

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON  
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

**SUBJECT: Drug Screening Policy**

**I. PURPOSE and SCOPE**

Medical students are entrusted with the health, safety, and welfare of patients, have access to controlled substances and confidential information, and operate in settings that require the exercise of sound, professional judgment, and ethical behavior. The University of Houston College of Medicine (UHCOM) has a responsibility to assure that patients are not under the care of impaired professionals. Thus, an assessment of a medical student's suitability to function in such a setting is imperative to promote the highest level of integrity in health care services, the safety interests of patients, a professional workplace, and the medical student's ability to meet UHCOM Technical Standards and obtain licensure.

Additionally, UHCOM is obligated to meet the contractual requirements contained in affiliation agreements between UHCOM and its clinical healthcare partners. To facilitate these requirements, the college may require urine drug screens for enrolled students.

**II. POLICY**

- A. Pre-clerkship – Students will be informed if a pre-clerkship clinical site requires a drug screen.
- B. Clerkship phase - All students will undergo drug screening prior to the start of the clerkship phase of the curriculum as current clinical affiliates require it.
- C. Students may be required to complete additional re-screening at any point, if there is reason to believe a student may be using or misusing drugs or other substances or if there is an extended absence from the education program.
- D. Positive drug screens
  - a. Drug screens are reviewed by an outside third-party vendor.
  - b. Positive results will be reviewed by the vendor's Medical Review Officer (MRO) to determine whether a positive result is due to a legally prescribed medication. The MRO may request additional information from the student.
  - c. A positive test, not due to a legally prescribed medication will result in a report to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, Admissions and Outreach for intervention and/or possible disciplinary action as authorized by policies, rules, and regulations imposed by the College of Medicine or the University of Houston.
- E. The expenses related to drug testing are borne by the student. Drug test results will remain separate from the academic record.

**III. MONITORING OF THIS POLICY**

Compliance with this policy is the responsibility of the Office of Student Affairs.

| <b>Approval History</b>      |               |                  |
|------------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| <i>Approver</i>              | <i>Status</i> | <i>Date</i>      |
| Curriculum Committee         | Approved      | October 12, 2021 |
| UH Office of General Council | Approved      | July 27, 2021    |

| <b>Document History</b>                   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Date Created                              | July 20, 2021   |
| Date Last Modified                        | July 27, 2021   |
| Responsible Office                        | Student Affairs |
| Next Scheduled Review Date                | May 2023        |
| Stakeholder Communication Method and Date |                 |
| Revision History/Purpose                  |                 |