

Communicable Diseases – Employee Safety

Policy Code:

7262

Descriptor Term: COMMUNICABLE DISEASES-EMPLOYEE SAFETY		Descriptor Code: 7262* (formerly GBRAB)
Presented to the Board: December 7, 1992	Adopted by the Board: February 1, 1993	Revised by the Board: Recodified as policy 7262: May 10, 2022

It is the policy of the Guilford County Board of Education to attempt to provide a safe and secure environment for all students and employees. Under certain circumstances, employees with communicable diseases may pose a threat to the health and safety of students and staff. In an effort to maintain a balance between the need to protect students' and employees' rights and to control communicable diseases, decisions regarding the employment status of employees with communicable diseases shall be made on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with this policy.

A. DEFINITION OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

A communicable disease is defined as an illness due to an infectious agent, or its toxic products, that is transmitted directly or indirectly to a person from an infected person or animal. The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services defines legally reportable communicable diseases.

B. SAFETY CONTROL MEASURES AND PLANS

In order to prevent the spread of communicable disease and conditions, universal health and safety precautions, including precautions regarding the handling and cleanup of blood and other bodily fluids, must be distributed to and followed by all employees. Control measures may be altered from time to time by health officials. GCS employees are expected to abide by the control measures implemented to protect the public health. Employees are also required to follow GCS's bloodborne pathogens exposure control plan that contains universal precautions and specific work practice controls relating to the handling, disposal, and cleanup of blood and other potentially infectious materials. All employees are required to review and be familiar with the plan, and the plan should be distributed on an annual basis. Students should not be involved in the handling, disposal and cleanup of potentially infectious materials unless the students have been specifically trained in the handling of such materials and are qualified to perform first aid services.

C. REPORTING COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Certain communicable diseases are required by law to be reported to the local health department by the school principal. Employees are therefore required to notify the Human Resources Department if they are experiencing a communicable disease or condition so that a determination can be made regarding the necessity of reporting to the local health department, reasonable

accommodations may be developed, and appropriate precautions may be taken.

- ~~1. Any employee suffering from a serious communicable disease that may pose a significant risk of transmission in the employee's current position, shall report this fact to his/her immediate supervisor.~~
- ~~2. Employees with communicable diseases, including AIDS and HIV infection, shall be permitted to continue employment in accordance with subsection 3. The Superintendent shall form an advisory committee, if necessary, to evaluate the employee's status.~~
- ~~3. The advisory committee formed by the Superintendent shall include the Superintendent or his/her designee; the employee's principal and/or immediate supervisor if appropriate; a physician representing the county health director or his/her designee; employee, as necessary; the employee's personal physician, when available; and may include legal counsel (employee's and/or school system's). The committee shall review the case of such employee to determine how the employee's disease is transmitted, how long the employee will be infectious, to what degree the employee's presence in his/her current job exposes other students and staff to harm, and the probability that the disease will be transmitted to others in the school community. If the committee determines that a significant risk of transmission exists in the employee's current position, the Superintendent, after consulting with the medical experts on the committee, shall determine whether alternative employment opportunities that would eliminate that risk and for which the employee is otherwise qualified are reasonably available within the school system. If appropriate alternative employment is not available, other options and benefits would be routinely considered.~~

~~Periodic reevaluation of the employee's condition and status shall be undertaken by the committee as necessary. All deliberations of the advisory committee shall be kept strictly confidential.~~

The ~~p~~Personnel informed of the condition of an employee with a communicable disease should be limited to those needed to protect the health and safety of the employee, students and other staff, and to those needed to identify situations where potential for transmission of the disease might exist. All those informed of the employee's condition shall respect and maintain ~~his/her~~their right to privacy and the confidentiality of ~~his/her~~their condition and records.

D. COOPERATION WITH LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS

If the county health director notifies GCS that an employee with a communicable disease or condition may be posing a threat to the public health, all employees shall cooperate with the health director in eliminating the threat. All GCS employees are expected to cooperate with the local health department to implement control measures required by the county health department.

E. EMPLOYEE HEALTH CERTIFICATES

The Superintendent or designee is responsible for requiring that all new employees, as well as employees who have been separated from public school employment for more than a year or who have been absent for more than 40 successive school days because of a communicable disease, provide a fully completed health certificate in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

- ~~4. In accordance with General Statutes 130A-136, school principals shall report suspected cases of certain communicable diseases, including AIDS and HIV, to the Director of the Guilford County Department of Public Health. Confidentiality of such reports is protected by law, and school principals are presumed by the law to be immune from liability for making such reports in good faith. The principal also shall notify the Superintendent of suspected cases of certain reportable diseases, including AIDS and HIV infection.~~
- ~~5. Employees who face increased risk of significant complications from exposure to communicable diseases that appear in the school setting shall notify the principal or supervisor of their risk. Unless prohibited by law, the principal or supervisor should notify an at-risk employee of the existence of chicken pox, influenza, meningococcus, measles, tuberculosis, or other infection occurring in the workplace that may represent a serious threat to the employee's health. In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, guidelines for necessary health and safety precautions shall be distributed by the administration and shall be followed by all school employees.~~
- ~~6. Nothing in this policy is intended to grant or confer any employment rights beyond those existing by law or contract.~~

Legal References: [Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq., 29 C.F.R. pt. 1630; G.S. 130A, art. 6; 10A N.C.A.C. 41A .0101 et seq.; G.S. 130A-136, 130A-142, 130A-143, 115C-323](#)

Cross References: [Communicable Diseases – Students \(policy 4230\)](#)

Adopted: February 1, 1993

Revised: May 10, 2022 (recoded from GBRAB); [TBD](#)