

Policy on Drug Screens

Responsible administrator: Associate Dean for Academic Programs

Last updated/reviewed: 8/3/2023

The pharmacy profession is responsible for ensuring patient health, safety, and welfare. Pharmacy colleges share in this responsibility as entities that are responsible for educating and training student pharmacists and providing direct patient care services. Student pharmacists are involved in practice experiences in various pharmacy settings and throughout the community as required components of the college of pharmacy curriculum. In addition, student pharmacists have access to controlled substances and confidential patient information. Student pharmacists are expected to be non-impaired during all practice experiences to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all patients.

Thus, given the nature of its educational program, the Auburn University Harrison College of Pharmacy (AUHCOP) has a responsibility to ensure patient safety associated with student education and patient care. The college and affiliated training sites are increasingly recognizing the importance of excluding from their facilities individuals who may jeopardize patient care and are requiring drug screens before allowing students to engage in patient care activities. Standards for accreditation such as those of the Joint Commission of Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) may require health care institutions to screen all individuals involved in patient care according to each institution's policies. The AUHCOP must meet contractual requirements in affiliation agreements with its affiliated training sites. Ensuring that our student pharmacists are not impaired is also an increasing concern of the AUHCOP as it expands its own pharmacy services as well as of the Alabama Board of Pharmacy. As licensed interns with the Board of Pharmacy, student pharmacists must be unimpaired to maintain an intern license which is required to matriculate in the academic program.

These policies and procedures outline the process for random urine drug screens for student pharmacists enrolled in the AUHCOP.

1. Prospective student pharmacists will be notified of the requirement for random drug screens in the AUHCOP program materials.
2. Random drug screening will be conducted for all student pharmacists enrolled in the AUHCOP.
3. Costs of the random drug screening program at AUHCOP are included in student fees established by the AUHCOP and collected by the University's Office of Student Financial Services. (Fees are averaged across the entire student body based on the number of tests planned for each year).
4. Random drug screens will include those drugs that are deemed appropriate by the AUHCOP (see Appendix A for current list).
5. Drug screens will be coordinated and conducted by a contracted third-party vendor approved by the college. The vendor will provide security and confidentiality of student data at all times.
6. Drug screen samples will be collected at the AUHCOP (Auburn and Mobile Campuses) by a vendor approved collection team or at vendor approved collection sites. Collection sites are as follows:
 - a. Auburn Campus (P1 through P3 classes) – Oral swab sample collection will take place in a designated area in the skills lab hall in the Walker Building.
 - b. Mobile Campus (P1 through P3 classes) – Oral swab collection will take place in a designated area in the HCOP suite at the University of South Alabama Research Park, Building III.
 - c. P4 Class – Urine sample collection will take place in approved laboratory collection sites (See Appendix B).

7. The AUHCOP will establish a total number of random drug screens to be done annually. The frequency of the random screens will vary to ensure that student pharmacists cannot determine a pattern of screening. A list of eligible student pharmacists will be provided to the vendor prior to the determined screening dates each semester. The vendor will randomly select a set number of student pharmacists to be screened on each date so that the total number of screens is completed annually. The student pharmacist selection will be stratified so that a specific percentage of each academic class is selected for each screening date. An individual student pharmacist may be randomly selected multiple times per year during their enrollment at AUHCOP.
8. Once selected for a random screen, P1-P3 student pharmacists will be notified of their selection via email on the morning of the day in which the sample is to be collected. Student pharmacists will then be required to report for the drug screening by the approved vendor. The notification will include the times when the vendor's personnel will be administering drug screening on the Auburn and Mobile campuses. Students with valid reasons that prevent them from being present to provide an on-campus urine sample should immediately contact the Office of Academic Programs (OAP).
OAP personnel include:
 - Auburn Campus – Ms. Charlotte Cheatham, 334-844-8348, ccc0010@auburn.edu
 - Mobile Campus – Ms. Olivia Shanks, 251-445-9305, oww0001@auburn.edu
 - Assoc Dean for Academic Programs – Dr. Karen Marlowe 334-844-8348, marlokf@auburn.edu
9. Requests for excused absences from on campus drug screening must be received by 10:00 a.m. on the day of the screening. The excuse will be reviewed by one of the aforementioned OASA personnel, each of whom has decision-making authority regarding excused absences.
10. Students who are not present for the on-campus sample collection, and who have not received an excused absence, will be required to provide a sample at an approved collection site (see Appendix B) no later than the close of business on the day of scheduled sample collection.
11. P4 student pharmacists will be notified by email that they have been selected for a drug screen. They will be required to provide a urine sample at an approved collection site (Appendix B) no later than the close of business on the day following the email notification. P4 students with valid reasons that prevent them from being present to provide urine sample should immediately contact the Office of Experiential Programs (OEP). OEP personnel include:
 - Ms. Olivia Shanks, 251-445-9305, oww0001@auburn.edu
 - Dr. April Staton, 334-844-4195, statoag@auburn.edu
 - Dr. Lynn Stevenson, 334-844-4329, tls0002@auburn.edu
12. The vendor approved collection team will follow standard operating procedures for collection of drug screening samples involving chain of custody procedures. In cases of a non-negative sample, the medical review officer (MRO) assesses the results which may include a donor interview and review of documentation in those cases where the positive result is due to a legitimately prescribed substance.
13. Any student pharmacists refusing a drug screen or not reporting during/within the designated time will be reviewed by the Associate Dean for Academic Programs (ADAP). Actions that may be taken in such instances include considering the drug screening results to be positive or assigning the student to an enhanced screening frequency with the costs of additional screening being charged to the student.
14. The vendor will assess the results of all oral swab and urine drug screens according to their established processes, including review as necessary by their MRO.

15. The vendor will report drug screen results only to appropriate approved AUHCOP personnel who are in need-to-know positions. Approved personnel include the Executive Director of Experiential Programs, Department Head for Pharmacy Practice, ADAP, Assistant Dean for the Mobile Campus, and the Dean of the AUHCOP, or other designated AUHCOP employees as the situation warrants. Security of student data is maintained in a password protected online database with the third-party vendor. Paper copies of any student data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in approved personnel offices only. Confidentiality of drug screens will be maintained at all times. Paper copies of student drug screens will be destroyed (shredded) once the student has completed the professional degree program.
16. At the time of sample collection, students will provide a phone number which will be used by the MRO to contact the student about legitimate medical explanations and verification. After a certain number of attempts, the MRO will release a non-contact result to encourage the college to have the donor contact the MRO office to conclude the interview. The MRO will not contact students via email.
17. The P4 electronic registrations are handled somewhat differently than registration for onsite collections. When they arrive at the collection site, students will provide a phone number which will be used by the MRO to contact the student about legitimate medical explanations and verification. After a certain number of attempts, the MRO will release a non-contact result to encourage the college to have the donor contact the MRO office to conclude the interview. The MRO will not contact students via email.
18. Student pharmacists have the right to review their drug screen results. They can contact drugresults@es2.com or they can call 866-859-0143. They will need to verify their name and social or student ID number. The vendor will email the report to their Auburn email address.
19. Positive drug screen results will be reviewed by the ADAP or his/her designee. The ADAP will meet with student pharmacists with positive drug screens. Such students will be referred to the Alabama Board of Pharmacy's Wellness program in accordance with the AUHCOP's Policy on Chemical Impairment (available at: http://www.pharmacy.auburn.edu/prospective_students/professional_degree/chemical_dependency.htm
20. Students with positive drug screen results may be prohibited from completing practice experiences and may be required to disenroll from the AUHCOP in accordance with the AUHCOP's Policy on Chemical Impairment until drug abuse/impairment issues are sufficiently dealt with.
21. Students with dilute-negative results will complete a repeat screening based on the recommendation of the MRO or at the discretion of the ADAP.
22. Sites that request a copy of the student pharmacist's drug screen will be provided access to the student data by the student, not the AUHCOP.

Procedures for additional screening that may be required by some rotation sites:

1. Student pharmacists may be required to complete a separate drug screen prior to any Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experience (IPPE) summer experiences or any Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences (APPE) if the training site requires such a screen. The drug screens may include a 5-panel, 8-panel, 10-panel, or 11-panel drug screen depending on the requirements of the affiliate training site.

2. If a student pharmacist is required to complete a drug screen for an affiliated training site, the student pharmacist will be required to log into the third-party vendor website to register, consent to the screen(s) and provide necessary information. The student will also pay the vendor online for the screen(s). Results of the drug screen will be available to the student for review for accuracy. Students are responsible for reviewing the results of their drug screen. Any challenges to the information in the screen(s) should be appealed by the student through the vendor and/or appropriate channels. The third party vendor may be able to assist the student with initiating this process.

Drug Testing for Reasonable Suspicion

1. Immediate drug testing may be required for those students whose behavior is suggestive of chemical impairment or abuse of drugs. An immediate drug screen may be required for such students as part of the initial intervention. All interventions will be under the direction of the ADAP, and must be conducted by at least 2 faculty and/or staff members who have been trained to conduct such interventions.
2. Findings of the urine drug screen assays will be reported to the ADAP and will be included as part of the student's initial chemical impairment evaluation, as specified in the college's Chemical Impairment Policy.

HCOP Announcement Concerning CBD (or Cannabidiol) Use

08/19/2019

CBD or Cannabidiol is an oil-based compound derived from the Cannabis or Hemp plant. It has become popular as a health and wellness supplement for a variety of ailments such as anxiety and chronic pain. CBD is a separate and different compound from THC, which is the compound in Cannabis that provides intoxicating effects. However, CBD-based products are manufactured from the components of the Cannabis plant, and it is difficult to eliminate 100% of the THC.

CBD is now legal federally and in the State of Alabama. This is the result of the Hemp Farming Act of 2018¹, which removed hemp from the list of plants considered to be a controlled substance and thus products made from this plant are now considered legal agricultural products. All legal CBD products in Alabama must contain no more than 0.3% THC. However, most CBD oil products are available as dietary supplements and thus are not subject to the stringent testing requirements of prescription drugs. A 2017 JAMA study revealed that only 31% of the products they tested were completely accurate in regards to their CBD and THC content.² The study also noted that the content of THC in some of these products may be enough to impair individuals - especially children.

While there are many reputable manufacturers who do remove the majority of THC, even this small amount of THC may be enough to lead to a positive result on a urine drug screen in some individuals using recommended doses. In individuals using CBD in excess of recommended doses, the risk would be even higher. A recent article by consumer reports notes numerous ongoing lawsuits regarding employee terminations for failed drug tests claiming to be from CBD oil.³

Auburn University and HCOP have policies regarding [employee](#) and [student](#) drug testing.^{4,5} While no one will be targeted for using CBD oil, there could be significant issues resulting from using these products, including ramifications with professional licensure.

There are reports of CBD being used to treat a variety of conditions; however, given the current issues surrounding the use of CBD oil, the lack of product regulation, and the inability of current drug testing methods to accurately ascertain the origin of THC, strong caution is encouraged before using these products.

1. U.S. House of Representatives – Committee on Agriculture. Hemp Farming Act of 2018. H.R. 5485. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/5485/text>. Effective April 12, 2018. Accessed August 8, 2019
2. Bonn-Miller M, Loflin M, Thomas B, et al. Labeling accuracy of cannabidiol extracts sold online. *JAMA*. 2017;318(17):1708-9. doi:10.1001/jama.2017.11909.
3. Gill L. Can you take CBD and pass a drug test? Consumer Reports. <https://www.consumerreports.org/cbd/can-you-take-cbd-and-pass-a-drug-test/>. Updated May 15, 2019. Accessed August 8, 2019
4. Auburn University. Drug and alcohol testing program policy. https://www.auburn.edu/administration/human_resources/employee_relations/drug_and_alcohol_policy.html. Updated June 14, 2019. Accessed August 8, 2019
5. Auburn University Harrison College of Pharmacy. Policy on Drug Screens. <https://www.auburn.edu/academic/pharmacy/about/pp/drug-screen.pdf>. Issued February 10, 2017. Accessed August 8, 2019

Drug Screen Addendum Regarding CBD Oil and Positive THC

Given the legality and increased availability of CBD products, we have had some students ask “what if I am using CBD oil and test positive for marijuana/THC?”

Answer: As stated in the AUHCOP’s Policies on Drug Screening and Chemical Dependency we will report all positive tests to the Program Director of the Alabama Board of Pharmacy’s Wellness Program. What subsequently happens is determined by the Wellness Program’s Director and the Board of Pharmacy. Typically, what happens is that the student is asked to surrender his or her internship license and undergoes a several day inpatient evaluation at a facility of the Board’s choosing. The student bears the expense for the evaluation, which often is not covered by health insurance. Subsequent decisions regarding the student’s internship license are made by the Board depending on the results of the evaluation.

Appendix A – Drugs to be tested

- **Amphetamines**
- **Cocaine metabolites**
- **Marijuana metabolites**
- **Opiates/Opioids**
- **Oxycodone**
- **Phencyclidine**
- **Barbiturates**
- **Benzodiazepines**
- **Methadone**
- **Propoxyphene**
- **MDMA/Ecstasy**

Appendix B – Approved Collection Facilities - LabCorp

ST	City	Facility	Drug Screening Hours
AL	Anniston	1412 Leighton Avenue Anniston, AL 36207 256-236-6331	Mon-Fri 7:00 AM – 4:30 PM
AL	Auburn	1518-B Professional Parkway Auburn, AL 36830 334-501-9700	Mon-Fri 8:00 AM – 12:30 PM, 1:30-4:00 PM
AL	Birmingham	153 Narrows Parkway, Suite 202 Birmingham, AL 35242 205-981-2335	Mon-Fri 8:00-11:00 AM, 1:30-3:30 PM
AL	Birmingham	790 Montclair Road Birmingham, AL 35213 205-581-3711	Mon-Fri 7:30 AM – 4:30 PM
AL	Cullman	1890 AL Highway 157, #220B Cullman, AL 35058 256-775-9098	Mon-Fri 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM
AL	Dothan	1034 Ross Clark Circle Dothan, AL 36303 334-792-0902	Mon-Fri 9:00 AM – 12 Noon, 1:00-3:00 PM
AL	Fairhope	D306 South Greeno Road, Suite B Fairhope, AL 36532 251-928-5409	Mon-Fri 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
AL	Florence	1122 Bradshaw Drive Florence, AL 35630 256-776-1395	Mon-Fri 9:00 AM – 12 Noon, 1:00-3:30 PM
AL	Gadsden	302 South 4 th Street Gadsden, AL 35901 256-543-2990	Mon-Fri 8:00 AM – 12 Noon, 1:00-4:00 PM
AL	Huntsville	333 Whitesport Drive SW, Ste 202 Huntsville, AL 35801 256-882-1103	Mon-Fri 9:00 AM – 4:00 Pm
AL	Huntsville	1878 Jeff Road, Ste. F Huntsville, AL 35806 256-489-1050	Mon-Fri 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM
AL	Jasper	3400 Highway 78 E, Ste 103 Jasper, AL 35501 205-221-6697	Mon-Fri 9:30-11:30 AM, 1:30-4:30 PM
AL	Mobile	1201 Montlimar Dr SW, Ste 175 Mobile, AL 36609 251-342-1611	Mon-Fri 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
AL	Montgomery	4135 Atlanta Hwy, Suite 2 Montgomery, AL 36109 334-395-7741	Mon-Thur 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM Fri 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
AL	Montgomery	225-A Winton Blount Loop Montgomery, AL 36117 334-396-8525	Mon-Fri 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
AL	Selma	103 Samuel O. Moseley Drive Selma, AL 36701 334-874-9051	Mon-Fri 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM

ST	City	Facility	Drug Screening Hours
AL	Sylacauga	209 W Spring Street, Suite 105 Sylacauga, AL 35150 256-245-4098	Mon-Fri 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
AL	Tuscaloosa	902 Dr Edward Hillard Drive Tuscaloosa, AL 35401 205-758-2794	Mon-Fri 7:30-11 AM, 1:00-4:30 PM
FL	Fort Walton Beach	339 Racetrack Road NW, Ste 21 Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547 859-863-5843	Mon-Fri 7:30 AM – 4:30 PM
FL	Panama City	3477 Hwy 77, Suite B Panama City, FL 32405 850-784-2505	Mon-Fri 8:00 AM – 12 Noon, 1:00-4:00 PM
FL	Pensacola	3437 North 12 th Avenue Pensacola, FL 32503 850-434-0345	Mon-Fri 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM
GA	Columbus	1345 13 th Street, Suite R Columbus, GA 31901 706-596-4503	Mon-Fri 9:00 AM – 4 PM
MS	Gulfport	1110 Broad Avenue, Suite 300 Gulfport, MS 39501 228-863-5382	Mon-Fri 8:00 AM – 4 PM