



The Valley College of Osteopathic Medicine (Proposed)

Health and Wellness Policies

Policy Statement

The Valley College of Osteopathic Medicine (The Valley COM) greatly values the health and well-being of The Valley COM community and understands that health and well-being are composed of many different aspects of care. The intent of this policy is to address required and recommended behaviors and actions for:

- 1) Matriculation
- 2) Preclinical (OMS I and OMS II) Education
- 3) Clinical (OMS III and OMS IV) Education
- 4) Wellness of the Faculty and Staff who support, mentor, and guide students

Pre-Matriculation Health Requirements

At the time of matriculation, students are required to submit proof of personal health insurance and proof of vaccinations/and other requirements to include the following:

- Hepatitis B Series
- Hepatitis B Positive Titer
- Measles, Mumps, and Rubella Vaccine
- Varicella Vaccine or Titer
- Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis Vaccine with Booster
- Tuberculosis Screening via PPD or Quantiferon Testing
- Current (Annual) Influenza Vaccine
- Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine Series

Additional information is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on [Guidelines for Protecting the Safety and Health of Health Care Workers](#).

Vaccinations and Vaccine Exemptions

Osteopathic medical students are future health care workers and will be part of the health care team. As such, all students and pertinent employees are expected to have current vaccinations, as recommended by the CDC.

Therefore, The Valley COM will not waive immunizations or other student health requirements for personal preference. If an exemption is granted, it will only apply to The Valley COM on-campus activities. Affiliated clinical sites may have different requirements for vaccinations and are NOT required to accept The Valley COM exemption. As such, students with exemptions may experience delays in their clinical education or may not be able to meet all educational requirements for promotion or graduation.

Preclinical and Clinical Education Annual Requirements

- Influenza Vaccine
- TB Screening
- COVID-19 Vaccine (based on CDC recommendations)

Drug Screening

All students must complete a Drug Screen, cost covered by the college, prior to beginning the Clinical Education Program in the OMS-III year.

In addition, students may be required to submit a drug screen due to a clinical site/hospital requirement while on rotations, or due to reasonable concerns of alcohol or substance use. The COM has the right to screen if there are signs or symptoms - at student cost. The Valley COM will provide information regarding services from a qualified third-party vendor approved by us.

If an enrolled student has a positive screening result, they will be required to meet with the Office of Student Services and may be referred to the Student Performance Committee for further action.

The Valley COM strongly encourages Student Doctors who believe they may have a problem with Alcohol or Controlled Substances to seek help by contacting the Office of Student Services.

Self-Care and Wellbeing

The Valley COM will address safety, wellness and aspects of self-care through a variety of mechanisms including the following:

- Prioritize student time for learning and by identifying and employing efforts that support meaningful educational experiences with management of noneducational obligations.
- Develop and provide programs that engage and encourage optimal medical student, faculty, and staff wellbeing.
- Provide ongoing education for faculty members, staff and medical students in the identification, prevention and mechanisms for support and mitigation of symptoms of burnout, depression, and substance misuse in self and in others.
- Provide mechanisms to support confidential reporting, self screening for concerns of burnout, depression, substance misuse, suicidal ideation, or potential for violence.
- Ensure provision of and access to confidential, affordable mental health assessment, counseling, and treatment, including access to urgent and emergent care 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Any student, faculty, or staff member who believes they may have an issue that impacts their well being, such as alcohol or drug misuse, gambling, or domestic violence, is encouraged to seek assistance from the Office of Student Services or Human Resources.

Fatigue Mitigation

The rigors and demand of the medical school curriculum may introduce fatigue that manifests in a variety of ways throughout the learning environments. The Valley COM will address fatigue recognition and management strategies as part of the curriculum when and where it is warranted. In general, the following strategies can be employed to help manage fatigue.

- Assure adequate rest before and after clinical responsibilities
- Use strategic napping
- Judicious use of caffeine
- Coordinate with other members of the health care team
- Time management to maximize sleep
- Recognizing the signs of fatigue
- Self-monitoring or employ the aid of others to help monitor performance
- Remaining active to promote alertness

- Maintaining a healthy diet
- Use of relaxation techniques to aid sleep
- When possible, maintain consistent sleep hygiene
- Exercise regularly
- If too fatigued to drive home while on duty:
 - Utilize call rooms or other rest areas for napping until less fatigued
 - Have a list of public transportation services that can be utilized
 - Use of other services such as Taxi/Uber/Lyft or requesting the aid of a colleague to aid in transportation

Students are expected to use professional judgment to ensure adequate rest prior to any curricular activity or clinical duties. However, if a student believes they are too fatigued to safely participate, the student should immediately contact the Office of Student Services.

If a faculty or staff member is concerned that a student is too fatigued to safely participate in educational activities, including patient care, should be reported to the Office of Student Services immediately. The concern will be addressed with the individual confidentially and a plan will be created to mitigate the risk of fatigue.

Issues of Faculty and Staff Fatigue and Fatigue Mitigation are addressed in the Employee Handbook.

Infection Prevention and Control

The Valley COM will train all students and employees in infection prevention and control at least annually and prior to engagement in any clinical activity within the curriculum. Training will include the following:

- Standard Precautions
- Transmission-Based Precautions
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Needle Stick Policy/Exposure to Blood and Body Fluids

COVID

For any concerns or policies regarding COVID-19, The Valley COM will adhere to the most current CDC guidelines.