



The University of Vermont

Policy V. 3.4.9.3

Responsible Official (s): Dean of Students and Vice President for Finance and Administration (as delineated in policy)

Effective Date: February 15, 2011

Communicable Diseases

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the University of Vermont to provide information to all community members to prevent the potential spread of serious and highly contagious diseases. All members of the University community are urged to promptly report incidents of infection, take all appropriate precautions, and cooperate with the University's efforts to limit the consequences of infection. The University will comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations that govern the reporting of and responding to communicable diseases and that protect the confidentiality and privacy of all concerned.

Reason for the Policy

The University of Vermont is committed to sustaining an environment that both respects individual privacy and promotes the health, safety and well being of all members of our community. It is essential that the members of this community recognize that the spread of communicable diseases poses a serious threat to the welfare of all community members. With this Policy the University intends to ensure that accurate and helpful information and advice about communicable diseases are available to all.

Strategic Direction

This policy supports the following goal in the University's Strategic Plan (http://www.uvm.edu/president/?Page=strategicplan2009_2013.html):

- *Institutional Efficacy*: As an institution, model the highest standard of ethical conduct, accountability and best practice, public service, and strong commitment to lifelong learning.

Applicability of the Policy

This Policy applies to all members of the University of Vermont community and their guests.

Policy Elaboration

None

Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

Communicable Disease: an illness that

- i. is highly contagious, and
- ii. poses a serious potential for lasting ill effects because of high rates of morbidity or mortality. Examples of such diseases include Meningitis, Tuberculosis, Hepatitis A, Chronic Diarrhea, Salmonella, SARS, Smallpox and Anthrax.

Infected Person: a University student or employee who has been medically diagnosed with a communicable disease.

Procedures

If you are a UVM student and you think that you might have a Communicable Disease, you should consult a health care provider at UVM's Center for Health and Wellbeing as soon as possible by calling 656-3350. There is a clinician available during clinic hours, and after hours there is a clinician on call. Before going to the clinic, call first, so that staff may inform you of any special instructions.

If you are a UVM faculty and staff member and you think that you might have a Communicable Disease, you should contact your primary care provider or hospital emergency room. Call first, so that staff may inform you of any special instructions.

If you think that you might have a Communicable Disease, then while you are waiting to be seen by a health care provider, please observe the following guidelines:

Limit your activities outside your room or home during this period. Do not go to work, classes, or public areas without consulting your health care provider.

Follow the instructions given by your health care provider and utilize infection control principles, including:

1. Cover your mouth and nose with tissue when coughing and sneezing.
2. Wash you hands often and well, especially after you have blown your nose or used the toilet

3. Don't share silverware, glasses, towels, or bedding with anyone in your home until these items have been washed with soap and hot water.
4. Clean surfaces (counter or tabletops, door knobs, bathroom fixtures, etc.) that have been contaminated by body fluids (sweat, saliva, mucous, vomit, urine or feces) with a household disinfectant used according to the manufacturer's instructions, or use bleach and water in a 1:10 solution.
5. Custodial staff working in areas where individuals have had a communicable disease should wear disposable gloves during all cleaning activities. Throw these out when you are done - do not reuse them.

Individuals with a communicable disease should follow these instructions for as long as their health care provider recommends, even if symptoms have resolved.

If you think that a co-worker, roommate, classmate, or other member of the University community with whom you have close contact may have a Communicable Disease, contact the medical clinic by calling 656-3350..

Confidentiality and Privacy

The University will comply with all pertinent statutes and regulations that protect the privacy and welfare of members of the University community who suffer from a communicable disease, as well as the safety and welfare of others within the University community. All confidential medical information about individuals will be handled in compliance with all applicable legal and professional ethical standards.

As with any medical condition, employees must not disclose information regarding another employee or student to anyone except those employees with a legitimate medical or administrative need to know. Breach of confidentiality may result in disciplinary action.

Other Procedures and Guidelines

Employees infected with a communicable disease may be eligible for medical leave as provided by University policy or applicable collective bargaining agreements.

An infected person returning to work or study after a leave of absence for reasons related to a communicable disease must provide a statement from a treating health care provider indicating that it is appropriate for the person to return to work/class. This statement should be submitted to the Director of the Center for Health and Wellbeing.

Federal law, state law, and University policy prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities. While not every infected person is a person with a disability, those laws and policy also prohibit discrimination against a person who has a record or history of disability or is regarded as having a disability.

Forms

None

Contacts

Questions related to the daily operational interpretation of this policy should be directed to either:

Director
Center for Health & Wellbeing
656-0123 or 656-0606

or

Assistant Director for Primary Care Services
Center for Health & Wellbeing
656-3350

The University officials responsible for oversight of the Policy when a student may be diagnosed with a communicable disease are the Director for the Center for Health and Wellbeing and an Associate Vice-President for Student and Campus Life. The University officials responsible for oversight of the Policy when a faculty or staff member is diagnosed with a communicable disease are the Director of the Center for Health and Wellbeing and the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

Related Documents / Policies

Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan
<http://www.uvm.edu/policies/riskmgm/bloodbornepath.pdf>
Infectious Materials Risk Designation Form
<http://esf.uvm.edu/uvmecp/riskdesg.html>

Effective Date

Approved by the President on February 15, 2011