

Prior to the start of clinical placement and in compliance with facility affiliation agreement, students must pass a mandatory drug screening analysis in order to begin the clinical course. Students will be notified of the requirement and the three day turn-around for the mandatory drug screening.

### ***All Students***

***All students, after a period of non-active enrollment within the School of Nursing, may be required to undergo another drug screening test.***

#### **Screening for Reasonable Suspicion of Drug/Alcohol Use**

Any nursing student who demonstrates suspicious behavior consistent with the use of drugs or alcohol, during a semester in which he or she is participating in a clinical experience will be subjected to drug testing (Faculty/Staff Report of Reasonable Suspicion of Drug/Alcohol Use, Attachment B).

The faculty member who observes such behavior will first contact the Program Director, documenting in writing the observed behavior. The decision to refer a student for drug testing will be made in collaboration with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. The decision to test will be made as expediently as possible; no later than 24 hours after reported suspicion. Screening based upon suspicion will occur no later than 48 hours after the reported observation. See Attachment B for a listing of suspicious behaviors (inclusive yet not limited to).

#### **Student Confidentiality**

Maintenance of confidentiality and protection of the rights of the student are critical factors in drug-testing. Every effort will be made to protect the confidentiality of students under this policy, including those who test positive, undergo reasonable suspicions testing or enter treatment programs. Only persons with a need to know will be informed of the drug testing results. Under no circumstance will any TTUHSC personnel or anyone else associated with the drug testing program be permitted to discuss publicly any information acquired in their capacity.

**Results Notification**

The Associate Dean of Student Affairs will receive results (positive and negative). All results will be handled using strict confidentiality. The Programmatic Department Chair and/or their designee will be notified in the case of a positive or dilute test.

**Appeals Process**

Students who test positive for a banned substance may contest the finding within 48 hours following receipt of notice. A written request for appeal must be submitted to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs within the 48 hour time frame. The Associate Dean or his/her designee will request the laboratory to perform confirmation testing on the student's specimen. The second test findings will be final. If the second test results are negative, the drug test will be considered negative. If the second test findings are positive, the student will be responsible for any costs incurred with analysis.

**Right to Change Policy**

TTUHSC School of Nursing reserves the right to change, modify, amend or rescind this policy in whole, or in part, at any time.

**Appendix A**  
**TTUHSC School of Nursing**  
**Drug Testing Consent**

Students must sign this form to participate in the TTUHSC School of Nursing program, per the requirements set forth by the drug testing policy. Any questions or concerns should be discussed with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. This consent form must be signed at the start of the academic program.

**By signing this form, you affirm that you are aware of the TTUHSC School of Nursing drug testing policy and requirement, which provides:**

- A student who tests positive shall be subjected to the sanctions as set forth in the drug testing policy.
- A student who tests positive has an opportunity to appeal the positive drug test.
- The penalty for missing a scheduled drug test is the same as the penalty for testing positive for the use of banned substances.

By signing below, I consent and understand:

\_\_\_\_\_ To be tested in accordance with the TTUHSC School of Nursing drug testing policy, which provides that:

- a. I will be notified of the mandatory testing; and
- b. I must appear for said testing or be sanctioned for a positive drug test.

\_\_\_\_\_ In order to be eligible to participate in the TTUHSC School of Nursing required curriculum design, my drug screen must be negative;

\_\_\_\_\_ To accept consequences of a positive or negative dilute drug test;

\_\_\_\_\_ To allow disclosure of my drug testing results only for purposes related to participation in the nursing program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
R#

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

**Appendix B**  
**TTUHSC School of Nursing**  
**DRUG TESTING REASONABLE SUSPICION REPORTING FORM**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, under the reasonable suspicion clause that is outlined  
 TTUHSC School of Nursing Faculty or Staff Member

in the TTUHSC School of Nursing Drug Testing Policy (SON OP xx), report the following objective sign(s), symptom(s) or behavior(s) that I reasonably believe warrant \_\_\_\_\_ be  
 Name of Student  
 referred to the School of Nursing Department Chair or Program Director for possible drug testing. The following sign(s), symptom(s) or behavior(s) were observed by me over the past \_\_\_\_\_ hours and/or \_\_\_\_\_ days.

**Please check below all that apply:**

<p>The Student has shown:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> irritability <input type="checkbox"/> loss of temper <input type="checkbox"/> poor motivation <input type="checkbox"/> failure to follow directions <input type="checkbox"/> verbal outburst (e.g. to faculty/staff/classmates) <input type="checkbox"/> physical outburst (e.g. throwing an object) <input type="checkbox"/> emotional outburst (e.g. crying) <input type="checkbox"/> weight gain <input type="checkbox"/> weight loss <input type="checkbox"/> sloppy hygiene and/or appearance	<p>The Student has demonstrated the following:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> dilated pupils <input type="checkbox"/> constricted pupils <input type="checkbox"/> red eyes <input type="checkbox"/> smell of alcohol on the breath <input type="checkbox"/> smell of marijuana <input type="checkbox"/> staggering or difficulty walking <input type="checkbox"/> constantly running and/or red nose <input type="checkbox"/> recurrent bouts with a cold or the flu (give dates) <input type="checkbox"/> over stimulated or "hyper" <input type="checkbox"/> excessive talking <input type="checkbox"/> withdrawn and/or less communicative <input type="checkbox"/> periods of memory loss <input type="checkbox"/> slurred speech <input type="checkbox"/> recurrent motor vehicle accidents and/or violations <input type="checkbox"/> recurrent violations of TTUHSC Student Code of Conduct
<p>The Student has been:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> late for lab <input type="checkbox"/> late for class <input type="checkbox"/> not attending class <input type="checkbox"/> receiving poor grades <input type="checkbox"/> staying up too late <input type="checkbox"/> missing appointments <input type="checkbox"/> missing/skipping meals	<p>Other specific objective findings include:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Print Name of Nursing Dept. Faculty/Staff \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Nursing Dept. Faculty./Staff \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed By: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Department of Nursing Chair/Designee \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Associate Dean Office of Student Affairs \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Reasonable suspicion finding upheld  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Reasonable suspicion finding denied

Developed: 2/14/19  
 Approved by: TTUHSC SON Executive Council 3/4/19  
 Reviewed/Editorial Changes: KC 3/2/2020  
 Review/Editorial Changes: KC 3/2/2023

