

Contagious Disease Policy

1. Scope

The policy applies to all members of the College community, including students and employees, as well as all visitors to the College's campuses and facilities, including contractors, vendors, and guests.

2. Policy Statement

Mountain Empire Community College is committed to maintaining, to the extent reasonably possible, a safe environment for all students and employees (the "College community"). The purpose of this policy is to help prevent the spread of contagious diseases through measures that focus on safety, prevention, and education. As needed, Mountain Empire Community College will make available to its College community information about the transmission of diseases and precautions that infected persons should take to prevent the spread of disease. Mountain Empire Community College will rely on information and guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC"), the Virginia Department of Health ("VDH") and local public health officials.

This policy is not intended to cover common illnesses, such as colds and viruses, or upper respiratory infections.

3. Definitions

Contagious disease: an infectious disease that is spread from person to person through casual contact or respiratory droplets, which may lead to an epidemic or pandemic and threaten the health or safety of the Campus community. These diseases include but are not limited to: tuberculosis (TB), measles or German measles (rubella), certain strains of hepatitis and meningitis, as well as SARS and certain strains of influenza. Other potentially less serious infectious diseases, such as chicken pox, seasonal flu, and pneumonia will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Epidemic: the occurrence in a community or region of cases of an illness clearly in excess of normal expectancy.

Pandemic: a disease epidemic that has spread across multiple continents or worldwide.

4. Procedures

Persons who know or have reason to believe they are infected with a contagious disease that, according to public health officials, creates a risk of death or significant injury or impairment, must stay home and notify appropriate College personnel, e.g., instructor(s) or immediate supervisor. They also should contact their healthcare provider and advise the local health department. They

must follow the directions of the local health department to prevent the spread of infection and to protect their own health. The Vice President of Financial and Administrative Services will serve as the point(s) of contact between the local health department and the College.

4.1. Students

Students who know or have reason to believe they are infected with a contagious disease that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, i.e., creates a risk of death or significant injury or impairment, must stay home and notify the Dean of Student Services and/or their instructor(s).

Faculty or staff who suspect a student is exhibiting symptoms of a contagious disease shall report what they have observed to the Dean of Student Services but may not take any other direct measures with respect to the student. The Dean of Student Services may send students home if they exhibit or report experiencing symptoms of the contagious disease. Failure to follow the Dean of Student Services instructions will be considered a violation of the student code of conduct and may result in disciplinary action.

Before returning to the College, students who reported having, or have been diagnosed as having a contagious disease must be free of all symptoms of the disease for at least seven (7) days since the date of the first report or diagnosis, or as otherwise recommended by a healthcare provider, the VDH, CDC, or other public health officials. The College may require students to provide written documentation from a healthcare provider or local health department that the student may return to campus safely, unless state officials advise agencies to not make such requests, in which case students may return after the appropriate period as established by public health officials.

Students have a responsibility to stay in contact with faculty/instructors regarding their absence and missed class assignments and should contact the Dean of Student Services if they have any difficulties or concerns. The College will provide reasonable accommodations as requested and required by law.

4.2. Employees

Employees who know or have reason to believe they are infected with a contagious disease that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others must notify their immediate supervisor and the Director of Human Resources that they have symptoms associated with the disease. Employees should stay home or leave the workplace if symptoms occur while already present at work. Supervisors have the authority to send employees home if they exhibit symptoms of a contagious disease while at the workplace. Employees will be charged sick or annual leave if sent home.

Before returning to the College, employees who have been diagnosed as having a contagious disease as listed above must be free of all symptoms of the disease for at least seven (7) days since the date of the first report or diagnosis or as otherwise recommended by a healthcare provider, the CDC, or other public health officials. Employees must provide written documentation from a healthcare provider that the employee may return to work safely, unless state officials advise

agencies to not make such requests, in which case employees may return following the appropriate period as established by public health officials.

Employees must comply with all policies and procedures related to sick leave and supervisor notification regarding their ability to return to work. The College will provide reasonable accommodations as requested and required by law.

Failure to follow a supervisor's directive is considered insubordination and is subject to formal disciplinary action under the Department of Human Resource Management's ("DHRM") Standards of Conduct or faculty human resource policy.

When the State Health Commissioner and the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia declare a Communicable Disease of Public Health Threat as defined in Section 32.1-48.06 of the *Code of Virginia*, employees, pursuant to DHRM Public Health Emergency Leave Policy (Policy No. 4.52), are permitted or required to attend to the medical needs of themselves and immediate family members and will be afforded up to the maximum hours of paid leave per leave year as established by DHRM for this purpose.

4.3. College

Should any disease reach a pandemic stage, the College will rely on information and guidance from local and state health officials to provide appropriate information to the College community. College officials may temporarily close the College or its campuses, if such closure serves the best interest of the College community.

Mountain Empire Community College will inform the College community of plans to provide continuity of operations that will minimize disruption to campus operations. Such continuity measures may include requiring and/or permitting employees to transition to temporary telework through a telework agreement; modifying or shifting responsibilities and duties based on College needs and access to the campus; or modifying or altering normal working hours and schedules. Other measures may include implementing new safety and sanitary measures at the workplace based on current and applicable recommendations by the VDH, CDC or any other state or federal agency, and in compliance with any Executive Orders issued that would require such measures. Students and employees will be notified of specific measures and may be asked to acknowledge receipt and understanding of those measures as well as agreement to abide by them.

The College will consult with local and state health officials to provide any specific instructions for individuals returning to the College following infection of a contagious disease.

4.4. Visitors, Guests, Contractors, and other Third Parties

The College reserves the right to limit access to its facilities to any third parties (visitors, guests, contractors, etc.), in the event of an epidemic, pandemic or any outbreak of a contagious disease that alters normal business operations. The College may institute additional safety measures based

on the recommendations of public health officials that would be applicable to third parties visiting or working on campus.

4.5. Confidentiality

No person, group, agency, insurer, employer, or institution should be provided any medical information without the prior specific written consent of the student, employee, or other College community member unless required or allowable under state and/or federal law. Furthermore, all medical information relating to contagious diseases of students and will be kept confidential, according to applicable state and federal law. Medical information relating to contagious diseases of persons within the College community will only be disclosed to responsible college officials on a need-to-know basis.

4.6. Non-Discrimination/ Harassment

Discrimination or harassment of employees having or regarded as having a contagious disease is prohibited.

4.7. Sanctions

Students who fail to comply this policy and applicable state and federal laws are subject to sanctions in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Employees who fail to comply with all applicable Mountain Empire Community College, VCCS, and DHRM policies and procedures, and applicable state and federal laws are subject to formal disciplinary action.

5. Authority

DHRM Policy 4.52, Public Health Emergency Leave
VCCS Policy 6.0.8.1, Contagious Diseases