



Policy Number	Subject	Effective Date	Revised Date
14.0030P	HIV / AIDS	Fall 2005	
<b>Responsible Division / Department: Student Affairs / Health Promotion</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> New Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Major Revision of Existing Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Minor/Technical Revision of Existing Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Reaffirmation of Existing Policy			

**I. OBJECTIVE & PURPOSE**

The University has an obligation to educate its community on matters concerning HIV/AIDS. Special attention has been paid to providing a balance between educational and prevention components, while at the same time alerting members to the importance of policy compliance. It is hoped that all members of the University community will become familiar with this policy and continuously strive to promote behaviors and attitudes that are compatible with the educational mission of the University, including active involvement in educational efforts as well as the support for those infected with HIV.

In keeping with the University’s mission of establishing an educational and caring environment it becomes necessary to promulgate this HIV/AIDS Policy to create a University community that is aware of:

- (1) The rights, privacy, and confidentiality of members of the University community who are, or may become, infected with HIV.
- (2) The means by which HIV is contracted and spread to others including methods to prevent the contraction and spread of HIV (e.g., universal precautions)
- (3) The emotional, mental, social, and physical needs of members of the University community who are infected with HIV.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

- 1. HIV refers to: Human Immunodeficiency Virus
- 2. AIDS refers to: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

3. An individual infected with HIV is one who:
  - Is shown by appropriate testing to have antibodies to HIV or its antigens in blood fluids or tissues
  - Is shown by appropriate testing to have antibodies to HIV or its antigens in blood fluids or tissue AND has either of the following:
    - a. An identified opportunistic infection [OR]
    - b. A T4 lymphocyte (a type of blood cell) count of less than 200 per micro liter of blood.

### **III. STATEMENT OF POLICY**

It is the policy of the University of North Florida to protect the education and employment rights of University students and employees who are, or may become, infected with HIV, while concomitantly providing University students and employees with an environment in which they are protected from contracting HIV. The successful implementation of this policy is contingent upon providing information in six areas:

- A. Medical Background [the wording of these is not consistent with A, B, C below]
- B. Legal Background
- C. Educational Guidelines
- D. Employee Guidelines
- E. Universal Precautions
- F. Evaluation

### **IV. STATEMENT OF PROCEDURE**

#### **A. Medical Information**

HIV is a virus that destroys the body's immune defenses. As the body's immune system weakens, the condition known as AIDS develops. The development of AIDS from HIV occurs over time, not overnight. The mechanism of this progression is as follows:

- 1) A person must be exposed to HIV and the virus must enter the body.
- 2) Once in the body, the virus attacks cells of the immune system responsible for controlling the body's defenses. Specifically, the virus destroys lymphocyte "T-Helper" cells. "T-Helper" cells recognize invading microorganisms and activate the immune system to destroy the invading microorganisms.
- 3) Prior to destroying a cell of the immune system, the virus replicates (reproduces more of itself). As a result, more HIV is released in the body which in turn infects more immune system cells.

- 4) As more HIV is produced in the body and attacks immune system cells, the immune system begins to break down and the body becomes susceptible to infection by pathogens that would otherwise be harmless. The continual destruction of immune system cells and the body's inability to fight pathogens and microorganisms eventually leads to the condition known as AIDS.

For students and employees with HIV/AIDS, there is an increased danger of infection by opportunistic organisms or other infectious agents they may come in contact with in the classroom or in the work place. Individuals with HIV/AIDS who have impaired immunity are at risk of acquiring or experiencing serious complications from such diseases. Of particular concern is the risk of severe infection following exposure to individuals with infectious diseases (e.g. tuberculosis or chicken pox) if appropriate precautions are not taken. **Individuals with HIV/AIDS** should be advised about the potential increased risk of infectious diseases within a University community and should continue to strictly follow guidelines for infection control and universal precautions (see section E).

Anyone infected with this virus, whether or not he or she may actually have symptoms, is considered infectious. This means that an individual infected with the virus can spread it to others, sometimes without even knowing they are infected themselves. Currently, the only effective means of limiting the transmission of HIV/AIDS is through education: providing information on risk factors, mechanisms of disease transmission, and methods of prevention and complying with universal precaution procedures.

## B. Legal Guidelines

### 1. Overview

Individuals with HIV/AIDS are accorded protection from discrimination by both federal and state laws including:

- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Florida Statutes Sections 627.429, 641.3007, 760.50

These laws prohibit discrimination against qualified persons with disabilities in employment, public services, and public accommodations, and apply to university students and employees. To comply with these federal and state laws, the University provides reasonable accommodations to students and employees who are known by the University to have HIV/AIDS.

Under these federal and state laws, students and employees of the University are not to be denied access, participation in, use of, or benefits of University programs, services, or activities based upon their HIV/AIDS status. This includes terms, conditions, and privileges of employment, as well as hiring, termination, compensation, fringe benefits, assignments, promotion, training and/or leave.

Additionally, the University is prohibited from making pre-employment inquiries regarding an individual's HIV/AIDS status.

These laws also protect individuals regarded as, perceived as, or associated with, a person with HIV/AIDS.

## 2. Confidentiality and Privacy

At all times, the University shall maintain the confidentiality and privacy of medical information and records obtained regarding an individual's HIV/AIDS status. Such information shall be provided only as needed to supervisors and/or other University officials in addressing necessary restrictions of work duties or other accommodations required for that individual. Furthermore, Section 119.07(3)(v) of the Florida Statutes exempts University officers' and employees' medical records from disclosure under Florida's public records law. HIV test results are specifically exempted from disclosure by Florida Statutes Section 381.004.

## 3. Admissions / Enrollment

An individual's HIV/AIDS status may not be considered in the application for admission to the University of North Florida.

No student will be required to cease attending the University solely on the basis of a diagnosis of HIV/AIDS. Such decisions will be made only after the possibility of reasonable accommodations has been explored and attempted, and an examination of the facts demonstrates that the student can no longer perform as required.

## 4. University Housing

A student shall not be denied the opportunity to live in University housing solely on the basis of a diagnosis of HIV/AIDS.

Students will not be moved within or removed from University housing based solely on a diagnosis of HIV/AIDS. Changes in room or removal from housing will be made on a case-by-case review. These cases will be reviewed by the Director of Residence Life and in consultation with a UNF physician. Changes will be made if it is determined that:

- a. The student has communicable opportunistic infections or is showing other symptoms of illness and requires care which cannot reasonably be provided in the University housing setting [OR]
- b. The student is demonstrating symptoms, needs, or behaviors which are inappropriate in the University housing setting and cannot reasonably be accommodated.

## C. Education

### 1. Guidelines

There is no evidence to indicate that HIV/AIDS can be spread by casual contact. The evidence demonstrates that HIV transmission is spread via contact with certain bodily fluids (e.g., blood). The greatest risks for transmitting and contracting HIV come from: contaminated syringes and needles, infected blood or body fluids, or sexual contact with an infected person.

The University's actions and education will be guided by current medical information, research, applicable federal and state laws and regulations, as well as the guidelines suggested by:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP)
- American Public Health Association
- U.S. Public Health Administration
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- American College Health Association (ACHA)
- Florida Department of Health
- Florida Department of Children and Families

### 2. Education/Prevention Services

As part of the educational process the University, via the Department of Health Promotion and Student Medical Services as well as other department and units within the Division of Student Affairs, will provide on a regular basis, a wide range of HIV education and prevention activities. These activities include but are not limited to:

**Health Fairs:** General health fairs as well as HIV/AIDS specific health fairs can address this topic. These fairs may be held on the University Green, in residence halls and at other locations to meet the need. Relevant community representatives will be sought to provide exhibits and to share information. Student groups will be encouraged to participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of health fairs.

**HIV Testing and Counseling:** The Department of Health Promotion provides education, prevention, and counseling/testing services on HIV/AIDS to better enable the University community to engage in informed, responsible, and healthy decisions regarding HIV risk factors, mechanisms of disease transmission, and methods of prevention. To assist with this education and prevention mission, programs and services are provided in the residence halls, through classroom presentations, and one-on-one education for interested individuals.

## D. Employee Guidelines

### 1. General Employee Information

All employees will be required to conform to the University policy on HIV/AIDS at all times.

An infected employee with HIV/AIDS will be treated in the same manner as any employee diagnosed with having any other illness, injury or disability. Any employee who informs the University that he/she is infected will be accorded confidentiality regarding disclosure of the medical condition. Any employee with HIV/AIDS shall be eligible to use accrued sick, compensatory, or annual leave as needed. A university sick leave pool member shall be eligible to request use of leave hours through the pool in accordance with policies and procedures of the pool.

In instances where an employee with HIV/AIDS is unable to fulfill his/her regular responsibilities, or portions of these responsibilities, but is able and desires to continue working in a less physically or emotionally demanding capacity, the University, if requested by the employee, will make reasonable efforts, in accordance with applicable laws, to accommodate the employee.

### 2. Employees of Physical Facilities

In order to comply with universal precaution procedures (see Section E. of Policy), employees who have responsibility for cleaning or repairing University restrooms, patient or exam/treatment rooms, and human health/science labs shall wear appropriate apparel (e.g., gloves, gowns, eye goggles) when working in these areas. In cleaning these areas, custodial workers shall use an appropriate disinfectant for cleaning to ensure that any contaminated surfaces are fully cleaned. All potentially biohazardous waste, including the designated orange garbage bags and sharp containers, should be handled using gloves (and/or other appropriate apparel) and disposed of in accordance with current University policy.

Custodial workers will receive instructions about modes of transmission or acquisition of HIV/AIDS. The importance of hand washing after handling potentially contaminated objects will be emphasized.

### 3. Police/Public Safety Employees

Police/public safety officers shall be trained to use and be issued an appropriate oral airway for providing CPR. This will reduce direct mouth contact with any infected person and will further serve to protect police/public safety officers from any disease or infection that might be transmitted orally.

All police/public safety officers shall be issued latex gloves for use when assisting or restraining any individual who is bleeding from any injury. Appropriate glove use (and other appropriate apparel) will reduce direct contact with the blood of any infected person and protect police/public safety officers from any blood-borne disease or infection. Additionally, all police/public safety officers are required to comply with universal precautions as outlined in section E of this policy.

#### E. Universal Precautions

In an effort to reduce the risk of transmission from HIV the following precautions should be observed at all times:

1. Used sharp items (e.g. needles, scalpel blades and other sharp instruments) are potentially infectious and should be handled with extraordinary care to prevent accidental injuries.
2. Used disposable syringes, needles, scalpel blades and other sharp items must be placed promptly and properly into puncture resistant containers located as close as practical to the area in which they were used. To prevent needle stick injuries, needles should not be recapped, purposely bent, broken, removed from disposable syringes, or otherwise manipulated by hand.
3. The anticipated exposure to body fluids may require the use of latex / vinyl gloves gowns, masks and/or eye protection. Other body parts should be washed immediately and thoroughly if they accidentally become contaminated with blood or other body fluids.
4. To minimize the need for emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, mouthpieces, resuscitation bags, or other ventilation devices should be located and available for use in areas where the need for resuscitation is predictable.

#### F. Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation component is to ensure the successful achievement of the policy/program objectives. The evaluation component will consist of two primary elements:

1. **Process Evaluation.** The purpose of the Process Evaluation is to monitor the progress of the policy and program implementation to indicate whether or not revisions are necessary in either the policy or program in order to meet stated objectives. Process evaluation data will include: (1) the number and type of education activities provided by various campus departments/units within the University community (2) the number of students and campus employees provided with a written description of the HIV/AIDS policy and education programs. These data will be documented in the appropriate campus department and units assigned with the responsibility for implementing the respective HIV/AIDS policy and education program components.

2. **Outcome Evaluation.** The purpose of the Outcome Evaluation is to determine the effectiveness of the HIV/AIDS policy and education program components and to provide suggestions for enhancing the efficacy of policy and programming. Outcome evaluation data will include: (1) collection of annual survey data.

A final aspect of the evaluation process will include the regular convening of the University of North Florida CADIC Advisory Board. The purpose of this Board is to make recommendations to the Vice President for Student and International Affairs on policy components and education programs. The CADIC Advisory Board, therefore, serves as a feedback mechanism ensuring the continual assessment and, when necessary, revision and improvement of the University HIV/AIDS policy and education programs.

A University committee (i.e., CADIC Advisory Board), whose membership is representative of the University community (e.g., faculty, staff, and students) and which shall include a representative from the Office of the General Counsel and a physician trained in infectious diseases, shall be responsible for the review, revision, and implementation of the UNF HIV/AIDS policy. This committee also will be responsible for monitoring all HIV/AIDS education and prevention efforts within the University community.

The Committee shall designate individuals to answer HIV/AIDS related questions and provide counseling, if needed, to members of the University community. Contact with these individuals will be private and confidential.

Final authority for any and all revisions of changes to this policy will reside with the Office of the President or designee.

*Formerly 9-3.015.*