

E. Guidelines on Infectious Diseases

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures to be followed when a university employee or student is infected with a communicable disease. Such diseases include, but are not limited to, hepatitis, meningitis, mumps, HIV/AIDS, whooping cough, measles, diphtheria, chicken pox, and tuberculosis.

General Policy

The University is committed to providing a working and learning environment free of health hazards for its students and employees. So long as medical evidence supports, with reasonable medical certainty, that a particular disease is not communicable by the casual contact normally found in the workplace or classroom, those areas will not be considered to be hazardous as a result of the presence of an infected student or employee.

The University will comply with all federal and state laws applicable to employees, students, and job applicants with communicable diseases.

The confidentiality of information regarding individuals infected with a communicable disease shall be respected.

As long as an employee (including student employees) with a communicable disease is able to perform job duties satisfactorily and medical evidence indicates that their condition is not a threat to themselves or others, the employee is to be treated consistently with others in the workplace. Similarly as long as a student with a communicable disease is able to pursue their education within the established academic standards and medical evidence indicates that their condition is not a threat to themselves or others, the student is to be treated consistently with other students. Discrimination against and/or harassment of the employee and/or student may result in disciplinary action.

The University will make educational materials on communicable diseases available for students and employees through the University Health Center (office of the University Nurse).

PROCEDURE FOR INDIVIDUALS INFECTED WITH A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

An individual with a communicable disease shall be required to inform the proper university personnel that they have a communicable disease. Failure to do so may cause the employee to be suspended and/or the student to be administratively withdrawn from classes.

Employees

An employee will inform their immediate supervisor if they have been diagnosed as having a communicable disease. It will be the responsibility of that supervisor to inform the administrator within their channel of communication of this situation. The University shall request from the employee, and the employee will provide, a medical report from a licensed physician which may be reviewed by a physician designated by the University.

The University reserves the right to request that the employee be examined a second time by a physician designated by the University. Medical reports or medical evidence will be used to assess each reported illness on a case-by-case basis. Those evaluating each case will include members of the university administration in conjunction with the employee and, if desired, the employee's physician. A determination will be made, based on reasonable medical judgments given the state of medical knowledge, concerning the nature of the risk, the severity of the risk, and the probability the disease will be transmitted and will cause varying degrees of harm.

Consultation with the United States Department of Health, the State Health Department, the County Health Department, and guidelines as determined by the Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, Georgia, may be used in making this determination. If, upon the request of the University, the employee refuses or otherwise fails to provide the medical report, the employee will not be allowed to return to work until such time as the medical report is provided. Should the illness persist, an updated medical report from a licensed physician shall be provided not less than every six (6) months as required by the University.

The employee may be placed on appropriate leave status or suspended in accordance with established university policy if it is determined that their continued association poses an unacceptable risk to themselves or to others.

Students

A student will inform the University Nurse if they have been diagnosed as having a communicable disease. It will be the responsibility of the University Nurse to notify the appropriate administrator(s) within the normal channel of communication of this situation. In the event the student is a minor and the minor's parents are aware of the disease, the student's parents shall have a concomitant duty to so inform the University Nurse. The University shall request from the student (or if the student is a minor, from the parents of the minor) a medical report from a licensed physician, which may be reviewed by a physician designated by the University. The University reserves the right to request that the student be examined a second time by a physician designated by the University. The medical report or medical evidence will be used to assess each reported illness on a case-by-case basis.

Those evaluating the case will include the Dean of Students, University Nurse, the contracted University Physician, and appropriate administrative personnel, in conjunction with the student (the student's parents or legal guardians if the student is a minor) and, if desired, the student's physician. A determination shall be made, based on medical evidence concerning the nature of the risk posed by the illness, the likely duration of the risk, the severity of the risk, and the probability that the disease will be transmitted and will cause varying degrees of harm. If, upon the request of the Dean of Students, the student refuses or otherwise fails to provide the medical report, the student will not be allowed to return to the University until such time as the medical report is provided. Should the illness persist, an updated medical report from a licensed physician shall be provided not less than every six (6) months as required by the University.

The student may be administratively withdrawn from classes if it is determined on the basis of medical evidence that his/her continued attendance poses an unacceptable risk to himself/herself or to others. Policy from SWOSU student Handbook
www.swosu.edu/resources/pubforms/DisplayMedia.aspx?pid=397