
Standard A3.09 The program publishes, makes readily available to current and prospective students, and consistently applies policies based on current CDC health professionals' recommendations and applicable state or country mandates for:

- a) minimum immunization and health screening of students

LR MSPAS Student Policy Manual Section:

4.5.2 Enrollment Requirements

All successfully selected applicants are conditionally accepted into the program pending:

- Verification that all admission requirements have been satisfied
- Meets all technical standards
- Successfully passes the required routine drug test
- Successfully passes a criminal background check
- Submission of Health Forms and Immunization Records

Health Documentation Requirements

4.5.2.1 Immunization Policy

- All Lenoir-Rhyne University MSPAS students are required to maintain their personal health records in good standing.
- Immunizations must be up to date for health professionals based on the CDC and NC guidelines.
 - a. This must be documented prior to starting any clinical rotations or clinical experiences.
- Additional requirements may be made by specific clinical sites, which the student must take care of in a timely manner.
- All immunizations and titers are the financial responsibility of the MSPAS student.
- The MSPAS Program will not allow students who do not complete or do not pass a drug test and background check, as required by preceptor sites, to participate in clinical rotations or clinical experiences.

Proof of immunization is required for specific populations by the state of North Carolina and by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. Failure to meet the NC requirements within 30 days after the first day of class could result in an immediate dismissal from the University as mandatory under the law.

- NCDHHS Division of Public Health website
<https://immunization.dph.ncdhhs.gov/schools/collegesuniversities.htm>
- CDC
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/adult-medical-condition.html>

Physician Assistant Studies (MS) Student Immunizations

Physician Assistant students should provide proof of the annual flu vaccine and proof of other vaccines necessary for health care providers as recommended by the CDC.

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/adult-medical-condition.html> and select (Table 2 - By Medical Condition). Healthcare Personnel recommendations are listed in the far-right column of this Table.

The following immunizations are required.

- **Influenza vaccination annually:** One (1) dose of influenza vaccine each year by November 1st. This is a mandatory yearly vaccine.
 - Provide proof of receiving the influenza vaccine no later than November 1st annually while enrolled in the program. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/adult-notes.html#note-flu> Healthcare workers are a high-priority group for vaccinations because they are more likely to be exposed to the flu through contact with sick patients. They can also spread the flu to close contacts and patients. The findings of a CDC review of related published literature indicate that influenza vaccination of health care personnel can enhance patient safety.

Influenza

Please provide documentation of a current flu vaccination. This must be updated annually

- **Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis vaccination:** Required three (3) doses. Provide a record of receiving one (1) dose of Tdap followed by Tdap or Td booster every ten years. If previously did not receive Tdap at or after age 11 years: 1 dose Tdap, then Td or Tdap every 10 years.
 - Students starting college or university in North Carolina must have gotten three doses of a tetanus/diphtheria (Td) containing vaccine, at least one of which must be tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Tdap). If not, they are required to get them.

<https://www.dph.ncdhhs.gov/programs/epidemiology/immunization/details/tdap-and-tdap-vaccines>

Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis: DTP series

Please provide documentation of completed DTP series.

TDAP

Please provide documentation of a TDAP vaccination administered within the past 10 years. If the vaccination was administered more than 10 years ago; documentation of a current TDAP or TD booster must be provided.

- **Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccination:** Required two (2)-dose vaccine series administered according to NC and CDC guidelines. Record of a positive antibody titer to each validating current immunity OR documentation of a two (2)-dose vaccine series
 - Health care personnel without presumptive evidence of immunity should get two (2) doses of MMR vaccine. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/adult-notes.html#note-mmr>
 - Born before 1957 with no evidence of immunity to measles, mumps, or rubella: Consider 2-dose series at least 4 weeks apart for protection against measles or mumps or 1 dose for protection against rubella
 - Born in 1957 or later with no evidence of immunity to measles, mumps, or rubella: complete 2-dose series at least 4 weeks apart for protection against measles or mumps or at least 1 dose for protection against rubella

MMR 2 shots or Titer

Please provide documentation of 2 doses of the measles vaccine, 2 doses of the mumps vaccine, and 1 dose of the rubella vaccine. (All three together are commonly known as MMR). Serological testing or titer test results are acceptable as well. Healthcare personnel without presumptive evidence of immunity should get two doses of MMR vaccine, separated by at least 28 days. If serological testing or titer is negative; students must repeat the 2-shot series. Vaccines must be administered at least 28 days apart.

- **Hepatitis B vaccination:** three (3) doses of the Hepatitis B vaccine or two (2) doses of Heplisav-B series OR a positive antibody titer validating current immunity.
Hepatitis B series OR titer
Please provide documentation of the 2 or 3 dose Hepatitis B series OR a positive antibody titer showing immunity. If the titer provided is negative; students must repeat the series.
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/adult-notes.html#note-hepb>
- **Varicella vaccination:** two (2) doses of the Varicella vaccine administered according to CDC guidelines OR a positive antibody titer validating current immunity. History of disease is not accepted.
Varicella (chickenpox) 2 shots or Titer
Please provide documentation of 2 doses of the Varicella vaccine or positive titer results with immunity. History of disease is not accepted. If the titer provided is negative; documentation of receiving 2 doses of Varicella will fulfill this requirement regardless of titer results
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/adult-notes.html#note-varicella>

- **Polio vaccination:** Record of the completed primary series of at least three (3) vaccinations. CDC website states complete 3-dose series if incompletely vaccinated.
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/adult-medical-condition.html>

Polio

Please provide documentation about the complete primary series. 3 doses of the Polio vaccine are required. Adults who are known or suspected to be unvaccinated or incompletely vaccinated against Polio should receive and complete the Polio vaccination series with IPV. Adults who completed their polio vaccination but who are at increased risk of exposure to poliovirus may receive one lifetime IPV booster. (Includes healthcare workers or other caregivers who have close contact with a person who could be infected with poliovirus).

- Adults known or suspected to be unvaccinated or incompletely vaccinated: administer remaining doses (1, 2, or 3 IPV doses) to complete a 3-dose primary series. Unvaccinated adults: Unvaccinated adults should be given three doses of IPV at these recommended intervals: The first dose at any time, The second dose 1 or 2 months later: A third dose 6 to 12 months after the second dose
- * Unless there are specific reasons to believe they were not vaccinated, most adults who were born and raised in the United States can assume they were vaccinated against polio as children.

*Note: Complete primary series consists of at least 3 doses of IPV or trivalent oral poliovirus vaccine (tOPV) in any combination.

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/adult-notes.html#note-polio>

- Meningococcal vaccine- (2 doses)-per NCDHHS guidelines

Meningitis

Meningococcal vaccine: (2 doses)-per NCDHHS guidelines. One dose before starting 7th grade or age 12, whichever comes first. A booster before starting 12th grade or age 17, whichever comes first. Exceptions: Students who received their first dose of MenACWY on or after their 16th birthday are not required to receive a booster dose. Students born before 2003 are not required to be vaccinated against meningococcal disease

<https://www.dph.ncdhhs.gov/programs/epidemiology/immunization/schools/college>

The following immunization are recommended.

- COVID-19 Vaccine (Strongly Recommended) annually-
 - This CDC guideline for COVID -19 recommendation can be found at the weblink <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/adult-notes.html#note-covid-19> and select **Routine vaccination** under the COVID-19 vaccination.

Students within the PA Program may be required to provide proof of additional vaccines during their tenure as deemed appropriate by the program and/or the clinical site.

****Please Note: Failure to comply with the program's vaccination requirements could result in the inability to matriculate, a delay in progression through the program, or the inability to graduate on time.**

- An exemption received from LRU may not be accepted by the clinical rotation site. Therefore, the LRU PA Program cannot guarantee clinical placements for students who are not fully vaccinated.
- The immunization requirements for clinical students are set by our clinical rotation sites. All students must comply with the program and clinical rotation site immunization policies at which they are assigned to successfully complete the program. It is the responsibility of the student to keep their immunization record up to date; failure to do so may result in delayed graduation.

How to Obtain immunization records:

Immunization records can be requested from your physician or the state health department in the state of your residency.

Where to submit records:

- All records should be submitted through your PA Program Certiphi portal for the PA program - "Certiphi My Record Tracker".
- All records should be submitted via your application/enrollment portal under "materials" and titled "student immunization records" for the university.

Our PA program also requires:

- Tuberculosis testing (TB) - Negative TB Skin Test/PPD or QuantiFERON-TB Gold
 - Positive results will require the student to receive a chest x-ray and further evaluation.
 - Students must have completed an annual TB skin test or appropriate serum test prior to admission to the program.
 - If a student is a known reactor, by either skin or serum testing, a follow up chest x-ray must be completed and documented.
 - Students will likely need to complete a QuantiFERON-TB Gold within 60 days of the start of clinical rotations, depending on site requirements.

An exemption received from LR may not be accepted by the clinical rotation site. Therefore, the LR PA Program cannot guarantee clinical placements for students who are not fully vaccinated.

The immunization requirements for clinical students are set by our clinical rotation sites. All students must comply with the program and clinical rotation site immunization policies at which they are assigned to successfully complete the program. It is the responsibility of the student to keep their immunization record up to date; failure to do so may result in delayed graduation.

4.5.2.2 Other Health Documentation Requirements

Proof of Current Health Insurance Coverage

- a. Students must provide the program proof of current health insurance
- b. Clinical sites may also require this information prior to start of a clinical rotation
- c. All records should be submitted through your PA Program Certiphi portal- "Certiphi My Record Tracker".

Physical Examination

Completion of a comprehensive physical examination by a licensed medical provider or family doctor indicating that the applicant has been medically cleared for admission is required for program matriculation. Go to <https://www.lr.edu/admission/graduate-admission/admitted-graduate-students> and select Health Forms under "Information & Resources", then choose College of Health Sciences Medical Clearance Form. The forms and all records should be submitted through your PA Program Certiphi portal.

4.5.2.3 Substance Abuse Testing

The Lenoir-Rhyne University PA Program requires students to consent to and pass a substance abuse test, in the form of a 10-panel drug screen, prior to admission and a recheck prior to beginning clinical rotations. The MSPAS Program will inform students of locations that offer these services in close proximity to the Hickory Campus of Lenoir-Rhyne University, as well as their respective costs. The student incurs this expense. Students need to undergo further substance abuse testing at least every 12 months or as required by the healthcare facilities during their training. The MSPAS Program will not allow students who do not complete or do not pass a drug test as required by these facilities to participate in experiential education activities at the facility. Such students may also face sanctions, including possible dismissal from the program. The student is personally responsible for obtaining, paying for, and submitting proper documentation for all required drug screens.

Drug screens are primarily obtained through Certiphi. This service will also be available through CASPA.

4.5.2.4 Background Check

The Lenoir-Rhyne University PA Program requires all incoming PA students to submit to and receive a criminal background check as a condition of initial and ongoing enrollment. The program provides instructions for obtaining the initial background screening to students at the time of enrollment. Students incur the expense of screenings. Both the student and the program should receive the results of the background check with the student's permission.

The background check:

1. Promotes and protects patient/client and student safety, as well as the well-being of the campus community
2. Complies with the mandates of clinical sites that require student background checks as a condition of their written contracts (affiliation agreements) with the Program as stipulated by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)
3. Promotes early self-identification of students at risk for not meeting clinical requirements and PA licensure eligibility requirements in some states
 - a. Students with an identified history of criminal activity risk not successfully completing the required clinical education requirements of the MSPAS Program (required for successful completion of all clinical experiences to graduate)
 - b. To ensure the eligibility of a student with a history of a felony conviction for sitting for the PA National Certification exam, the at-risk student will need to seek clarifying information directly from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) and the state licensing board* in which s/he wishes to practice

* As PA practice laws vary from state to state, it becomes the student's responsibility to know the laws of individual states regarding policies associated with the awarding of a PA license; the at-risk student may need to petition the NCCPA and state licensure agency to request a declaratory order/opinion from the licensure agency. The at-risk student must obtain clarification and eligibility prior to acceptance into the program.

The approved program vendor is: Certiphi

1. Upon matriculation to the program and annually thereafter, all students whose education and training will involve participation in clinical settings are required to undergo a criminal background check.
2. Students are responsible for all expenses related to meeting health requirements, drug screens, and background checks.
3. Applicants who answer "no" to questions relating to criminal background in their CASPA application, who later matriculate and are found to have a positive criminal background check, are likely to be dismissed from the program on the basis of misrepresentation.
4. In the event of a reported incident, a determination about the applicant's/student's continued progress in the academic program will be made by the University in accordance with its policies and procedures.

5. Applicants who have been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor may be denied certification or licensure as a health professional. Information regarding eligibility may be obtained from appropriate credentialing boards.
 - a. Clinical rotation sites may not permit participation in the clinical experience.
6. This should be considered seriously by the candidate prior to application and matriculation. Applicants are advised that results of criminal background checks and other required background screening will be released to third parties involved in their clinical education.
7. Criminal offenses incurred after the student matriculates may result in the student's dismissal from the program. Tuition and fees will not be refunded.

Initial Background Check: a 7-year required background check is to be on file prior to admission to the program

- a. A background recheck is required prior to the start of clinical rotations
- b. There may be additional background checks required based on clinical sites
- c. The student is personally responsible for obtaining, paying for, and submitting the proper documentation for all required background checks

This service is also available through Certiphi.

Clinical rotation sites may require background checks. The NC Medical board also requires a criminal background check prior to licensing. If a student is unable to complete a clinical portion of the PA program due to negative items contained in a criminal background check or failure to pass a drug screening, the student will not graduate. Neither LR nor the PA program will be held liable for the student's failure to obtain state licensing.

The MSPAS Program maintains strict confidentiality related to all information gathered in the process of criminal background checks. Students will be required to give written permission to release the information as required by a clinical site. The program will place copies of these documents in the student's clinical education file. The program will communicate issues with the background check to the student.

- Failure to submit these documents on time could result in sanctions including denying matriculation into or dismissal from the MSPAS Program. If a background check identifies a history of criminal behavior, the MSPAS Program may prohibit the student from matriculation into the program or participation in clinical education courses.

The Director of Clinical Education and the Program Director and/or other University administrative personnel as well as the clinical site will evaluate cases on an individual basis.

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- Clinical sites have the right to refuse placement to any student possessing a history of criminal activity.
 - The program can deny a student admission to the MSPAS Program or dismiss him/her from the program based on clinical placement difficulties related to a history of criminal activity.

Students will be required to have a repeat background check and drug screen at the end of the didactic year before the clinical year starts. The student may be required to complete additional background check(s) and/or drug screen(s) based on clinical site requirements. The student incurs the expenses related to the procurement of both background checks and drug screens, and any additional screening as required by clinical sites or the Program.

Standard A3.09b The program publishes, makes readily available to current and prospective students, and consistently applies policies based on current CDC health professionals' recommendations and applicable state or country mandates for: b) international travel (for programs offering international curricular components)

Currently, the Lenoir-Rhyne University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program does not offer international travel for curricular components.