

POLICY STATEMENT

Subject:

Policy on Communicable Diseases

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Addition____ Deletion____ New Item____	Origination Office: Office of the President	President's Approval

I. PURPOSES:

The purposes of this policy are to:

Safeguard the welfare of students and employees

Manage the operations of the university in an effective and efficient manner

Inform and advise the university community

Establish operating procedures appropriate to all constituents of the university community

II. SCOPE:

The Policy shall be implemented for communicable diseases commonly found in the college population and which can be transmitted by air, object or through casual contact. Examples of these communicable diseases are:

Chicken Pox - Varicella
Rubella - 3-day measles
Rubeola - 9-day measles
Meningitis - viral and bacterial
Hepatitis A
Tuberculosis (TB)
Severe Adult Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)

The scope of this policy shall also include other communicable diseases that pose risks similar to the diseases listed above and which would put the university community at risk.

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Excluded from this policy are communicable diseases transmitted through sexual contact, or through needle use, such as Hepatitis B and HIV.

III. OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the communicable Disease Policy are to:

Define communicable diseases

Identify reporting requirements

Identify individuals and groups with responsibilities in the presence (outbreak) of a communicable disease

Provide information about methods of self-protection for members of the university community

Recommend a program of education and training for members of the university community

IV. POLICY AND PROCEDURES:

A. Procedures For Treating Students With Communicable Diseases Who Reside In University Housing:

1. Student Health Service staff shall examine patients suspected of having a communicable disease and determine appropriate medical care based upon confirmed diagnosis.
2. If a patient has been diagnosed as having a communicable disease by the Student Health Service staff or other medical agency, a Health Service physician shall determine if the patient should return home. If the student is unable to leave campus, the Director of Housing and Residence Life (or his/her designee) shall make provisions to isolate the patient on campus, as quickly as possible. While arrangements are being made about location of isolations, the patient shall remain in observation at the Student Health Service. This option, returning the patient home or keeping the patient in isolation on campus, is intended to prevent the spread of the communicable disease. The preferred practice shall be to return the patient to his/her home if at all possible.

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3. In the event that a patient with a communicable disease must remain on campus and in isolation, the Student Health Center Director, or his/her designee, shall, in consultation with the Vice President for Student Affairs, determine the extent of the involvement of the other major university offices in the management of the communicable disease. This decision will be based upon the Director's and Vice President's evaluations of the risk to the university community. Major university offices may include: Housing & Residence Life, Physical Plant, Housekeeping, University Safety/Police, Institutional Advancement/Office of Media Relations, and Human Resources. The directors of each of these offices shall be contacted. These individuals shall implement plans to care for the infected patient and to maintain a safe and orderly campus environment.

- a. The Director of the Office of Housing and Residence Life shall announce the location in which the patient is convalescing to all appropriate parties within the Office of the Housing and Residence Life.

The Office of Housing and Residence Life shall advise its staff of procedures to be used in communication with the infected patient and in serving the residential needs of the infected patient with the assistance of the Student Health Service.

The Director of the Office of Housing and Residence Life shall be responsible for coordinating food services for the infected patient during the convalescent period and which in isolation in university housing. The Student Health Service shall issue the patient a meal pass, if necessary, prior to isolation.

- b. The Director of the Housekeeping Department shall arrange for routine and special custodial services for the area in which the patient is convalescing. The Director of Housekeeping shall be responsible for informing all housekeeping staff who are assigned to the isolation area of the diagnosis and mode of transmission of the disease. The Director of Housekeeping, with the assistance of Student Health Service, shall inform the custodial staff of the recommended methods of self-protection that should be used in carrying out routine and special custodial service.

- c. The Director of Physical Plant shall, with the assistance of Student Health Service, inform maintenance and trades persons who are assigned, or may be assigned, of the area in which the infected person is convalescing, and of the recommended methods of self-protection should maintenance and trades persons come into contact with the infected person.
- d. The Director of University Safety/Police shall, with the assistance of the Student Health Service, inform the police officers that a person with a communicable disease is convalescing on campus. The director shall provide the police officers with information about the disease, the location where the patient is convalescing, and the recommended methods of self-protection should the campus police come into contact with the infected person.
- e. The Director of Human Resources shall be responsible for notifying the Office of Disabled Student Services of the incident and requesting that the necessary academic faculty and staff be advised.

The Office of Human Resources shall be responsible for mediating the labor-relations issues that may arise as a result of the university's caring for a person with a communicable disease.

- f. The Director of Media Relations, or his/her designee, shall prepare appropriate news releases and coordinate public relations inquiries.
- 4. In all cases, the Vice President for Student Affairs shall inform the Director of Human Resources of his/her decision relative to Item #3 above.
 - 5. Before a patient is discharged from isolation and before the patient may return to classes at the university, he/she must be examined by a Student Health Service staff physician. When a patient convalesces at home, he/she shall visit the Student Health Service and provide a statement of non-communicability from his/her family physician before returning to classes. The physician shall certify that the patient is no longer infectious to others and that the patient presents no risk to the university community. The Director of Health Services shall notify appropriate parties that the patient has been released from care and may return to class.

B. Procedures For Treating Students With Communicable Disease Who Reside Off-Campus:

1. Student Health Service health care staff shall examine a patient suspected of having a communicable disease and determine appropriate medical care based upon confirmed diagnosis.
2. If a patient is diagnosed as having a communicable disease by the Student Health Service staff or other medical agency, a health service physician shall determine if the patient should return to his/her home or to his/her off-campus residence. The preferred practice shall be to return patient to his/her home where care can be provided and where exposure to other students is reduced.
3. In the event that a patient with a communicable disease must remain off campus and in isolation, the Student Health Service Director or his/her designee, in consultation with the Vice President for Student Affairs, shall determine the extent of the management of a communicable disease. This includes evaluation of the risk to the University community. Major university offices may include: University Safety/Police, Institutional Advancement/Office of Media Relations, and Human Resources. The directors of these offices shall implement plans to care for the infected patient and to maintain a safe and orderly campus environment. In the event that diagnosis is made over the weekend, the Vice President for Student Affairs, shall determine when the other major offices shall be notified.

- a. The Director of University Safety/Police shall notify and inform the appropriate individuals who may have contact with the infected individual. The Director of University Safety/Police shall be responsible for maintaining the safe and efficient operation of the university when an epidemic is expected to occur.

- b. The Director of Human Resources shall be responsible for notifying the Office of Disabled Student Services of the incident and requesting that the necessary academic faculty and staff be advised.

The Office of Human Resources shall be responsible for mediating labor-relations issues that may arise as a result of the university's caring for a person with a communicable disease.

- c. The Director of Media Relations, or his/her designee, shall prepare appropriate news releases and coordinate public relations inquiries.

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4. In all cases, the Vice President for Student Affairs shall inform the Director of Human Resources of his/her decision relative to Item #3 above.
5. Before a patient may return to classes at the university, he/she must be examined by a Student Health Service staff physician and/or family physician. Either physician shall certify that the patient is no longer contagious to others and that the patient presents no risk to the university community. The certification shall be filed in the patient's Student Health Service medical chart. The Director of Health Services shall notify appropriate parties that the patient has been released from care and may return to classes.

C. Procedures For Managing University Employees With Communicable Diseases:

1. It is the responsibility of an employee who has a confirmed communicable disease to report that information to the university for the health and safety of the university community, the employee is expected to remain off work until the risk of infecting others has ended and until he/she can return to full duties.
2. Any employee who has a communicable disease, and reports off sick as a result of the disease shall be required to present a doctor's certificate to his/her supervisor before being permitted to return to work. The doctor's certificate must certify that the employee poses no risk to the university community as a result of the communicable disease.
3. The employee's supervisor shall report the incident to the Office of Human Resources. The office of Human Resources shall inform the Director of Health Services. The Director, in consultation with the the Vice President for Student Affairs shall determine the extent of the involvement of other major university offices in the management of the communicable disease. This decision will be based upon the Director's evaluation of the risk to the university community. Major university offices may include: Housing and Residence Life, Physical Plant, Housekeeping, University Safety/Police, and Institutional Advancement/Office of Media Relations.

The directors of these offices shall implement plans to maintain a safe and orderly campus environment.

D. Procedures for Managing an Epidemic Among Children Participating In University Programs.

1. Responsible adults working with children enrolled in the university school, infant day care and preschool programs, shall contact the Director of Health Services when the occurrence of a communicable disease has been confirmed
2. The Director of Health Services shall consult with the Vice President of Student Affairs to determine the extent of the involvement of other major university offices in the management of the communicable disease. This decision will be based upon the Director's evaluation of the risk to the university community. Major university offices may include: Housing and Residence Life, Physical Plant, Housekeeping, University Safety/Police, Institutional Advancement/Office of Media Relations, and Human Resources. The directors of these offices shall implement plans to maintain a safe and orderly campus environment.
3. Prior to returning to the program, the parents of the child shall be required to present a doctor's certificate to the program supervisor, certifying that the child is no longer contagious to others and that the child presents no risk to the university community.

E. Procedures For Managing An Epidemic Among Participants In University-Sponsored Camps and Conferences:

1. Responsible adults working with participants enrolled in university-sponsored camps or conferences shall contact the Director of Health Services when the occurrence of a communicable disease has been confirmed.
2. The Director of Health Services shall consult with the Vice President for Student Affairs to determine the extent of the involvement of other major university offices in the management of the communicable disease. This decision will be based upon the Medical Director's evaluation of the risk to the university community. Major university offices may include: Housing and Residence Life, Physical Plant, Housekeeping, University Safety/Police, Institutional Advancement/Office of Media Relations and Human Resources. The directors of these offices shall implement plans to maintain a safe and orderly campus environment.

3. Prior to returning to the program, the participant shall be required to present a doctor's certificate to the program supervisor certifying that he/she is no longer contagious to others and that he/she presents no risk to the university community.

F. Procedures For Training Employees About Communicable Disease:

1. The Office of Human Resources shall schedule employee training about communicable diseases. Training shall include:
 - a. Overview of Communicable Disease Policy.
 - b. Overview of the methods of infection and communicability for the common communicable diseases.
 - c. Methods of self-protection.
 - d. Roles of staff when implementing the Communicable Disease Policy.
2. Training will be provided as a part of new employee orientation and annually for all other employees.

V. DEFINITIONS:

The following definitions pertain to this policy:

Communicable Disease – A communicable disease is an illness due to a specific infectious agent or its toxic products which can be transmitted from one individual to another. A communicable disease may be transmitted directly from one body to another without the aid of other objects, e.g., kissing, sexual contact, droplet spray from sneezing, coughing, spitting, singing or talking. It may be transmitted indirectly when an object transmits the organism. Objects of transmission may be clothing, linens, utensils, food, water, milk, air, soil or insects.

Communicable Period – The communicable period is that period of time or times during which the infectious agent may be transferred directly or indirectly from an infected person to another person.

VI. RESPONSIBILITIES:

It is the responsibility of all affected parties to report all communicable diseases to the Student Health Service Director. The Student Health

Service Director shall notify the Vice President for Student Affairs who shall in turn notify the President when a communicable disease threatens the university community.

It is the responsibility of certified and licensed health officials, external to the university, to provide a confirmed diagnosis to the appropriate university sources when a university student or employee is known to have a confirmed diagnosis of a communicable disease.

It is the responsibility of the Student Health Service to report specific communicable diseases to the appropriate public health agencies in accordance with Commonwealth of Pennsylvania health laws.

The responsibility for coordination of the implementation of the Communicable Disease policy shall be shared among the following groups:

- Student Health Services
- Office of Human Resources
- Office of Housing and Residence Life
- Office of Housekeeping Director
- Office of Safety/Police
- Office of Institutional Advancement/Office of Media Relations
- Office of Director of Physical Plant

When deemed appropriate by the Vice President for Student Affairs, it is the responsibility of the Office of Media Relations to publicly announce that an epidemic of a communicable disease has been confirmed, and to state the related facts that serve to inform and protect the university community.

VII. PROCEDURES:

(See Policy Statement) – Not Applicable

VIII. RECISION:

Not Applicable

XI. PUBLICATIONS STATEMENTS:

Not Applicable

X. DISTRIBUTION: E