

## RULES AND REGULATIONS

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# ARTICLE XXIII UNIVERSAL BLOOD LEAD LEVEL TESTING



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ALLEGHENY COUNTY  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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RULES AND REGULATIONS

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ARTICLE XXIII. UNIVERSAL BLOOD LEAD LEVEL

TESTING Section 1. AUTHORITY, PURPOSE, AND SCOPE.

Pursuant to the authority granted to the Allegheny County Health Department under the Pennsylvania Local Health Administration Law, 16 P.S. §§ 12010(f) and 12011(c), this regulation has been promulgated to improve the health of the children of Allegheny County. Universal blood lead level testing will facilitate early detection and referral for treatment of elevated blood lead levels; will reduce the incidence, impact and cost of elevated blood lead levels; will inform parents and guardians of their children's lead exposure; and will enable countywide surveillance of childhood blood lead levels. The regulation applies to all residents of Allegheny County.

Section 2. DEFINITIONS.

*Blood Lead Level.* A measure of lead in the blood, measured in micrograms of lead per deciliter of whole blood ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ).

*Child.* A natural person under 72 months of age who is a resident of Allegheny County.

*Department.* Allegheny County Health Department.

*Director.* The Director of the Allegheny County Health Department.

*Elevated Blood Lead Level.* A blood sample obtained by venipuncture where the serum blood lead level of a person is equal to or greater than the level defined as elevated by the Centers for Disease Control.

*Health Care Practitioner.* An individual who is authorized to practice some component of the healing arts by a license, permit, certificate or registration issued by a Pennsylvania licensing agency or board.

*Record of Blood Lead Level Testing.* Any written or electronic document acceptable to the Director showing the date of blood lead level testing, including, but not limited to health care practitioner records, school health records, and other similar documents or history.

*Blood Lead Level Testing.* A blood sample obtained either by venipuncture or finger stick capillary blood collection used to measure the amount of lead in the blood calculated in micrograms per deciliter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ) of lead.

Section 3. BLOOD LEAD LEVEL TESTING REQUIREMENTS.

- A.** *General Rule.* Blood lead level testing shall be performed in accordance with the following:
- 1.** Children shall receive a blood lead level testing in accordance with the following schedule:
    - a.** Each child shall be tested between approximately 9 months to 12 months of age and again at approximately 24 months of age.
    - b.** All children designated as high risk, as determined by a health care practitioner and based on the child's exposure to lead and any other factors indicating high risk, should receive subsequent blood lead level testing as deemed appropriate by a health care practitioner and in accordance with Centers for Disease Control guidance.
    - c.** Blood lead level testing may be delayed if the health care practitioner is not able to collect a sufficient blood sample for testing.
    - d.** If a child has not had their blood lead level tested between approximately 9 months to 12 months of age and at approximately 24 months of age, then that child shall have their blood lead level tested as soon as possible after 24 months but before 72 months of age or entry into kindergarten, whichever is sooner.
- B.** *Testing Methods.* Health care practitioners shall ensure that blood lead level testing is conducted either by venipuncture or by capillary blood sampling in accordance with current best practices. Capillary blood sample testing results of equal to or greater than the blood lead reference value as established by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) shall be confirmed with a venipuncture test.
- C.** *Exception.* If the parent or guardian of a child objects on the grounds enumerated in Section 4, below, then the testing required by Subsection A, above, may not be performed.

Section 4. EXCEPTIONS.

- A.** *Medical Exemption.* Children need not have a blood lead level testing according to the schedule enumerated in Section 3, above, if a health care practitioner or their designee provides a written statement that blood lead level testing may be detrimental to the health of the child. When the health care practitioner determines that blood lead level testing is no longer detrimental to the health of the child, the child should have their blood lead level tested according to Section 3, above.
- B.** *Religious Exemption.* Children need not have a blood lead level testing according to the

schedule enumerated in Section 3, above, if the parent, guardian, or emancipated child objects in writing to the blood lead level testing on religious grounds or on the basis of a strong moral or ethical conviction similar to a religious belief.

Section 5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT.

- A. The Department shall monitor blood lead level testing data and surveil for elevated blood lead level results among children.
- B. The Department shall make educational materials and other relevant services available to eligible families with children found to have elevated blood lead levels.

Section 6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONERS.

- A. Health care practitioners shall perform blood lead level testing on children in accordance with the provisions of this Article.
- B. Health care practitioners shall report the results of blood lead level testing administered in accordance with applicable Pennsylvania law or regulation.

Section 7. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE.

The provisions of these Rules and Regulations are severable. Should any section, paragraph, sentence, clause, or phrase of these Rules and Regulations be declared unconstitutional or invalid for any reason, the remainder of said Rules and Regulations shall not be affected thereby.

Section 8. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The provisions of these Rules and Regulations shall become effective ten days after the enactment date of an ordinance of Allegheny County approving its provisions.