

STUDENT PREGNANCY POLICY

As a student radiographer, you may be exposed to more radiation than the general public. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Guide #8.13 has established a basic exposure limit for occupationally exposed students of 25 millirem per calendar quarter, e.g., (January, February and March) or 100 millirem per calendar year. Because it is required that radiation levels in the clinical facility be kept as low as reasonable achievable (ALARA), there is no significant health risk to individual adult students.

The development of radiation exposure standards reflects the sensitivity of cells to radiation damage. This radiation sensitivity is related to the reproductive activity of the cells: embryos and fetuses are more radiosensitive than children and adults. Because of the sensitivity to an unborn fetus, the National Council on Radiation Protection (NCRP), (Report Number 105, p. 13, 1989), has recommended that the dose equivalent limit to the unborn fetus from occupational radiation exposure of the expectant mother be limited to 500 millirem for the entire pregnancy.

It is the option of the student to inform program officials of her pregnancy. If the student chooses to voluntarily inform program officials of her pregnancy, it must be in writing, indicate that you are a declared pregnant student, and indicate the expected delivery date.

It is your responsibility to decide whether the exposure you may receive is sufficiently low to protect your unborn child. The advice of the radiation safety officer (RSO) may be obtained to determine whether the radiation levels are high enough that the unborn child could receive 500 millirem or more before birth. The alternatives you might want to consider if you are now pregnant or expect to become pregnant include the following:

1. You may continue in your current status as student radiographer without modification or interruption with the understanding that the radiation exposure to the fetus must be limited to 500 millirem during the 9-month gestation period. This option may be selected only if prior badge readings indicate that less than 500 millirem should be accumulated over the 9-month period. You should reduce your exposure as much as possible by decreasing the amount of time you spend in the clinical radiation areas, increasing your distance from the radiation source and by using proper shielding.
2. You could decide not to continue assignments or modify assignments in the areas where radiation is present, which could affect your graduation date. Should you choose this option, you may ask the program director or clinical coordinator to reassign you to areas involving less exposure to radiation. Didactic and clinical schedules shall be modified to enable you to continue in the program while minimizing exposure to ionizing radiation. There are no restrictions necessary for Radiology (general, fluoro,

portables, specials and CT). However, there are no exceptions for some surgical procedures and brachytherapy.

3. If the above options are not possible, you might consider taking a leave of absence until the child is born, which again, could affect your graduation date. You may also choose to withdraw from the program until your physician permits you to return. You will be allowed to re-enter the program at the point in which you left, providing no more than one year has passed since the time you left or withdrew. If you desire to continue your education after the one year has elapsed, you will have to re-apply for admission to the program.

Whatever alternative you select, you should do so immediately. The unborn fetus is more sensitive to radiation during the first three months of your pregnancy.

I have read and understand the above information and have received a copy of the NRC Guide #8.13. I further understand the potential health risks to my unborn child should I become pregnant and choose to remain in the program.

SSN Estimated Delivery Date Signature Date
(If applicable)

The following student has received a copy of the NRC Guide #8.13 as indicated by her signature and date of receipt.

Print your name Signature Date

**STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING
OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE TO IONIZING
RADIATION DURING PREGNANCY**

Having voluntarily declared my pregnancy to the proper school officials, I have read and understand the policies and procedures regarding occupational exposure to ionizing radiation during pregnancy. I have been counseled and I am aware of the risks involved which may affect my unborn fetus if I continue to work with and around ionizing radiation.

I will continue to practice all radiation safety and protection techniques to include wearing a second radiation detection monitor at the abdomen level beneath my lead apron. I understand that they exposure will be recorded as abdomen dose and will be monitored monthly for the entire gestation period.

I further understand that I will be required to abide by the following safety rules:

1. I may not be assigned duties or tasks involving cement surgical procedures and brachytherapy.
2. I will not hold or restrain a patient receiving ionizing radiation.
3. I will refrain from any procedure requiring my presence in the exposure room while exposures are being made. I may be allowed to work behind the protective barrier (control booth) while exposures are being made.

I agree to release DCH Health System from any liability that may be associated with complications or damage during or after my pregnancy, which may be determined to be related to occupational exposure to ionizing radiation.

Student Signature

Date

Radiation Safety Officer Signature or
Assistant Radiation Safety Officer Signature

Date