



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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TO: Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Facilities licensed pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10-161B

FROM: Michael J. Kennedy, J.D., Executive Director *MSK*
Certificate of Need and Licensure Program

DATE: January 6, 2023

RE: Replacement for Rules Regarding SUD Client Tuberculin Skin Testing

The Department of Health (Department) is sending this memo, which supersedes the rules found in N.J.A.C. 10:161B-11.6, to establish a new tuberculin screening process for clients of substance use disorder (SUD) facilities. This memo is the Department's current policy and at a future date, the Department will be amending the various standards in the New Jersey Administrative Code to reflect this new policy.

The Department is adopting the "Tuberculosis Screening, Testing, and Treatment of U.S. Health Care Personnel: Recommendations from the National Tuberculosis Controllers Association and CDC, 2019" published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report; May 17, 2019; Vol. 68; No. 19, as the guideline the SUD facilities are to follow regarding Tuberculosis screening, testing, and treatment for clients. While these standards are addressed to employees of healthcare facilities, the Department feels they are appropriate because epidemiology of TB in New Jersey indicates low prevalence and low incidence of TB

disease among SUD clients in New Jersey. As such, the intended purpose of initial screening is to establish reliable baseline TB results. SUD facilities should perform a baseline tuberculin skin test (TST) at admission and only retest if there is a known or suspected exposure to TB. Those clients with baseline "positives" should be referred for medical evaluations to rule-out TB disease and to consider preventive therapy. There is no need to conduct ongoing/annual screening of those who test negative at baseline. SUD facilities may retest clients who have suspended treatment if it has been greater than one year (i.e., re-establish baseline).

Any future supplements or amendments to these standards promulgated by the CDC are to be automatically followed by SUD facilities for their clients. Facilities are to amend their existing policies and procedures reflecting these new standards prior to implementation.

In addition to the guidance provided above, the Department will allow any of the FDA approved tuberculosis tests (e.g., the Interferon Gamma Release Assay) to serve as a replacement for any specifically named tuberculosis tests that appear in the regulations.

If questions arise, please call Michael Kennedy or Mohamed Salameh of my staff at (609)376-7767.