



Ambulatory Clinic Policy and Procedure

Title: HEALTHCARE WORKERS WITH COMMUNICABLE DISEASES	Policy Number: EP 7.4
Regulation: ADA, DSHS, FDA, TAC Reference:	Effective Date: 01/2025

Policy Statement:

It is the purpose of this policy to protect staff, faculty, residents, students, patients, and visitors from potential exposure to infectious diseases. Recommendations from the CDC and the American's with Disability Act (ADA) will serve as guidelines to prevent the spread of transmittable infectious diseases to healthcare personnel and/or patients.

Scope and Distribution:

This policy applies and will be distributed to all Texas Tech Physicians of El Paso (TTP EP) ambulatory clinics.

Review:

The appointed Infection Preventionist, in consultation with the Infection Prevention and Control Committee Members, will review this TTP EP Policy on June 1 of every even-numbered year.

Definitions:

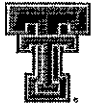
Healthcare Personnel (HCP): refers to all paid and unpaid persons serving in healthcare settings who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials, including body substances (e.g., blood, tissue, and specific body fluids); contaminated medical supplies, devices, and equipment; contaminated environmental surfaces; or contaminated air.

Healthcare settings: refers to places where healthcare is delivered and includes, but is not limited to, acute care facilities, long-term acute care facilities, inpatient rehabilitation facilities, nursing homes and assisted living facilities, home healthcare, vehicles where healthcare is delivered (e.g., mobile clinics), and outpatient facilities, such as dialysis centers, physician offices, and others.

Presenteeism: refers to a healthcare personnel reporting to work when sick to show they work hard and are important to the employer.

Procedure:

1. Texas Tech Physicians of El Paso (TTP EP) will implement an exposure management process geared towards healthcare personnel (HCP) with whom are suspected of or have acquired a communicable disease in or out of the workplace setting.
 - a. The intention of this plan is to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases among HCP and patients.



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- b. HCP are responsible to report possible or diagnosed exposure of infectious diseases to their immediate supervisor or to the Office of Occupational Health (OOH).
 - i. If the HCP informs their immediate supervisor first, the supervisor must notify the OOH and Human Resources (HR) as soon as possible.
 - c. TTP EP provides a confidential and non-punitive mechanism for HCP to report exposures and/or potentially infectious illnesses.
 - i. The organization fosters a culture that prevents reluctance to report exposures or illnesses due to concerns regarding missed work or fear of reprimand.
 - ii. Presenteeism is not accepted due to the potential increase transmission of infections in the workplace.
 - iii. Discretion is taken to protect the privacy of the healthcare personnel.
 - d. Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC EP), HSCEP OP 75.11A, Health Surveillance Program Exposure Management discusses a process for HCP to have access to clinical providers with expertise in exposure and illness management.
 - e. All non-employees of TTUHSC El Paso are responsible for obtaining the appropriate screening/treatment and documentation via their own personal health practitioner, when necessary.
 - f. Appendix A provides a list of illnesses and recommended work restrictions that includes the exclusion of HCP to have close contact with patient, staff, students or visitors.
 - g. Healthcare personnel are to provide OOH and HR clearance forms before returning to work.
2. When the Office of Occupational Health detects an outbreak among HCP, they will coordinate with the Infection Prevention and Control Committee members to formulate a response plan.
 3. TTP EP will follow state and local requirements for reporting specific infections or infectious conditions to the appropriate health agencies within the required time frame.
 4. If an exposure to an infectious disease occurred by a medical device or equipment due to a quality problem or another issue, TTP EP should report any findings to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) MedWatch database.

REFERENCE:

1. Texas Administrative Code.
[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=25&pt=1&ch=97&rl=11](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=25&pt=1&ch=97&rl=11)



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2. Texas Administrative Code.
[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=25&pt=1&ch=97&rl=12](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=25&pt=1&ch=97&rl=12)
3. HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE CHAPTER 81. COMMUNICABLE DISEASES; PUBLIC HEALTH DISASTERS; PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES.
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/HS/htm/HS.81.htm>
4. Kuhar D, Carrico R, Cox K, et al. *Infection Control in Healthcare Personnel: Infrastructure and Routine Practices for Occupational Infection Prevention and Control Services.*; 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/infection-control/media/pdfs/Guideline-Infection-Control-HCP-H.pdf>.
5. **Kuhar D, Babcock H, Brown VM, et al. *Infection Control in Healthcare Personnel: Epidemiology and Control of Selected Infections Transmitted Among Healthcare Personnel and Patients.*; 2024.** <https://www.cdc.gov/infection-control/media/pdfs/Guideline-IC-HCP-H.pdf>.
6. Henderson DK, Dembry L-M, Sifri CD, et al. *Management of healthcare personnel living with hepatitis B, hepatitis C, or human immunodeficiency virus in US healthcare institutions. Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology.* 2022;43(2):147-155. doi:10.1017/ice.2020.458
7. SHRM. How to handle communicable diseases in the workplace. SHRM. <https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/tools/how-to-guides/how-to-handle-communicable-diseases-workplace#:~:text=Employee%20self-notifies%20and%20protection.any%20accommodations%20or%20leaves%2C%20confidential>. Published January 18, 2024.
8. *The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Coverage of Contagious Diseases.*; 2011. <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RS22219.html#:~:text=Footnote%2016%2C%20which%20was%20referenced,her%20salary%20until%20retirement%20eligibility>.
9. MedWatch: The FDA Safety Information and Adverse Event Reporting program. U.S. Food & Drug. <https://www.fda.gov/safety/medwatch-fda-safety-information-and-adverse-event-reporting-program>. Accessed October 15, 2024.

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Signatory approval on file by:	
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