

# **TUBERCULOSIS EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP FOR PERSONS WITH OVERSEAS TUBERCULOSIS CLASSIFICATIONS:**

## **GUIDELINES FOR PROVIDERS**

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# **Tuberculosis (TB) Evaluation and Follow-Up for Persons with Overseas TB Classifications:**

## **Guidelines for Providers**

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### **Background**

Several hundred immigrants and refugees enter Connecticut every year. These new entrants undergo an [overseas medical examination](#) in their country of departure to determine their health status for admissibility to the U.S. Occasionally, immigrants and refugees may have medical findings that are suggestive of pulmonary TB, or may be recent contacts to a known TB case. These entrants will be given an [overseas TB classification](#) during their overseas examination, and will be recommended for further TB evaluation upon U.S. entry (See Table 1 below).

Connecticut's Refugee and Immigrant Health Program (RIHP), located in the TB Control Program at the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH), tracks overseas TB classifications and immigrant and refugee health. The RIHP notifies appropriate local health department staff and an entrant's sponsor when someone has entered Connecticut with an overseas TB classification.

Upon receipt of that notification, the sponsor and the local health department should ensure that the person with an overseas TB classification receives a U.S.-based TB evaluation. A [TB Follow-Up Worksheet](#), provided in the notification packet, should be completed and sent to the RIHP.

This document presents overseas TB classification definitions, describes DPH's TB classification notification packet, and describes what DPH does with the TB evaluation data it receives. This document does not set out a specific protocol for screening or treatment of all refugees or immigrants with overseas TB classifications. CDC TB guidance for newly-arrived refugees may be found [here](#); CDC TB guidance for immigrants may be found [here](#).

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### **What are Overseas TB Classifications?**

During the overseas medical health assessment process, before entry to the U.S., refugees and immigrants may be given an overseas TB classification. Possible overseas TB classifications and their definitions are shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. TB Classifications Assigned at Overseas Medical Examination**

<b>TB CLASS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>No TB classification</b>	Applicants with normal overseas TB screening examinations.
<b>Class A TB with waiver</b>	Applicants who currently have active TB disease, but have been granted a medical and/or government waiver to enter the U.S. (This happens very rarely.)
<b>Class B1 TB, Pulmonary: No Treatment</b>	Applicants who have medical history, physical exam, or chest x-ray <b>findings suggestive of pulmonary TB</b> , but have negative acid-fast bacillus sputum smears and cultures; and <b>are not diagnosed</b> with TB, or <b>can wait to have TB treatment started <u>after</u> U.S. entry</b> .
<b>Class B1 TB, Pulmonary: Completed Treatment</b>	Applicants who were diagnosed with pulmonary TB overseas in the past and have <b>successfully completed directly observed therapy <u>prior</u> to immigration</b> .
<b>Class B1 TB, Extrapulmonary</b>	Applicants with evidence of extrapulmonary TB.
<b>Class B2 TB, latent TB infection (LTBI) Evaluation</b>	Applicants who have a tuberculin skin test (TST) of $\geq 10$ mm but otherwise have a negative evaluation for TB.
<b>Class B3 TB, Contact Evaluation</b>	Applicants who are a contact of a known TB case.

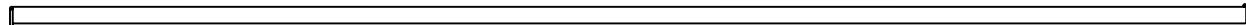
Adapted from: [CDC Immigration Requirements: Technical Instructions for Tuberculosis Screening and Treatment; Using Cultures and Directly Observed Therapy, October 1, 2009, pp. 21-22.](#)

#### How does DPH receive TB classification information about recent refugee or immigrant arrivals?

CDC sends daily notifications about entrants with overseas TB classifications to TB Control and/or Refugee Health Coordinators through its Electronic Disease Notification System (EDN). EDN only sends notifications about refugees and permanent immigrants with TB classifications. Therefore, the RIHP does not receive information about other immigrants, such as tourists, students, or people here on work or other visas that do not undergo this screening.

The EDN notifications include scanned, original overseas medical documents and a transcribed, typed version of those documents. EDN also generates a *TB Follow-Up Worksheet* that U.S. providers should complete to show the results of the U.S. TB evaluation.

When DPH receives notifications about entrants with a TB classification, the RIHP sends a cover letter and a notification packet to both the local health department director and to the arriving person's sponsor (e.g. refugee resettlement agencies and/or sponsoring individuals).



### **The DPH TB Classification Notification Packet**

As mentioned above, the notification packet consists of: 1) Cover letters, 2) a "TB Follow-Up Worksheet" generated by the CDC, and 3) copies of both the scanned overseas medical documents and the transcribed version of those documents.

- **Cover Letters**

Cover letter to entrant's sponsor/sponsoring agency.

Cover letter to director of the local health department of the entrant's jurisdiction.

- **TB Follow-Up Worksheet**

This worksheet is generated by CDC and is pre-populated with available demographic information for the specific refugee or immigrant with a TB classification.

The U.S. medical provider should complete the worksheet after the evaluation (review of overseas medical documents and documentation of domestic TB testing, diagnosis, recommendations for treatment).

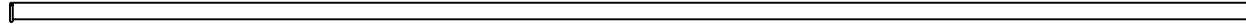
**\*\*No\*\*** medical screening information from the overseas documents should be filled in on the TB Follow-Up Worksheet.

- **Overseas medical documents**

These are electronically-scanned original records of the entrant's overseas medical screenings.

- **Transcribed (typewritten) versions of the overseas documents**

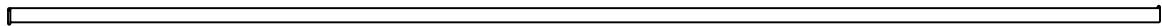
These are CDC-transcribed versions of the scanned overseas documents. Sometimes, the typed documents note, "See Scanned Documents". The scanned overseas documents may include important, but handwritten, information that should be reviewed by the health care provider.



### **What should you do with the notification packet?**

- ✓ Collaborate with the entrant's sponsor/sponsoring agency to arrange or conduct a TB screening/assessment. Assist them in the manner appropriate for your jurisdiction and capacity.

- ✓ Review and/or complete the TB Follow-Up Worksheet with findings from the TB evaluation. If you are acting as the provider, please record the dates of tests, evaluations, treatments, and evaluation disposition, as well as all other relevant information.
- ✓ Send the completed TB Follow-up Worksheet to the RIHP (see contact information at the end of this document).
- ✓ If repeated attempts to contact the individual or his/her sponsor fail, please fill out and send the TB Follow-up Worksheet to the RIHP, noting dates and times of attempted contacts. This enables the RIHP to update and close out the file.
- ✓ If the person has moved, please obtain the new address (and phone number if possible) and send that to RIHP. The RIHP will then notify EDN to transfer information to the new jurisdiction.



#### **DPH Uses of TB Follow-up Worksheet Data**

- Data collection, analysis, and reporting

The findings reported on TB Follow-up Worksheets are a key component of DPH TB control and surveillance activities. As a condition of federal and state agreements and grants, the RIHP is regularly required to submit reports about TB evaluations, diagnoses, and treatment dates.

- Technical assistance and information sharing

TB Follow-up Worksheet data inform DPH TB Control Program staff of emerging TB and other health trends in Connecticut. These data also allow program staff to strategize about program quality improvement, technical assistance, and outreach to sponsors, health care providers, and local health departments in Connecticut.