Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Expanded TB Screening for Humanitarian Parolees

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IGRAs: Blood Tests for Tuberculosis (TB) Infection

• IGRAs – Interferon Gamma Release Assays or “TB blood tests”
• Like TB skin tests, IGRAs are screening tests for TB infection, not disease
• Also like TB skin tests, IGRAs usually remain positive for life
• Two commercially available tests:
  • Quantiferon-TB Gold Plus (QFT)
  • T-Spot.TB Test
• Required by USCIS (US Citizenship and Immigration Services) to be used in place of the TB skin test to satisfy TB screening requirements
Updates

• As of 10/1/23, funding to support IGRA access in MA for Uniting for Ukraine (U4U) arrivals ended.
  • Our Division was able to test 174 arrivals
    • From 49 different MA communities
  • U4U arrivals are expected to meet USCIS attestation for IGRA testing within 90 days of arrival.

• As of 1/5/23, Humanitarian parole pathways opened for persons from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, & Venezuela
  • Must meet USCIS attestation requirement for an IGRA test within 90 days & appropriate follow-up.
New Opportunity

• ELCK-5 Grant
  • Through short term funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), DPH aims to improve access to Tuberculosis services for Humanitarian Parolees
    • Estimate covering the cost of 500-600 IGRA tests via Quest Diagnostics

• Who Qualifies?
  • Humanitarian Parolees from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, Venezuela, & Ukraine
    • Not needed for children under the age of 2
The Process

**Supporter (in US):**
Submits application for persons from one of the five designated countries

**USCIS:**
Approves supporter's application

**Beneficiary* (overseas):**
Receives notification that Humanitarian sponsorship application is approved

**Beneficiary:**
Initiates biometric security checks, pre-departure attestations

**Beneficiary/Supporter:**
Calls LBOH to request help with TB IGRA test

**Beneficiary:**
Must attest to IGRA TB test within 90 days of arrival

**Beneficiary:**
Travels to U.S.

**Beneficiary & Supporter:**
Coordinate and complete travel arrangements
Local Boards of Health’s Role

1. Complete the DPH Humanitarian Parolee: Request for IGRA Test form

2. Fax form to DPH/Division of Global Populations at 617-887-8791.
   a. DPH will create MAVEN-TB event(s).

3. Download the Quest lab order from the MAVEN event(s).

4. Provide education about TB test and identify nearby Quest Patient Centers.
   a. DPH will notify LBOH when IGRA TB test results are available in MAVEN.

5. Provide TB IGRA test results verbally within 5 days of results being available. Mail a paper copy of the lab report together with a result letter to resident.
Resulting

- If the IGRA result is **NEGATIVE**:  
  - Provide brief education and information about TB.  
  - No additional follow-up is needed.

- If the IGRA result is **POSITIVE**:  
  - Initiate referral to the nearest TB clinic.  
  - Provide education and information about TB and the importance of keeping their TB clinic appointment.  
  - Continue to follow-up if person initiates treatment for TB Infection or Disease

- If the IGRA result is **INDETERMINATE**:  
  - Consult with DPH, individual may require repeat testing.

❖ Resulting letter templates will be available on MAVEN Help  
❖ Remind resident to submit their attestation for IGRA TB test results through their own USCIS online portal.
Resources

- Please reference the USCIS websites for in depth descriptions on how humanitarian parole is granted for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, Venezuelans, and Ukrainians (U4U) and subsequent public health attestation requirements.

  - https://www.uscis.gov/CHNV
  - https://www.uscis.gov/ukraine
  - Welcome.us

With any further questions, please call the Division of Global Populations (DGP) directly at 617-983-6970
Thank You!

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