

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

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**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** February 3, 2014  
**TO:** Physicians  
**FROM:** Douglas M. Kent, MPH  
Administrator  
**SUBJECT:** PROCEDURE FOR TB PATIENT REFERRAL

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All patients suspected of having pulmonary TB should be admitted to the hospital for an inpatient work-up, but if a physician feels admission is not warranted, then Florida Department of Health Bay County (FDOHBC)(formerly known as the Bay County Health Department) personnel will evaluate the patient for TB as an outpatient.

In the past, these patients have been sent to the health department as walk-ins, which unnecessarily exposed other patients and staff to potentially contagious TB. In order to eliminate this exposure, r/o TB patients should no longer be referred as walk-ins to the FDOHBC. These patients should be sent home on at-home isolation and a referral (enclosed) faxed (747-5475) to the FDOHBC in addition to a courtesy call to our Epidemiology Department at (850) 872-4720 ext. 1300 or 1269. Upon receiving the referral our TB staff will contact the patient to conduct a home visit for evaluation. The referral form documenting the outcome of our evaluation will be mailed back to the referring office. The referral form is available from our website at:  
<http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/tuberculosis/tb-forms/documents/tb-1173.pdf>

Patients that are sent to the Florida Department of Health Bay County for a routine evaluation and treatment of LTBI not associated with contact to an active case of TB will be charged on a fee-for-service basis. Patients that are evaluated for exposure to TB as a result of being a contact to a known case will NOT be charged for TB services.

The Florida Department of Health Bay County can no longer process routine outpatient AFB cultures (sputum or urine) for community providers. The cultures should be taken to one of the local laboratories for processing.

If you have questions or concerns about this change in policy, please call the Epidemiology section at 872-4720 ext. 1300 or 1269.

DMK/mf

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**Florida Department of Health**

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