Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi
College of Nursing and Health Sciences

FNP Student Clinical Guide

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Introduction

Successful clinical learning occurs through collaboration among the student, preceptor, and clinical instructor, with each contributing to the educational experience. Students enrolled in the Family Nurse Practitioner program are individually responsible for securing an approved clinical site and qualified preceptor and for completing all required preceptor agreements. Clinical sites must provide learning experiences that support achievement of course objectives and progression toward advanced nursing practice. All clinical expectations outlined in this guide are consistent with professional standards, Texas Board of Nursing rules, and Texas law.

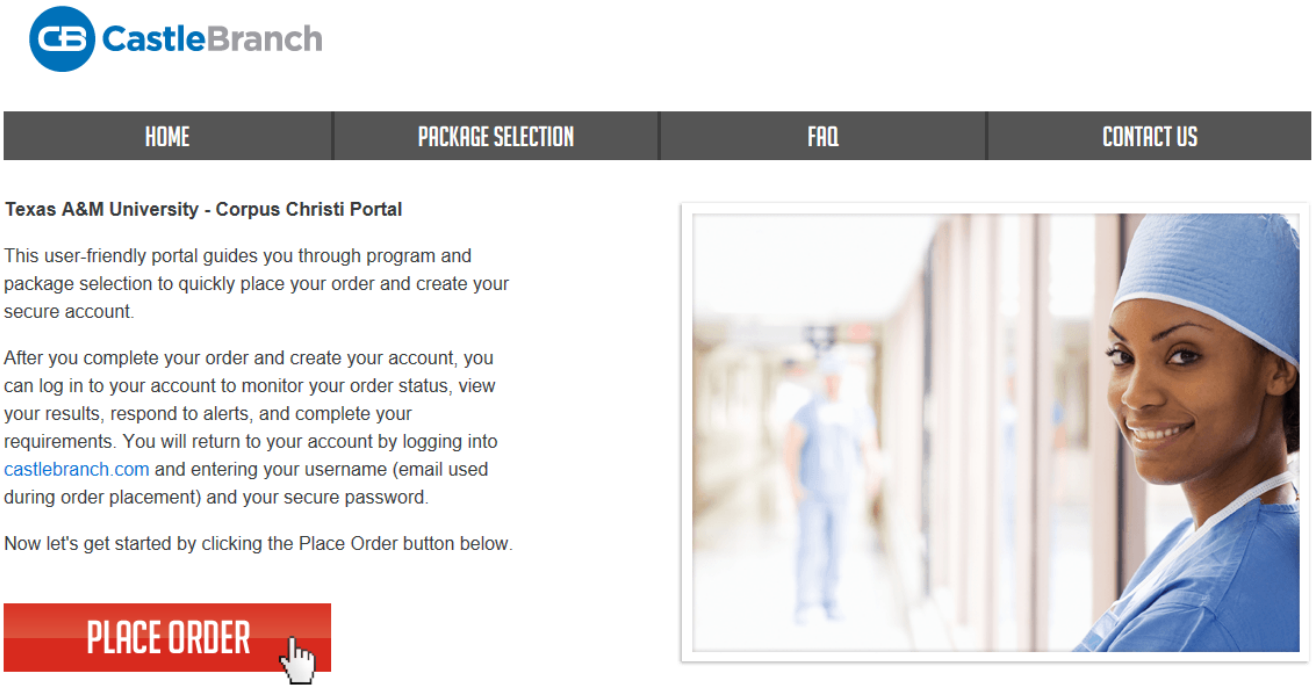
Student Compliance

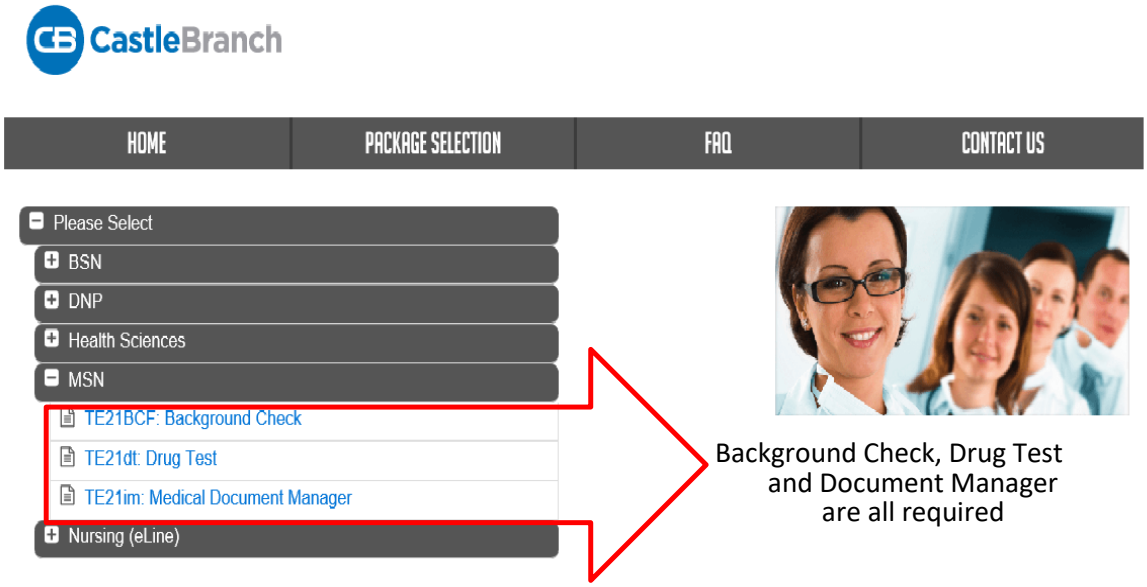
Documentation of compliance with immunization, licensure, and certifications must be uploaded to Castlebranch prior to starting clinicals and updated every semester by the student (see Attachment 1 for complete list of compliance items). If immunization, licensure, and/or certifications expire during the semester, students will be required to stop attending clinical until the information is updated.

- Why? – CastleBranch is a repository for the documents required by your future clinical sites. These documents ensure your and your patient's safety!
- How? – You can access CastleBranch via web browser. See instructions for purchasing an account below, a list of what to upload on page 2, and FAQ on page 3 of this document.
- Who? – ALL CONHS students must purchase and complete a CastleBranch document tracker.
- You may contact Bryana Cazarez for any questions or concerns regarding CastleBranch (CastleBranch@tamucc.edu).

Purchasing CastleBranch Account

Follow link to portal: https://portal.castlebranch.com/TE48




CastleBranch
HOME
PACKAGE SELECTION
FAQ
CONTACT US
Please Select
BSN
DNP
Health Sciences
MSN
TE21BCF: Background Check
TE21dt: Drug Test
TE21im: Medical Document Manager
Nursing (eLine)
Background Check, Drug Test and Document Manager are all required

Typhon Group

Typhon is a cloud-based student tracking database commonly used in health education for data entry and progress monitoring. Students will be given access to Typhon Group prior to the start of clinicals. This database will allow students to search previously used clinical sites and preceptors and is also where students will document every patient encounter during clinical rotations. At the end of the program, faculty utilize Typhon to demonstrate competency for each student by pulling a compilation of data that lists patient encounters and categorizes them based upon diagnoses, age, gender, complexity etc.

Preceptor Selection

Students are soley responsible for coordinating and selecting their clinical site and preceptor. Students should select preceptors based on their qualifications to support student achievement of the course objectives. Students should review their course objectives before beginning the process of preceptor selection. The clinical site and preceptor should be able to provide learning opportunities that allow students to demonstrate satisfactory completion of the course objectives and progression in their development as nurses with advanced educational preparation.

For Family Nurse Practitioner students, preceptors must have:

- Active, unencumbered professional license (NP, MD, or DO)
- National board certification in family practice or related specialty
- Minimum of two years of independent clinical practice
- Practice setting appropriate for FNP role preparation
- Commitment to teaching, supervision, and evaluation

For Nurse Practitioners: Texas Board of Nursing - License Look-up

For Physicians and Physician Assistants: Texas Medical Board - License Look-up

Once a potential preceptor is identified, reach out to see if he/she is willing to accept you as a student. Most students will utilize their personal network to secure a preceptor, however if unable to do so, it is best to schedule a meeting in person to request preceptorship. At the meeting, the student should provide the potential preceptor with a copy of their CV and the course objectives. Students should use this opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to coursework, knowledge of program content, ethical responsibilities (confidentiality), and willingness to adapt their schedule to the preceptor's practice. As a reminder, the preceptor is doing you a favor – and it is imperative that you work around their schedule.

Students may **NOT** complete clinical experiences under the supervision of a workplace supervisor or family member(s). Clinical hours may be completed at the student's place of employment **ONLY** if:

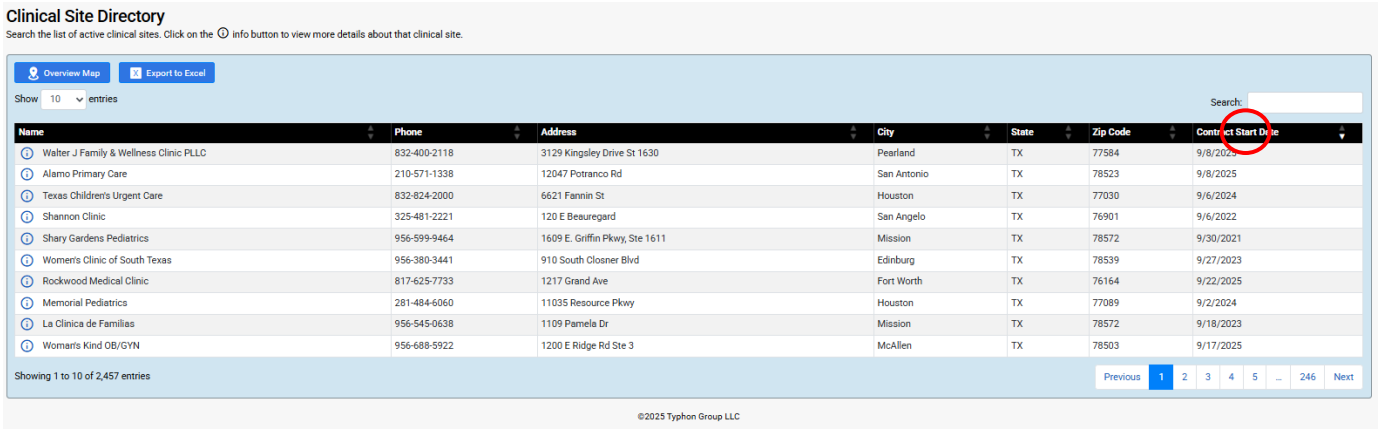
- The preceptor does not participate in the student's employment evaluation AND
- The clinical experience occurs in a unit different from the student's workplace

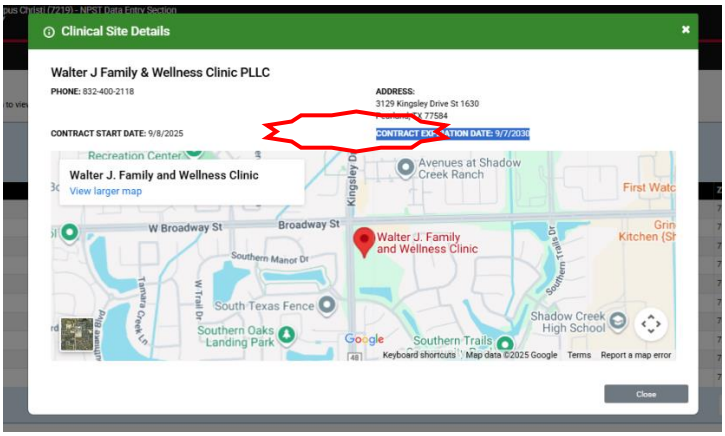
Clinical Site Affiliation

Once a preceptor has been selected and a verbal agreement has been reached, each student will need to verify that the university has an affiliation agreement with the clinical practice site. This is different from the preceptor agreement that needs to be completed with each preceptor prior to beginning a clinical rotation (see Attachment 2). This is a contract between the university and the clinical site (hospital, clinic etc.).

How to verify if we have an active agreement:

1. Log into Typhon account
2. Navigate to the **Clinical Site Directory**
3. Search for the clinical site name (try multiple versions to ensure it wasn't entered under an alternate or similar name).
4. Verify clinical site using known address – several places have similar names
5. Click on button to view additional information.
6. The **Contract Start Date** and **Contract Expiration Date** is shown in the pop-up:





- If the clinical site is not in Typhon, this means the university does not have an active affiliation agreement with them and a contract must be established.
- If the site is listed in Typhon, but NO **Contract Start Date** or **Contract Expiration Date** is listed, a new affiliation agreement must be initiated.
- If the contract expiration date has passed, a new agreement will need to be initiated.
- If the contract will expire DURING the semester, please notify Debbie Silva immediately so she can begin to work on the extension.

All affiliation agreements are initiated via the Docusign link below:

- Initiate Affiliation Agreement

Please allow up to 3 months for the affiliation agreement to be signed by all parties. The contracts can often be completed much faster, however larger healthcare systems tend to take much longer to process.

Clinical Preceptor Agreement

Once an affiliation agreement is confirmed with the clinical site, a formal preceptor agreement will need to be completed every semester for each preceptor utilized. Even if the student is using the same preceptor, a new agreement will need to be completed each semester. This agreement is completed via Docusign – please see link below. It is required for the preceptor to include their CV information and an updated copy of their license (within 30 days). These requirements, while cumbersome, are essential to the ongoing accreditation of the university.

- Preceptor Agreement Packet

Please note: the packet is sent to administration first for signature and thus the preceptor will not receive notification for signature for 1-2 business days. Once the packet has been signed by all parties, the student will receive a final copy of the signed packet (see Attachment 2). Save this file as it will need to be uploaded into canvas for the clinical instructor to verify completion.

Clinical Faculty Assignment

Each student will be assigned to a clinical faculty member. This faculty member may be a full-time faculty member at the university or an adjunct faculty member. Typically, the assignments are based upon location of the student and/or faculty member. We try to assign local faculty to local students and utilize our adjunct faculty located in the various large cities around Texas to students who are completing rotations in those areas. Please note that we cannot accommodate faculty requests due to the high complexity of workload, travel, location and assignments. In addition, it is possible that faculty assignments will change several times before and even after the start of the semester. While we try to minimize the changes, factors outside of our control necessitate these changes.

Scheduling of Clinical Hours

Students and preceptors should agree on the days and times that the student will be in the clinical agency before starting the clinical experience. Clinical hours are to be scheduled at the convenience and availability of the preceptor. Students are not to ask preceptors to conform to a schedule that meets their personal or employment needs. In general, clinical hours should be completed during the time frame, Monday - Friday, 8 am - 5pm. For FNP students, the clinical schedule must also fit the assigned clinical faculty's schedule. Clinical faculty must be available to students by phone and for site visits during the student's clinical hours and therefore the student schedule needs to also coincide with the clinical faculty member's schedule. If a student is requesting to perform clinical hours outside of the normal timeframe, they must discuss and obtain prior approval from their clinical faculty member. Students must not begin clinical until they have received clearance to begin clinical by their assigned clinical faculty.

Each student will be required to submit their intended clinical hours schedule to their clinical faculty member prior to starting clinicals. This schedule will be used by faculty to coordinate site visits with each student.

Clinical Dress and Behavior

Students should always maintain professionalism during clinical. This includes dressing appropriately for each clinical rotation. The use of uniforms or lab coats should be determined through the preceptor/student interview. Students are expected to conform to the dress of the clinical site where the coursework is completed (i.e. if the preceptor dresses in business casual, we expect the student to do the same). Every student must wear a school ID badge that identifies them as a Registered Nurse and TAMU-CC CONHS graduate student. These badges should only be worn by the student when the student is in the clinical setting in the student role. Students should clearly identify themselves as an MSN nursing student in an advanced nursing role. If a student has a name change during the program, all information including badges must be updated to reflect the new name.

Students are representatives of TAMU-CC CONHS and must present themselves as ambassadors of the program. They are expected to be respectful to faculty, preceptors, staff, and patients. Reports of unprofessional behavior will result in the student being counseled and possibly subject to review by the CONHS graduate Admission and Progression and/or reported to the University Office of Student Affairs.

Preceptors volunteer to help teach MSN students and often agree to do so because they enjoy learning and interacting with students. Students should remember to express their appreciation individually to their preceptors for their dedication, mentoring, and teaching at the end of the clinical experience.

Preparation for Clinical Experience

The clinical experience extends the learning environment of the didactic portion of the course to integrate theoretical concepts with clinical practice. Students should prepare for the clinical experience by developing individual learning objectives associated with the course. Course work required in the didactic portion of the course is designed to prepare students for their clinical experiences. Therefore, students are expected to remain engaged in the course, prepare for clinical by completing the required readings and assignments, and reviewing additional relevant material that will ensure appropriate practice in the clinical setting.

Follow-up reading of current reference material following the clinical day provides the student with the opportunity to increase the breadth of scientific and clinical knowledge gained through the clinical experience.

Guidelines for preparation include:

- Students are expected to have full knowledge of entrance requirements for clinical including credentials, dress, location, and hours before scheduling the first clinical day at the clinical agency.
- Students are responsible for ensuring they are compliant with agency requirements for the student learning experience. These requirements generally include current CPR certification, background check, urine drug screen and immunizations, by the first day.

- In accordance with TAMU-CC CONHS and agency policies, students must have confirmation from clinical faculty that these requirements are met before entering the clinical setting.
- Whenever possible, discussion with other students who have had the same or similar placements may be beneficial.
- On the first clinical day, discuss questions about computer access, the procedure for preceptor cosigning documents, eating and parking arrangements, and the communication with other disciplines.
- Learn something about the preceptor, when possible, to acknowledge the preceptor's background and allow for a fuller educational experience.
- Students employed in the agency they have selected for a clinical experience must not

  combine work activities with course activities. It is illegal to access patient information associated with learning experiences using the student's employee identification or password. Each student must complete course requirements from the student role identified as a student.

Attendance

Each student is responsible for adjusting his/her own personal and/or professional schedule to accommodate the required number of clinical hours per semester. It is the student's duty to monitor the number of hours completed, and ensure all hours are done prior to the last day of class. It is always best to schedule extra days to accommodate unforeseen circumstances or cancellations. An extension to complete clinical hours past the last day of classes will only be considered for extreme extenuating circumstances such as hospitalization and will need to be approved by faculty prior to the end of the semester. Student failure to secure a clinical site or preceptor does not constitute extenuating circumstances. It is always recommended to have backup preceptors in case of short-notice cancellations.

If the student cannot attend clinical on a scheduled day, **the student must immediately notify the preceptor and clinical faculty**. The student should obtain a telephone number and discuss the procedure of notifying the preceptor and faculty for unexpected absences. Failure to notify the preceptor as negotiated, prior to the beginning of the scheduled clinical day, is unacceptable and may place the student and clinical placement in jeopardy. The student will need to present the preceptor and faculty with a plan to complete the lost clinical time.

If an instructor visits a clinical site and the student is not present without prior notification, formal disciplinary action will be taken and the student is at risk for dismissal from the program. Please see the MSN Student Handbook for more information.

Required Hours

A total of 630 clinical hours is currently required for completion of the FNP program. Clinical hours are counted as time spent in the clinical setting actively engaged in patient care. Time spent with the patient and time spent with the preceptor discussing patient care, documenting or entering clinical information into the EHR all count as clinical time. Time spent outside of the clinic or time spent in the clinic while not engaging in patient care (such as during a lunch break) do not count toward clinical hours. Clinical hours are required for each of the following courses as outlined below:

NURS 5624 – Health Assessment and Differential Diagnosis

- 90 clinical hours

NURS 5644 – Acute & Chronic I (Pediatrics)

- 135 clinical hours

NURS 5645 – Acute & Chronic II (Women's Health)

- 135 clinical hours

NURS 5746 – Integrated Clinical

- 270 clinical hours

All clinical hours must be completed within the course timeline (beginning and end of the semester). In addition, the minimum number of hours must be achieved during each course and cannot be "rolled over" to another semester if additional hours are completed in any given semester.

Within the 630 required clinical hours, a minimum amount of time (75 hours) must be spent with specialty populations to include geriatrics, pediatrics and women's health. Some family practice clinics see the full spectrum of patients and students are able to easily document 150 encounters with each of these populations, however most students require specialty clinical time in both women's health and pediatrics.

By the end of the FNP program, each student will need to have met the following requirements:

- **Pediatrics** – 75 clinical hours spent within a pediatric clinic **OR** 150 documented pediatric encounters in Typhon
- **Women's Health** – 75 clinical hours spent within a women's health clinic **OR** 150 documented women's health encounters in Typhon
- **Geriatrics** – 75 clinical hours within a geriatric setting **OR** 150 documented geriatric encounters in Typhon

This point often causes confusion for students. We expect students to see about **2 patients per hour** while in clinic. That is why the requirement is **150 patient encounters**—it shows that you completed approximately **75 clinical hours** in pediatrics, geriatrics, or women's health.

If all of your time is spent in a specialty clinic, you only need to show that you completed **75 hours** in that clinic. However, if you have already seen patients in that specialty before starting the dedicated clinical rotation, those encounters count. For example, if you have already seen **20 women's health patients**, that equals **10 clinical hours**, so you would only need to complete **65 additional hours** in the women's health clinic.

Grading and Evaluation

Grading and evaluation are part of an ongoing process that provides students with feedback regarding their performance in meeting course objectives. Regardless of the grades derived from the didactic components, an unsatisfactory/failure in the clinical portion of each course will supersede that grade and result in failure of the entire course. Please refer to the MSN Student Handbook for more detailed information.

The Clinical Faculty will complete at least one evaluative clinical site visit. Additional site visits may be completed based on the individual student progress observed or reported in the clinical area. The clinical faculty can be reassigned throughout the course. In the unusual circumstance that a student fails to provide safe care or professional conduct based on the clinical instructor's professional judgment, the student may be removed from the clinical setting at any time. If the identified deficiencies cannot be remedied in the remaining clinical time and (within the limits of available faculty or preceptor supervision), the student will earn an 'Unsatisfactory' grade in the Clinical Course thus resulting in failure of the entire course.

End of Semester Paperwork

Each student will be required to submit the following Docusign forms at the conclusion of the semester:

- Completed Clinical Hours Log – this will be signed by the student, the preceptor and the FNP Clinical Coordinator. This form will also generate a certificate for the preceptor documenting the number of hours they performed preceptorship.

- Preceptor Evaluation of Student – this must be completed for each preceptor used

- Student Evaluation of Preceptor – this form allows the student to evaluate their preceptor which allows faculty to recommend or not recommend their use for future students.

- Student Evaluation of Clinical Site – this form allows the students to evaluate the clinical site again helping clinical faculty to either recommend or not recommend its use for future students.

CONTACT INFORMATION

FNP CLINICAL COORDINATOR
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FNP ADMINISTRATION
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Academic Administrative Assistant of Graduate Studies
Island Hall 336 L
Kirstin.meza@tamucc.edu

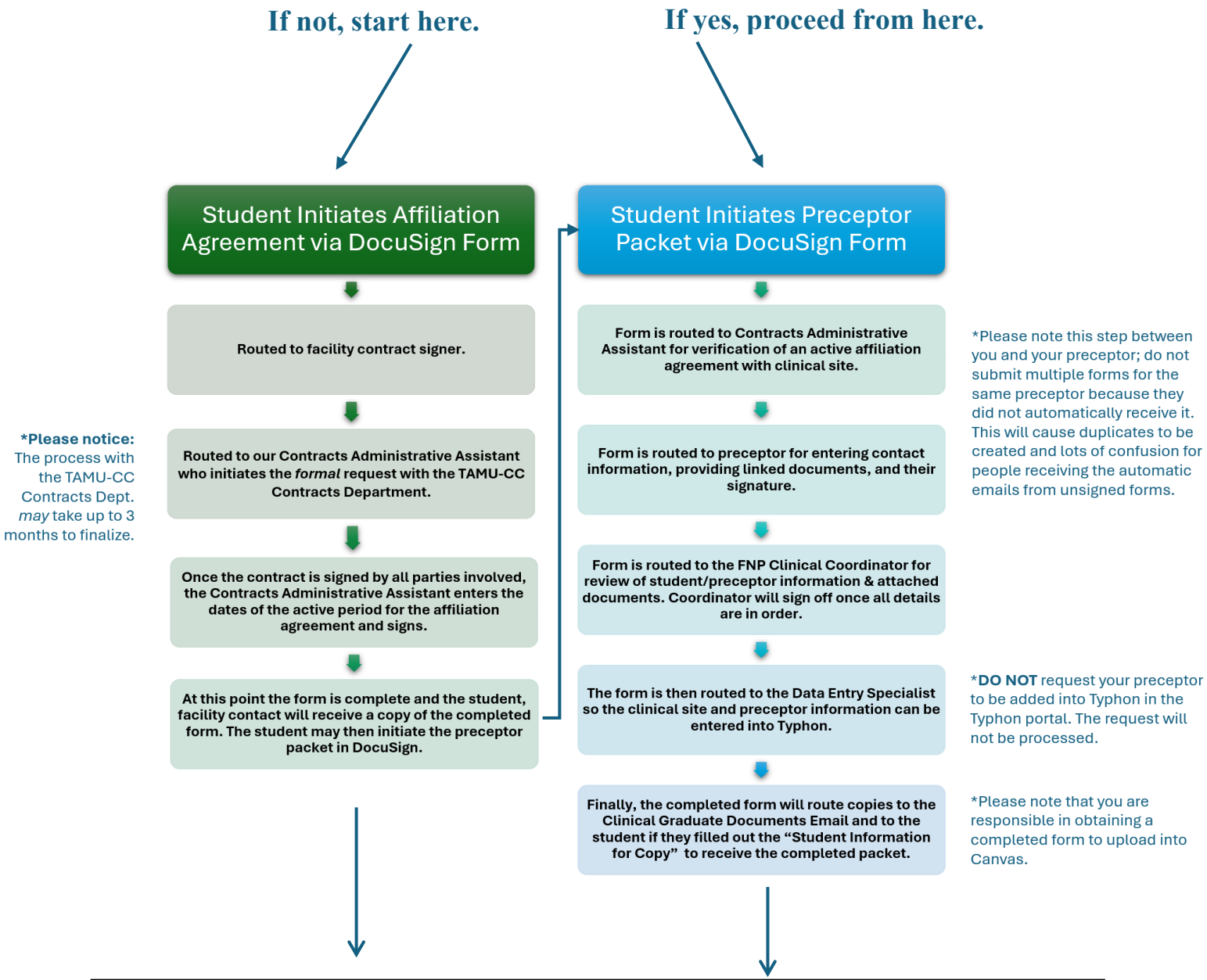
Attachment 1

REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS & CERTIFICATIONS	
HEPATITIS B	3 Doses Required – 1 month between 1st and 2nd dose; 5 months between 2nd and3rd dose **OR** positive titer confirming immunity (upload lab report w/ values)
OR	
HEPATITIS A&B TWIN Rx	3 Doses Required – 1 month between 1st and 2nd dose; 5 months between 2nd and3rd dose **OR** positive titer confirming immunity (upload lab report)
VARICELLA ZOSTER VIRUS(CHICKEN POX)	2 Doses Required – 1 month apart **OR** positive titer confirming immunity (upload lab report w/ values)
MEASLES (Rubeola)	Inoculation required if born after 01/01/1957 2 Doses Required – 1 month apart – Must be since Jan. 1, 1968
MUMPS	Inoculation required if born after 01/01/1957 (If born before 1957, titer required)1 Dose Required
RUBELLA (German Measles)	Inoculation required for all students.1 Dose Required
OR	
MMR	2 Doses Required – 1 month apart, must be since Jan. 1, 1968 **OR** positive titer confirming immunity (upload lab report w/ values)
TETANUS, DIPTHERIA, PERTUSSIS (DPT TOXOID)	1 Dose Required – must be within past 10 years.
OR Td / Tdap BOOSTER	If initial DPT inoculation was not within past ten years, 1 dose Td/Tdap booster required. 1 Dose Td/Tdap booster required every 10 years.
TUBERCULOSIS (TB)	Skin test required yearly **OR** blood assay (QFT or TSPOT) required yearly **OR** Chest X-ray every five years (TB Questionnaire required in years student does not have a chest X-ray.)
INFLUENZA (FLU)	Flu shot required yearly for all students. (Must receive the seasonal vaccine by October 1st in each year enrolled)
RN LICENSE	Provide verification of clear RN licensure from the TBON website. A copy of your RN license is NOT acceptable. The documentation must have the student's name present.
URINE DRUG SCREEN (UDS, 10-panel)	CastleBranch UDS **OR** private lab test results. See FAQ for more info.
CPR CERTIFICATION (American Heart Assoc.)	Current CPR certification required
BACKGROUND CHECK	Background check purchased through CastleBranch

Attachment 2

DOES YOUR INTENDED SITE HAVE AN ACTIVE CONTRACT FOR THE *ENTIRE DURATION* OF THE TIME YOU WILL BE EARNING CLINICAL HOURS WITH THEM?

(CHECK THIS IN TYPHON)



You must have an ACTIVE agreement *and* a COMPLETED preceptor packet (for each site and each preceptor) before you can begin earning precepted hours.

Any hours accumulated before obtaining the necessary documentation will not count.