

Life-Threatening and Communicable Diseases Policy

Purpose

This policy provides guidance for dealing with work situations involving employees who have life-threatening and communicable diseases, including but not limited to:

- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS);
- Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection;
- HIV-related illness as defined by the Connecticut General Statutes Section 19a-581; or
- Any other life-threatening and communicable disease.

Non-Discrimination

The Connecticut Department of Higher Education (DHE) does not discriminate against qualified individuals with life-threatening and communicable diseases in any terms or conditions of employment.

It is our policy that individuals with life-threatening and communicable diseases will be treated with the same compassion and consideration given to any employee with a health problem. No person will be treated differently in the workplace as a result of having or being perceived as having such a disease.

No HIV or AIDS Testing

Present or prospective employees will not be required to submit to an AIDS or HIV-related test as a condition of hiring or continued employment.

Ability to Work

DHE recognizes that employees with life-threatening and communicable diseases may wish and may be physically able to work a regular or modified work schedule. It is DHE's policy to accommodate these employees by allowing them to work as long as they are able to perform their essential job functions, with or without reasonable accommodation, provided that medical evidence indicates that their conditions do not pose a direct threat to themselves or others.

Employee Health and Safety

DHE also recognizes its obligation to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all employees. Therefore, DHE will obtain appropriate medical direction, when necessary, to ensure that an employee's condition does not pose a significant risk of substantial harm to him/herself or to other employees.

According to the best medical evidence available to date, casual workplace contact with employees who have AIDS or who have been exposed to HIV will not result in transmission to others. Employees are expected to work with co-workers and any other individuals who have these conditions that do not pose a significant risk of harm. Employees who have unwarranted fears of exposure will not be allowed to refuse to work with individuals affected by HIV/AIDS or any other communicable disease.

In addition, it is unacceptable for employees to spread rumors regarding situations involving HIV/AIDS or any other life-threatening and communicable disease where such rumors may affect the privacy, dignity and well-being of others. Behavior of this nature will not be tolerated at DHE.

Confidentiality

All employee records or information regarding life-threatening and communicable diseases will be confidentially maintained in the Business Office in a secure area, apart from the employee's personnel file.

Information Specific to HIV/AIDS: The identity of any employee with HIV or AIDS will remain confidential. HIV and AIDS-related information will not be disclosed without the written consent of the employee. Any unauthorized disclosure by an employee is strictly prohibited by the Connecticut General Statutes and may result in disciplinary action.

This policy is intended to be consistent with the Connecticut HIV/AIDS Testing and Confidentiality Law of 1989 (C.G.S. §§19a-581 through 19a-592).

For More Information

Marlene Artibani has been designated as the contact person at DHE regarding this policy. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact her at (860) 947-1842.