

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE October 31, 2012

**Health District will no longer provide TB tests for health cards;
*Locations available community wide***

LAS VEGAS –As of Thursday, Nov. 1, the Southern Nevada Health District will be no longer be providing tuberculosis testing for health card applicants. TB tests are required for all health card applicants except food handlers and health club attendants. Applicants must still present their TB test results to the health district when they apply for their health card. Alternative testing resources are available on the health district’s website, www.SNHD.info.

TB tests are required for regulatory purposes for certain professions. Based on internal reviews, it has been determined that health card TB screenings are not an effective means to screen for active tuberculosis cases in Southern Nevada and the health district was duplicating services available elsewhere in the community. Recently, the health district also eliminated the hepatitis A immunization requirement for most health card applicants. Hepatitis A and B immunizations are still required for body art/tattoo applicants to obtain their health card. They will be able to receive their hepatitis shots at the regular immunization clinic. In addition, a new online food safety training program for food handlers and child care health card applicants was implemented in July.

As a result of the changes, the cost of the health card has been reduced by \$10, with the exception of the child care card which remains the same at \$40. Food handlers and child care staff must complete the online food safety training before they come to the health district to apply for the card. The cost of the online training is \$20 and must be paid at registration, the \$20 balance must be paid at the health district when applying for the card.

The health district implemented the immunization requirement in 1999 as a measure to reduce hepatitis A infections locally. Hepatitis A rates are at historical lows in Clark County and nationwide as a result of the introduction of the vaccine and recommendations to immunize people in high risk groups, including children. In each of the past five years, the health district has received reports of 10 or fewer cases of hepatitis A in Clark County.

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Health District/TB testing - add one

Updated information about the Southern Nevada Health District can be found on Facebook www.facebook.com/SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict, on YouTube www.youtube.com/SNHealthDistrict or Twitter: www.twitter.com/SNHDinfo. The health district is now available in Spanish on Twitter www.twitter.com/TuSNHD. Don't have a Twitter account? Follow the health district on your phone by texting "follow SNHDinfo" to 40404.