



Rules & Regulations of Visa Medical Examination Services

Ministry of Health

Directorate General of
Private Health
Establishments

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"Rules and regulations for medical examination of expatriates recruited for work in the Arab States of the Gulf Cooperation Council"

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Section One: General Regulations

1.1. The Private Health Establishments (PHEs) with Visa Medical Examination Services (VMES) are responsible to examine all cases referred to them and the examinations will be carried out only upon request.

1.2 Carry out all conditions set by MoH to examine expatriates coming to the Sultanate accurately and honestly and will follow utmost adherence to the precautions, and these PHEs shall bear full responsibility for any negligence, deficiencies or infringement in medical examinations.

1.3 Carry out medical examination for every expatriate in accordance with appendix I.

1.4 Conduct all clinical, laboratory and x-ray examinations. Ensure that the expatriate is free from any of the diseases listed in Appendix II, and to indicate the results of examinations on medical forms indicating results in numbers in some tests and as “positive” or “negative” «reactive» or «no-reactive» for others according to the type of tests done and as recommended internationally.

1.5 Confidentiality and privacy should be protected as related to the results of the tests. It is prohibited to disclose these results which should be sent in an appropriate way that secure its privacy and its safe delivery, (either through e-mail, or in confidential sealed envelopes, to the authority requesting examination, after signature of the authorized offices in the approved PHEs with whose signature is acknowledged at MoH).

1.6 The licensed PHEs with VMEU are subjected for inspection by MoH auditing team regularly, and so their licenses are renewable or terminated according to their adherence to the conditions, rules and regulations. Reevaluation is done periodically and as needed.

1.7 Quarterly reports should be sent to the MoH for all cases examined by PHEs.

1.8 Take necessary procedures and precautions to counteract any fake or fraudulence of medical examination reports, and the approved unites shall bear all consequences if negligence is proved.

1.9 Provision MoH with the official stamps and signatures of authorized persons in the PHEs, forms and medical certificates and with their updates as required.

1.10 Establishing an advanced computer network in the unit. The electronic finger prints as well as the digital photographs are to be endorsed.

1.11 Write guidelines and put on a board near the reception area in the health facility clarifying the documents needed for medical examination.

1.12 The unit is obliged to issue medical reports within 3 days. In case it is exceeded, the reasons of the delay are explained and if candidate desires to have delay reasons in writing, the unit is obliged to do so.



1.13 A violation or a breach or break to any of the articles of these rules and regulations by an approved unit will be punished by one or more of the following penalties in accordance to the list of penalties.

- A warning.
- A mount of fines (will be determined by the violation committee).
- Suspension for a fixed period of time.
- Withdraw the license of the unit.





Section 2- Duties and Responsibilities of the Approved Units

- 2.1. Pledge to the MoH rules and regulations of expatriates examination according to this document.
- 2.2. Conduction of all required medical examinations according to the approved form issued by the MoH.
- 2.3. All medical and physical fitness examinations should be carried out accurately and according to scientific criteria and international standards.
- 2.4. Maintenance of equipments, tools and devices must be carried out continuously. The equipments should be upgraded to cope with the new methods of examination provided to expatriates.
- 2.5. The identity of the Expatriate to be medically examined will be ascertained and the specimens examined in the laboratory and the X-ray taken by radiology department should be subject to stringent controls in order to ensure that the results are matched with the correct expatriate.
- 2.6. Guarantee that the medical fitness certificate given to the expatriates should be authenticated and validated. Procedures will be taken to prevent counterfeit and fraudulent actions. The unit will be responsible to counter any deceit, fraud or counterfeit in issuing these certificates, in case of any negligence on the part of the unit.
- 2.7. To submit reports on a quarterly basis to the MoH on the total numbers of expatriates examined, and indicate the numbers of unfit expatriates and reasons for their unfitness.
- 2.8. To report to the MoH any changes that may take place in the unit from the time of its first inspection by the technical committee, as it relates to the location, building, equipments, supplies, human resources, telephone and fax numbers, other means of communication or any other information of importance.
- 2.9. Commitment to implementation of financial and administrative penalties arising from violation of any article of these rules and regulations or breach of any condition set by MoH for examining expatriates.
- 2.10. All issued certificates will be stamped with the seal of the PHE after a medical examination has been carried out, and all other clinical, laboratory and x-ray tests have been accomplished. Adherence to the regulations issued in this respect should be made.





Section 3- Duties and Responsibilities of Auditing Team for Inspection and Evaluation of Visa Medical Units

3.1. The auditing team assigned by DGPHE shall visit the PHE which requests license of VME to ensure the availability of its human and material resources, and to verify information submitted from the unit about its available facilities on the evaluation form (Appendix III). The team will present the form with its recommendations either to approve or disapprove the endorsement of the unit including the reasons for the decision to DGPHE.

3.2. Propose amendment in the criteria and control procedures for the selection and evaluation of expatriate examination units.

3.3. Propose amending the list of diseases that the units will abide by in their medical examinations.

3.4. The team shall undertake the following procedures:

a- Inspection of the new units and making sure that they are fulfilling all requirements for examination of the expatriates

b- Evaluation and follow up of the work of the approved units periodically and report their findings to the DGPHE.

3.5 Recommends to license new units or cancel licenses of units violating their commitments, or renew or not any endorsed units.

3.6 Reviews violations committed by the approved units and recommend imposing appropriate penalties and fines according to the rules and regulations mentioned in this document. And these recommendations are then forwarded to violations committee for approval of penalties.

3.7 Other duties assigned to it by the DGPHE.



Section 4- The Licensing Requirements

4-1 General Requirements:

4.1.1 The unit should be licensed by the Directorate General of Private Health Establishments (DGPHE).

4.1.2. There should be a real need to endorse new units in the location, in the city, town, in such a way that the number of units will match the number of expatriates to be examined annually.

4.1.3. PHE requiring endorsement to medically examine expatriates will submit a request to DGPHE directly along with the documents including the required information, notably:

- a. Location and size of the facility.
- b. Human and physical facilities available in the unit.
- c. Medical services available in the facility.
- d. Number of expatriates that can be examined monthly.
- e. Pledge to abide by rules and conditions for medical examination of expatriates.
- f. Pledge to pay the required fees.

4.1.4. The location of the facility must be easily accessible to expatriates.

4.1.5. The size and facilities of the facility must be compatible with the expected number of expatriates to be examined.

4.1.6. The facility will have the necessary equipments and reagents to carry out required tests in accordance with the latest international criteria and standards of quality control. It will also provide approved certificates of quality control for its laboratories.

4.1.7. The medical team in all divisions of the facility should be highly qualified up to the efficient standards and training to carry out the medical examinations, in all required specialties. The number of personnel in the medical team should match the magnitude of work required.

4.1.8. The administrative staff in the facility should be highly organized and efficient in order to ensure that the administration requirements are met to guarantee the issuance and validity of certificates issued by the facility.

4.1.9. Regular and accurate records should be available about the expatriate examined as well as the results of the laboratory tests carried out.

4.1.10. Availability of the necessary personal, computers, and various communications means e.g. telephone, fax, etc.

4.1.11. The presence of contracts for other physicians.





4.2 Licensing Requirements

Note:

1- The criteria below are considered as the minimum requirements for the licensing of facilities that are conducting VME in Sultanate and are subject to change according to the latest technology developments in scientific methods of medical investigations.

2 - All standards are mandatory to be acquired by new facilities and as well as during relicensing process.

4.2.1 Physical Environment

4.2.1.1– The location of the facility to be at a main street and in an easily accessible place during working period.

4.2.1.2– Basement is not accepted as a location of a facility.

4.2.1.3– The neighboring activities should be acceptable.

4.2.1.4- The facility to be in a separate building or as part of a building which has an appropriate entrance.

4.2.1.5- The areas of the rooms should not be less than 4 x 4 meter.

4.2.1.6- All the interior paint to be of homogeneous color, with proper curtains.

4.2.1.7- The facility should include the following section in the interior arrangement:

A - Office of the Medical Director.

B - Reception and registration office.

C –Medical examination rooms for both sexes.

D - X-ray Room and waiting area for x-ray.

E – A room for blood samples.

F – A laboratory.

G – A reporting section.

4.2.2 Management Requirements

4.2.2.1 - Existence of a valid license for the facility from DGPHE.

4.2.2.2 – All medical profession in the facility should carry valid licenses from DGPHEA.

4.2.2.3- Presence of employment agreements for contract physicians (if needed); authorized or approved by MoH. The contract must clarify the duration of the contract, the profession and the working hours (full time /part time).

4.2.2.4– Existence of medical waste contract disposal procedure.

4.2.2.5– Availability of an infection control manual.





4.2.2.6– Maintain a record of attendees for the staff.

4.2.2.7- Keeping & maintaining the purchasing bills for the equipments, reagents and solutions.

4.2.2.8- Fixing to each system a metal card which is difficult to be removed containing the code number of the facility.

4.2.3 Manpower in the facility

A– A medical director (physician).

B– General physicians; including at least one female physician (Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery from a recognized university + experience (3) years in the field of work).

C- Laboratory Specialist [medical lab specialist] (physician, Master or equivalent in clinical pathology + 3-year experience after the Masters).

E- Laboratory technicians (at least 2)

F– Radiology specialist (physician, Master or equivalent in Diagnostic Radiology + 3-year experience after the Masters)

G– X-ray technicians, (appropriate scientific qualification + 3-year experience).

H– Nursing staff, including at least 2 females.

I- Phlebotomist employed to collect blood samples.

J– Administrative employees [a receptionist and data entry persons (fully aware of computer and have an accredited certificate in this field).

K– Ordinary workers of both sexes (for cleaning and general assistance)

4.2.4 The Reception and Registration Area

1- The existence of an electronic registration system (a computer with scanner for saving copies of ID cards and passports of candidates in the basic database).

2– Presence of an electronic fingerprint or equivalent security system.

3- Using of compatible software to facilitate the flow of data.

4- The existence of an internal computer network to link the reception and registration unit to all other activities, including the medical reports' unit.



5- The possibility of communication through the Internet (providing an appropriate technology to internet access such as DSL or any other appropriate technology).

4.2.5 The candidates waiting rooms:

1- Waiting area in the health facility should be wide enough to accommodate the suggested number of candidates coming per day and should be divided into two separate rooms for both men and female, each one has a toilet.

2- Appropriate lighting and ventilation system.

3- Availability of health education materials (TV, magazines, leaflets...ext).

4- The presence of a clearly stated educational messages, outlining the importance of the medical fitness in country of origin and that this medical will be repeated in the end destination country prior to the issuing permanent residence visa (Iqama). The message should point out the importance of the forgery of the fitness report.

4.2.6 Administration Area

An area of 4x4 m, with appropriate cabinet allocated inside the room to keeping the records and documents i.e. staff contracts, license, certificates, authorizations and quality control records, signing in and out records for the staff, purchase invoices of reagents, solutions and equipment, maintenance contracts,..... Etc.).

4.2.7 Examination Rooms

1- Rooms are at least 4X4 meters.

2- Adequate ventilation.

3- Good illumination.

4- Easy to clean floors.

4.2.8 Equipments

1- General medical examination rooms:

- a desk + doctor chair + Chair for the candidate.
- a regular examination table.
- a partition
- A side light bulb
- An x-ray lantern
- A stethoscope
- A Sphygmomanometer a blood pressure gauge (mercury)
- a thermometer (digital)
- tongue depressors (disposable)
- medical gloves(disposable)
- vaginal speculums
- an ear endoscope (auriscope)





- tuning fork
- a bin for medical waste (distinct)
- hand washbasin.
- a washtub for hands antiseptis+ antiseptic alcohol hand gel

2- Eye examination room

- digital device for measuring vision acuity (Digital)
- funduscope
- equipment for diagnosis of color blindness
- device to measure the intraocular pressure.

4.2.9 Laboratory

1- To be included in the license of the medical facility, whether in the same level of deferent level in the same building.

2- The total area utilized should be at least 50 m²

3- Samples should be will maintained and not to max samples and reagents.

4- In case samples are withdrawn in the lab a suitable place should be kept a way machinery in the lab and candidates to be recorded through a system which allows checking the identity of the candidate using the electronic fingerprint before withdrawing samples.

5 - The presence of a room for blood sample extraction (a minimum area of 3x4 m) and equipped with the following:

- Table & chair for the candidate
- B- Tubes for the collection of samples of different types and sizes
- Alcohol swabs
- A trash bin to collect medical waste
- E- Basin

6- The laboratory should include the following units: -

- Hematology unit
- Microbiology unit
- Parasitology unit

7- It is conditioned that each of the previously mentioned units to be isolated from the others in well-ventilated place (the existence of appropriate size suction fans) and contains:-

- basin and a system of disposal of samples and waste
- Medical Refrigerator (capacity not less than 18 feet³) equipped with a thermometer.
- microscope (good quality)

8 - In addition to the above, the hematology unit should contain:

- 2 deep freezers
- 2 centrifuge systems
- 1 water bath
- Automatic cell counter





- Rotary device (For CBC Tube Mixing)
- A good quality device for the testing of HbsAg, HCV and HIV
- Incubator
- Autoclave
- Safety Cabinet for the Conservation of sputum samples of tuberculosis
- Oven

9- The presence of complete reagents for all the tests listed below and are consistent with the latest scientific developments and valid (with reference to the date of expiry), and the quantity to be sufficient to cover the expected number of expatriates to be examined.

4.2.10 Tests required:

- HIV ELISA screening I&II
- HbsAg ELISA screening
- HCV antibodies ELISA screening
- Swab for Gonococcus
- Complete urine analysis including Schistosoma.
- Stool analysis for parasites including Schistosoma.
- Blood sugar if(positive in urine) , urea, creatinin, SGPT, SGOT.
- VDRL and TPHA
- Pregnancy test for females.
- Malaria & microfilaria.
- Sputum Exam. For acid fast bacilli.

– The existence of a quality assurance program for the tests including:

- Periodic maintenance contract for services and calibration for devices and equipment (the existence of maintenance contracts with specialized companies, and to allocate a file for each device showing the dates of the periodic maintenance and calibration).
- The existence of a mechanism to verify the results of the tests.
- The test to be conducted on a standard sample and another one on a reference sample at each cycle to examine the samples of candidates.

4.2.11 X-Ray Department

1– The total area utilized should be at least 25 m2 .

2- Walls, doors and windows, flooring if not in the ground floor and ceiling lined with lead to protect against leakage of radiation.

3– The candidates to be registered in the computer after matching the electronic fingerprint with that taken in the reception and registration unit.

4– X-ray equipment:

A. Digital X-ray. The X-ray film and data to be recorded to the health unit computer system.



- B. X-ray films of various sizes and with high quality and working validity.
- C. X-ray film cassettes of various sizes.
- D. Large x-ray lantern.
- E. Double sided lead lined walls to protect X-ray technician.
- F. Radiation protective gown.
- G. Protector of the reproductive system of men and another for protection of the ovaries of women.
- H. Automatic film development system.
- I. Radiation detector.

4.2.12 Medical reports' unit:

- 1- Acceptable Area for medical reporting
- 2- The equipments
 - A computer connected to the internal network of the facility.
 - A scanner.
 - The authority of entry to the site of Visa Medical Centre to report the data and the results of medical check-up tests of the candidates.
- 3- The presence of an appropriate mechanism to prevent the falsification of medical reports, of which a copy is handed to the candidate.
- 4- A computer program for saving the data of the candidates who have been examined in the unit and were issued medical reports with a copy of the reports have been issued and signed by the medical specialists and approved by the medical Director and sealed by the stamp.

4.2.13 General Services:

- 2 bathrooms: one for males and other for females' candidates



Appendix I

Guidelines of Medical Examination Required for Foreign Manpower

Firstly: History of any significant past illness:

A) Nervous System:

Applicant should not be suffering from any previous nervous or neurological disease, at any period during life time, such as epilepsy, melancholia, or any other similar disease. He should also be free from any clinical symptoms or signs that indicate the presence of any nervous or neurological diseases.

B) Allergy:

Applicant should be free from all types of allergic diseases or the presence of clinical symptoms or illness indicating his suffering there from.

Secondly:- Physical Examination:

1- General

a) Record the vital signs

b) Visual Acuity:

Visual acuity should be suitable for the job the applicant will perform, bearing in consideration that jobs which require sharp vision such as drivers should not be less than 6/6 or 6/9 either with or without eye-glasses, in addition to colour differentiation, and that the two eye-vision and visual field should be quite normal and should not be suffering from any apparent squint in addition to near vision efficiency.

Applicant should not be suffering from contagious eye diseases such as (granular conjunctivitis, purulent conjunctivitis, trachoma), and other eye diseases that require prolonged medical treatment or surgical operations such as (cataracts and glaucoma).

c) Hearing:

Applicant's hearing power should be normal and should not be suffering from any infections in the middle or inner ear.

2- Systemic examination:

1-a - Blood pressure: should be within normal limits.

1-b - Heart: heart beatings must be regular and consistent and heart function should be normal and free from congenital defects and organic diseases.

1-c- Lungs: Applicant should not be suffering from bronchial asthma or any other lung diseases.

Chest X-ray should indicate that the applicant is free from Tuberculosis or any signs indicating the existence of fibrosis, calcifications, bronchiectasis or tumor.

1-d - Abdomen: Applicant should be free from any type of hernias (whether umbilical or inguinal) or ascites, provided that the internal organs should be healthy and not enlarged and the digestive system should be safe from any tumors.

1-e- Extremities: Extremities should be free from any congenital or pathological abnormalities and legs should be free from varices, and the vertebral column should also be free from any abnormality or disk prolapse.



1-f- Skin:

Applicant should be free from leprotic pathological manifestations and other chronic skin diseases such as (Eczema and psoriasis) or any other infectious skin diseases such as (chronic tinea, other fungal skin infections and scabies).

3) OTHERS

3-a- Applicant should be free from all rheumatic diseases, lymphoid glands and thyroid gland enlargement or any apparent tumors.

3-b- In case of females: Applicant should not be pregnant and should be free from all types of vaginal bleedings, uterine prolapse and breast tumors.

4) VENEREAL DISEASES

Applicant should be free from clinical symptoms and signs for any venereal disease, clinically and laboratory (TPHA or VDRL or any other specific type of analysis).

Thirdly: Laboratory Investigations

1 . Urine:

A complete urine analysis shall be made, on condition that its results should be within the normal limits, provided that it should not contain sugar, albumin or bilharzia in endemic areas.

2. Stool:

An analysis should be made for the stool for any gastro intestinal parasites. A stool culture should be done in order to ascertain that it does not include salmonella, shigella and cholera (in endemic areas).

3. Blood:

3-a - A complete blood picture shall be made on condition that the results should be within the normal limits, and that hemoglobin percent should not be less than 10g/100ml.

3-b- A film shall be taken for malaria to make sure that it does not exist.

3-c- Necessary analysis shall be carried out so as to know the percentage of sugar in blood, which should not exceed the normal level.

4. Serology should include:

a- Ascertaining that applicant is not suffering from HIV infection through Elisa test, and results of this test must be “Non reactive”.

b- HBsAg and Anti-HCV results should be “Negative”.

c- Liver functions tests: SGPT & SGOT results should be within normal level.

d- Kidney function test (creatinine) results should be within normal averages.



Appendix II

CANDIDATES WITH THE FOLLOWING DISEASES ARE CONSIDERED UNFIT TO WORK / RESIDE IN OMAN

Infectious Diseases			
No.	Name of Disease	No.	Name of Disease
1.	HIV AIDS Reactive.	2.	Hepatitis (B) Surface Antigen Positive and Anti HCV.
3.	Microfilaria Positive & Malaria Blood Film Positive.	4.	Known Leprosy Patient.
5.	Tuberculosis any type.	5.A	Pulmonary by chest X ray showing active or past evidence of old T.B. Including minimum Fibrosis, calcification and Pleural thickening.
5.B	Tuberculous Pleural Effusion.	5.C	Tuberculous Lymphadenitis.
6.	Venereal Diseases, VDRL Positive and TPHA Positive.		
Non Infectious Diseases			
1.	Chronic Hepatic Failure	2.	Congestive Heart Failure
3.	Uncontrolled Hypertension	4.	Uncontrolled Diabetes Mellitus
5.	Known case of cancer	6.	Psychiatric Diseases and Neurological Disorders
7.	Physical Disability eg. colour blindness for drivers, deafness etc	8.	Any major operation
9.	Hemoglobin below 10 mg/dl	10.	Chronic Renal Failure
Others			
1.	Pregnancy		



Appendix III

INSPECTION CHEKLIST

Item / Subject	Yes	No	NC	Remarks
Section 1: General				
The facility is licensed by MoH				
Daily capacity <input type="text"/>				
Section 2: General location and structure of premises				
- Area, internal organization and location				
- Hygiene appropriate				
- Existence of maintenance and cleaning contract				
Section 3: Equipment and capabilities				
- Using computer for registration of candidates and issuing reports.				
- Using finger print with photo in candidate registration.				
- Existence of a system for saving candidates' files, copies of medical reports and x-ray films				
- Existence of a mechanism for identification of personal data and prevention of faking medical reports issued by the unit				
- Number of examination rooms are appropriate for anticipated number of candidates				
- Areas of examination rooms for required tests are appropriate.				
- Equipments for required tests are appropriate.				
- Modern equipments and consistency with global developments				
Availability of minimum limit of manpower	GPs			
	Pathologist			
	Radiologist			
	Nurses			
	Radiographer			
	Lab Technicians			
	Others			
Section 4: Laboratory				
- Location & Accessibility				



- Appropriate types of equipments				
- Appropriate quantity of equipments				
- Existence of required reagents				
- Validity of reagents (validity and expiry dates)				
- Existence of a record for lab results				

Section 5: Radiology

- Location & Accessibility				
- Appropriate x-ray system in items of size, safety and modernity				
- Leading (walls, ceilings, floors and doors)				
- Appropriate type of x-ray machine				
- Appropriate storing of films				

Overall Assessment

Excellent

 Very good

 Good

 Unacceptable

Recommendations of the Team

.....

.....

.....

Names of Inspection Team Members

Signature

1-

2-

3-

4-



Appendix IV

Penalties

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL VIOLATIONS IN ONE YEAR:

No	Type of Violation	Penalties
1.	Irregularity in sending quarterly reports and inaccuracy or information.	
2.	Lack of purchasing bills of equipment, apparatus and reagents used to carry out examinations.	
3.	Change of the location of the unit to another location without permission of the Executive Board.	
4.	Non-payment of imposed fines within a month from date of notification on the part of the Executive Board.	
5.	Lack of accurate and complete records	
6.	Incomplete, inaccurate laboratory examination	
7.	Non upgrading of equipment compatible to volume and efficiency	
8.	Non upgrading of equipment compatible to volume of the work and efficiency despite the request from the technical team during the last visit	
9.	Non printing the code of the unit on the equipment with a metal fixed label.	
10.	Non printing the code of the centre on the readings of lab results.	
11.	Failure to provide quality control certificate for the unit	
12.	X-ray not clear, or lack of identification information or lack of code of the unit	
13.	X-ray films records – not kept for one year	
14.	Use of expired reagents	
15.	Use of reagents of poor rated quality with finding unfit cases.	
16.	Inefficiency of technicians and specialists	
17.	No contracts for physicians, technicians and administrative workers in the unit	
18.	The unfit cases in the quarterly statistical reports showing less than 3.5% of the total cases.	
19.	An increased variation of tested candidate in health unit exceeded 10% compare to GAMC statistics	
20	In Case of variation among, tested candidate in health facility and the GAMCA (more than 10%	



	with proof that this disparity is due to unequal distribution by GAMCA office	
21.	The unit had previously received the penalty of suspension due to exceeding the maximum limit of unfit cases and repeated the same or other violation	
22.	The unit had received the penalty of temporary suspension (3 months) twice and repeated the same violation or others	



UNFIT CASES RECORDED IN THE UNIT WITHIN A YEAR

No	Disease	Frequency of violation	Penalties
1.	AIDS	1-5	
		6-10	
		11 or more	
2.	HBs Ag	1-5	
		6-10	
		11-15	
		16-20	
		21-30	
		31 or more	
3.	HCV	1-5	
		6-10	
		11-15	
		16-20	
		21-30	
		31 or more	
4.	T.B. OR any pathology in chest X-ray	1-5	
		6-10	
		11-15	
		16-20	
		21-30	
		31 or more	
5.	Leprosy	1-5	
		6-10	
		11 or more	
6.	Microfilaria	1-5	
		6-10	
		11-15	
		16-20	
		21-30	
		31 or more	
7.	Non infectious diseases, pregnancies, sexual and psychological diseases. .etc.	15-25	
		26-40	
		41 or more	