

PROCEDURES MEMORANDUM

TO: MCC Staff and Students

FROM: Office of the President

SUBJECT: Procedures Relating to Communicable Diseases Affecting Students and Staff

DATE: August 25, 2009

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

SCOPE: These procedures apply to all classifications of College students and employees.

1. Summary 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, by means of this Procedures Memorandum (PM), to strike a balance between the right of a student, or employee, having a communicable disease to an education, or continued and uninterrupted employment, and the right of students and College employees to be free from the risk of exposure to a communicable disease which may affect their health, safety or welfare. It is also the intent of the College to provide due process to students or employees affected by these procedures.

2. Definition of Communicable Disease

Communicable Disease means an illness due to an infectious or malignant agent which is capable of being transmitted directly or indirectly to a person from an infected person or animal through the agency of an intermediate animal, host or vector, or through the inanimate environment.

A list of communicable diseases maintained by the State of Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services can be found at

<http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/cod/codindex.htm>

3. General Guidelines

A. Metropolitan Community College is committed to preventing the spread of communicable disease at all of its facilities and activities. The College is further

committed to educating faculty, staff and students about precautions necessary to prevent the transmission of such diseases. The intention of this PM is to promote the health, welfare and regular attendance of College students, faculty and staff.

- B. Each incident of a contagious communicable disease, and the determination of the appropriate course of action to be taken by the College, shall be dealt with on an individual case-by-case basis. Except as otherwise provided herein, the identity of a student or employee who has a contagious communicable disease, or who is suspected of having such a disease, shall not be released without the permission of the affected student or employee, except as otherwise permitted or required by law.
- C. If the College has reasonable cause to believe that a student or employee has a contagious communicable disease, and that they may pose a health risk to others, the College may request the individual to submit to an appropriate medical evaluation to determine what course of action, if any, should be taken by the College.

#### 4. Procedures Relating to Students

- A. The College shall respect the right to privacy of any student who has a contagious communicable disease. The student's medical condition shall be disclosed only to the extent necessary to minimize the health risks to the student and others. Only College personnel deemed to have a "direct need to know" regarding a student's medical condition will be provided with the necessary information by the College Health Advisory Officer. College personnel shall not disclose student health information except as may be required by law.
- B. Any course of action taken by the College with regard to this Procedures Memorandum will take into consideration: (1) the physical condition of the student; (2) the expected type of interaction the student will have with others in the College setting; (3) the potential risk factors for the student and others in the College setting; (4) the current available public health department guidelines concerning the particular disease in question; and (5) all other appropriate factors.

NOTE: In determining a course of action, the Epidemiology Office of the Douglas County Department of Health will be contacted by the College Health Advisory Officer to obtain current available guidelines concerning the particular communicable disease in question.

- C. If it is the decision of the College President or his/her designee, in consultation with the College Health Advisory Officer, that a student with a contagious communicable disease is not to be permitted to attend classes or participate in College activities with other students because he or she poses a serious health risk to others, the President, or his or her designee, shall notify the student in writing of the intended action. After receiving such notification, the student shall

be entitled to request a hearing before the Vice President of Student Services to appeal said decision.

- D. Before a student who has been determined to pose a serious health risk to others may resume College classes and activities, a notification that the student no longer poses such a risk must be received from a private physician, clinic or the Department of Health to the College Health Advisory Officer.

## 5. Procedures Relating to Employees

- A. The College shall respect the right to privacy of any employee who has a contagious communicable disease. The employee's medical condition shall be disclosed only to the extent necessary to minimize the health risks to the employee and others. Only College personnel deemed to have a "direct need to know" regarding an employee's medical condition will be provided with the necessary information by the College Health Advisory Officer. College personnel shall not disclose employee health information except as may be required by law.
- B. Any course of action taken by the College with regard to this Procedures Memorandum will take into consideration: (1) the physical condition of the employee; (2) the expected type of interaction the employee will have with others in the College setting; (3) the potential risk factors for the employee and others in the College setting; (4) the current available public health department guidelines concerning the particular disease in question; and (5) all other appropriate factors.

NOTE: In determining a course of action, the Epidemiology Office of the Douglas County Department of Health will be contacted by the College Health Advisory Officer to obtain current available guidelines concerning the particular communicable disease in question.

- C. If it is the decision of the College President, in consultation with the College Health Advisory Officer, that the attendance at work of an employee who has a contagious communicable disease is not to be permitted because he or she poses a serious health risk to others, the President, or his or her designee, shall notify the employee in writing of the intended action. After receiving such notification, the employee shall be entitled to request a hearing before the Executive Vice President, or his or her designee, to appeal said decision. Before an employee determined to pose a serious health risk to others may return to work, they must provide a notification that the employee no longer poses such a risk from a private physician, clinic or the Department of Health to the College Health Advisory Officer.

## 6. Responsibilities for Infectious Disease Education and Prevention

- A. Student Services - The College Health Advisory Officer will ensure that communicable disease educational outreach programs are developed to provide College students with appropriate factual material regarding disease matters and precautions concerned therewith, and ensure that specialized guidelines are provided to educate Health and Public Services students regarding communicable diseases and their prevention in the health care setting. Should the College become aware of any student who is infected with a contagious communicable disease, the College Health Advisory Officer will be responsible for reporting to appropriate health authorities, as required.
- B. Personnel and Employee Relations - The College Health Advisory Officer will ensure that the College workforce is provided with appropriate factual material regarding communicable disease matters and precautions concerned therewith.
- C. Should the College become aware of any employee who is infected with a contagious communicable disease, the College Health Advisory Officer will be responsible for recommending the appropriate course of action to the College President.
- D. College Facilities and Services - The Director of Facilities Management, Planning and Construction, or his or her designee, along with the College Health Advisory Officer, will ensure that 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 practices to eliminate potential health hazards. The College's safety manual will be continually updated to include current hygiene and sanitation guidelines for preventing the transmission of communicable diseases.
- E. Public Relations Office - All outside inquiries regarding a communicable disease matter at the College will be referred to the Director of Public Relations.

Adopted 11/2/87; Revised 1/1/00; 6/6/05; 6/5/06 (title changes only); 8/23/06; 08/25/09