

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES PROCEDURES**

**PURPOSE:** To establish procedures relating to students and employees who acquire a communicable disease which may affect their health, safety, and welfare and that of others with whom they come in contact.

### **1. BACKGROUND**

In view of the nationwide concern relating to the rise of communicable diseases, appropriate procedures must be in place should the College community be faced with incidents of these illnesses which would require an institutional response. It is the intent of the College through this procedure to strike a balance between the right of the student or employee with a communicable disease to an education or continued employment, and the right of students and employees to be free from risk of exposure to a communicable disease which may affect their health, safety, or welfare.

### **2. DEFINITION OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE**

Communicable disease is an illness due to specific infectious agent or its products from an infected person, animal, or inanimate reservoir to a susceptible host, either directly or indirectly through an intermediate plant or animal host, vector, or the inanimate environment.

Note: The list of communicable diseases is stated in Title 173, Nebraska Department of Health, Chapter 1, Rules and Regulations Concerning the Reporting and Control of Communicable Disease, Section 001 – Reportable Disease List.

### **3. GENERAL GUIDELINES**

A. The College is committed to preventing the spread of communicable diseases on its campus. The College is further committed to educating employees and students about precautions necessary to prevent the transmission of such diseases. The intention of these College procedures is to promote the health and regular attendance of College employees and students so that the maximum potential for working and learning exists.

B. Each incident of communicable disease and the determination of the course of action to be taken by the College shall be dealt with on an individual case by case-by-case basis.

C. If the College has reasonable cause to believe that an employee or student has a communicable disease, the College may request an appropriate medical evaluation of the individual to determine what course of action, if any, should be taken by the College.

D. Except as otherwise provided herein, the identity of an employee or student who has a communicable disease or who is suspected of having such a disease shall be revealed only to those parties, if any, who have the right to such information under the law.

4. PROCEDURES RELATING TO STAFF MEMBERS AND STUDENTS

- A. Employees and students with identified communicable diseases may work or attend college whenever, through reasonable accommodation, the risk of transmission of the disease or the risk of further injury is sufficiently remote.
- B. The College shall respect the right to privacy of any employee or student who has a communicable disease. The employee's or student's medical condition shall be disclosed only to the extent necessary to minimize the health risks to the employee or student and others. The number of personnel aware of the employee's or student's condition will be kept at the minimum needed to assure proper care of the employee or student and to detect situations in which the potential for transmission of the disease may increase. Persons deemed to have "a direct need to know" will be provided with the appropriate information; however, these persons shall not further disclose such information.
- C. Any course of action taken by the College with regard to this procedure will consider: (1) the physical condition of the employee or student; (2) the expected type of interaction the employee or student will have with others in the College setting; (3) the potential risk factors for the employee or student and others in the College setting; (4) the current available public health department guidelines concerning the particular disease in question; and (5) any other appropriate factors.
- D. If it is the decision of the College President that an employee or student with a communicable disease is not to be permitted to attend work or classes or participate in the College activities with other employees or students because he or she poses a serious health risk to others, the President shall notify the employee or student in writing of the intended action. After receiving such notification, the employee or student shall be entitled to due process through normal grievance procedures.
- E. Before an employee or student who has been determined to pose a serious health risk to others may resume work or attend college classes and activities, a notification that the employee or student no longer poses such a risk must be received from a private physician, clinic, or the Department of Health.
- F. An employee or student who refuses to report to work or attend class or an assigned educational activity with an individual who has a communicable disease determined to present only a remote risk shall first be directed to a medical expert designated by the College to help allay his or her fears. If refusal persists, the employee or student is not excused from assigned work or classroom responsibilities and appropriate disciplinary procedures will result.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Student Services -- The Vice President of Student Services and the Student Health Advisor will ensure that communicable disease educational outreach programs are developed to provide college students with appropriate factual material regarding disease matters and precautions. Should the College become aware of any student who is infected with a communicable disease, the President will be responsible for recommending action on the student status of the individual, determining the possible risk to other students and to College staff, and for reporting to appropriate health authorities, as required.
- B. Human Resources – The Director of Human Resources and Student Health Advisor will insure that the College staff is provided with appropriate factual material regarding communicable disease matters and precautions. Should the College become aware of any employee who is infected with a communicable disease, the Director of Human Resources will be responsible for recommending action to the President on the employment status of the employee, determining the possible risk to co-workers, and for reporting to appropriate health authorities, as required.
- C. Review Committee – There may be incidents which arise on the College campus that will require an institutional response to employees and students. When such incidents arise, the President, Vice President of Student Services, Director of Human Resources, and the Student Health Advisor will seek the medical advice of a physician. This committee will also provide an opportunity for the individual to discuss his/her circumstances. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times. The President will review the issues and will be responsible for determining the status of the employee or student.
- D. College Facilities and Services – The Vice President of Administrative Services will insure the appropriate facilities management and College service practices are implemented to minimize the risk of the spread of communicable diseases. These will include attention to custodial and public safety and assistance practices to eliminate potential health hazards.
- E. President's Office – All outside inquiries regarding a communicable disease matter at the College will be referred to the President.

Note: Human Immuno Deficiency Virus

There is no current evidence that individuals infected with HIV (Human Immuno Deficiency Virus) can infect other individuals by casual contact. Accordingly, there is no reason to exclude these individuals from campus academic, social, or cultural activities. Therefore, on the basis of our current knowledge of the disease, individuals sharing common living space, study areas, libraries, classrooms, and theaters do not represent a problem or public health threat to the campus community.

Original policy date: 03/10/88 (Item #5032)  
Revision date: 06/18/92 (Item #6220)  
Revision date: 09/12/96 (Item #7739)  
Revision date: 03/13/97 (Item #7957)  
Revision date: 06/10/99 (Item #8572)