



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

November 1, 2009

RE: Update to the TB Component of the Technical Instructions for the Medical Examination of Aliens in the United States, effective November 1, 2009

New Release of Form I-693, Report of Medical Examination and Vaccination Record [Edition October 14, 2009]

Dear Dr. [LAST NAME]:

We are contacting you to inform you that on November 1, 2009, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), updated the TB Component of the Technical Instructions for the Medical Examination of Aliens in the United States (May 2008) (TB Component of the Technical Instructions) that apply to aliens seeking to immigrate to the United States. The update was effective upon its release on November 1, 2009. In anticipation of these changes, USCIS revised Form I-693, Report of Medical Examination and Vaccination Record [Edition October 14, 2009].

Changes to the TB Component of the Technical Instructions

Under the TB Component of the Technical Instructions (2008) the administration of a Tuberculin Skin Test (TST) was required to screen applicants for adjustment of status 2 years and older (or those less than two years if there was known contact with a tuberculosis (TB) case or other reason to suspect TB) for evidence of cell-mediated immunity to *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. As of November 1, 2009, and under the updated TB Component of the Technical Instructions, the civil surgeon may administer an interferon gamma release assay (IGRA) or a TST to evaluate cell-mediated immunity.

Interferon gamma release assays (IGRA) are blood tests that measure a component of cell-mediated immune reactivity to *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* in fresh whole blood. CDC currently allows the use of QuantiFERON® TB Gold (QFT-G), QuantiFERON® TB Gold in Tube (QFT-G IT) and the T-Spot® TB. If CDC authorizes the use of additional cell-mediated immunity tests, it will publish the information on its website.

Under the update to the Technical Instructions, the civil surgeon is directed to administer only one type of test for cell-mediated immunity (TST, QFT-G, QFT-G IT, or T-Spot) to each applicant. For your convenience, we are attaching a copy of the update to the TB Component of the Technical Instructions to this letter.

The update can be obtained from CDC's website at www.cdc.gov or by clicking on the following link: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dq/civil.htm> (click on Technical Instructions for TB or Updates).

Impact of the changes to the TB Component of the Technical Instructions on the Form I-693, Report of Medical Examination and Vaccination Record

USCIS has anticipated this change and has updated Form I-693. It will implement the changes as follows:

- Form I-693, Edition June 5, 2008, may be used until December 31, 2009, but only if the initial TB screening test method used is the TST;
- Form I-693 Edition October 14, 2009 should be used if the initial TB screening test method used is an IGRA;
- **Form I-693, Edition October 14, 2009, must be used to conduct a medical assessment on or after January 1, 2010.**

For example: You complete and sign a medical assessment on November 15, 2009 and give it to the applicant in a sealed envelope. The traditional TST method was used for the TB assessment and the Form I-693, Edition June 5, 2008, was properly completed. The applicant submits the Form I-693 on March 28, 2010. The form will not be rejected because it was properly completed before January 1, 2010 and the TST was used as a TB assessment method; the form was properly completed on November 15, 2009, and the correct version was used at the time of the assessment.

For example: You complete and sign a medical assessment on November 15, 2009 and give it to the applicant in a sealed envelope. You used an IGRA for TB testing. You properly annotated Form I-693, Edition October 14, 2009 with the IGRA test result. The applicant submits the Form I-693 on March 28, 2010. The form will be accepted because you completed the medical assessment on the newest version, and as per the instruction, annotated the IGRA results on the Form I-693, Edition October 14, 2009.

For example: You completed a medical assessment on November 15, 2009 but did not use the Form I-693, Edition October 14, 2009 to record the IGRA result. You simply attached a copy of the laboratory result to the Form I-693, Edition June 5, 2008. The applicant submits the Form I-693 on March 28, 2010. The form will be returned to have the results of the medical examinations annotated on the new Form I-693, Edition October 14, 2009.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the [Civil Surgeon Coordinator] at [Contact Information]. For your convenience, we are attaching a copy of the newest edition of Form I-693 (Edition October 14, 2009) that is currently posted on USCIS' website. To ensure that you are using the most updated version of the form, we suggest that you are always using the form posted on USCIS' website.

Additional Materials

To explain these changes to applicants for adjustment of status, USCIS released the attached "Question and Answer" information about TB and TB testing for purposes of the immigration medical examination. If helpful to resolve your patients' questions about TB testing and the immigration process, please do not hesitate to provide a copy of the material to your patients. These questions and answers can also be accessed on USCIS' website at www.uscis.gov.

Also, as you well know, for the proper completion of the Form I-693, civil surgeons have to follow the *Technical Instructions for the Medical Examination of Aliens in the United States*, published by CDC. The *Technical Instructions* for civil surgeons, including the instructions on vaccinations, can be accessed at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dq/civil.htm. Any updates to the medical requirements, including TB updates and vaccination requirements, are posted at this site, and civil surgeons are required to be in compliance with any and all updates. Additionally, CDC posts Frequently Asked Questions for civil surgeons on its components of the *Technical Instructions*. They can be accessed from the same link as the *Technical Instructions*. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the medical requirements, you may also contact CDC at CDCqap@cdc.gov.

We appreciate the efforts that you and your staff put forth to stay current with all updates and changes to the medical requirements and forms. You are providing a valuable service to our immigrant community and we look forward to your continued partnership.

If you should have any questions regarding the *Technical Instructions* and its updates, or Form I-693, we urge you to contact your local USCIS civil surgeon coordinator.

Sincerely,

[Name of Civil Surgeon Coordinator, Field Office or District Director]

Attachments:

- Update to the TB Component of the Technical Instructions for the Medical Examination
- Form I-693, Report of Medical Examination and Vaccination Record [Edition October 14, 2009] and its instructions
- Frequently Asked Questions entitled "2009 Update to the Tuberculosis (TB) Screening Required for Adjustment of Status"