

**New Tuberculosis Testing Rules Take Effect January 16, 2013***Clarification about “volunteers” is forthcoming*

DES MOINES, IA (January 4, 2013) – New Tuberculosis Screening rules taking effect on January 16, 2013 will impact all Iowa licensed hospitals and health care facilities. The rules [481 IAC 59] outline requirements and procedures to conduct TB screenings for health care workers, as well as residents of health care facilities. Additionally, the chapter details the screening process to be used, the risk classifications, and who may conduct TB screenings.

The new chapter was substantially written by the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and is designed to bring Iowa into compliance with TB testing recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The new rules also provide uniformity in the requirements and procedures to conduct TB screening.

The Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) has recently become aware of questions and concerns raised by health care providers regarding the testing of current employees, as well as the testing of volunteers who assist in facilities. The following guidance is hereby provided by DIA regarding the implementation of the TB Screening rules:

- Hospitals and health care facilities will not be required to retest current employees who have previously been tested for TB pursuant to the existing rules. Testing of health care workers hired on or after January 16 should be completed according to the Chapter 59 rules.
- The Department will be working with health care providers, the Department of Public Health, and other stakeholders to clarify the situations and circumstances under which volunteers must be tested or screened for tuberculosis. It is the Department's intent that those who volunteer on a consistent, regular basis should be screened and tested for TB pursuant to Chapter 59.

Additional information about the implementation of the TB Screening rules will be forthcoming as protocols are developed in cooperation with stakeholders.