

MAINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

**HEALTH AND SAFETY
Section 809**

SUBJECT: BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASE

PURPOSE: To provide a safe and healthy environment for Maine Community College System faculty, staff, students, and visitors by addressing certain issues regarding blood borne pathogens and infectious disease

A. Introduction

In the normal course of the day-to-day activities of the community colleges, large groups of people of diverse backgrounds are brought together. In addition, students in the various health science and related programs have, as part of their clinical education, the potential for direct contact with persons with infectious diseases. Despite these challenges, it is the goal of the MCCS to provide a safe and healthy environment for faculty, staff, students and visitors.

B. Definitions

The following terms have the following meanings in this policy:

1. “Blood” means human blood, human blood components, and products made from human blood;
2. “Bloodborne Pathogens” means pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), AIDS, AIDS-Related Complex (ARC), Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), and Hepatitis C Virus (HCV);
3. “Other Potentially Infectious Materials” means unfixed tissue or organ other than intact skin from a person, and the following human body fluids: semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid, peritoneal fluid, amniotic fluid, saliva in dental procedures, any body fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood, and all body fluids in situations where it is difficult or impossible to differentiate between body fluids; and
4. “Occupational Exposure” means reasonably anticipated skin, eye, mucous membrane, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that may result from an employee’s performance of duties.

C. Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan

Each college shall adopt a Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan that includes at least the following components:

1. Definitions;
2. Employee Exposure Determinations;
3. Methods of Compliance;
4. Engineering Controls;
5. Work Practice Controls;
6. Housekeeping Controls;
7. Personal Protective Equipment;
8. Regulated Waste Management;
9. Contaminated Sharps Disposal;
10. Hepatitis B Vaccinations;
11. Exposure Reporting and Follow-up;
12. Labeling and Signage;
13. Training and Information;
14. Recordkeeping; and
15. Periodic Plan Review.

Such Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plans shall be available online and paper copies shall be available to employees upon request.

D. Infectious Disease Policy Statement

The M CCS recognizes that infectious diseases such as those listed in section B.2 above pose serious public health threats. Likewise, the M CCS recognizes that principles of non-discrimination, privacy, and informed decision-making are also important. The M CCS is therefore committed to addressing, analyzing, and resolving issues presented by such diseases on a case-by-case basis.

No person shall be denied employment or education solely because the person has an infectious disease unless public health laws, regulations, directives or advisories require otherwise, or unless bona fide employment and/or educational qualification requirements, some of which set forth as examples in sections E, F, and G below, apply. When a public health official has reason to believe that the continued presence by a person at the M CCS presents a clear danger to the health of others, and the public health official has so notified the M CCS, the M CCS shall exclude the person from the M CCS during the period of danger.

E. Requirements Applicable to Students

Students and/or student applicants with infectious diseases such as those listed in section B.2 above shall be subject to the following reasonable requirements.

1. Health Science and Other Professionally Regulated Programs

Applicants to, and students in, health science or other professionally regulated programs may be required to follow policies, standards, health screening, and immunization requirements established by their respective professions for clinical and other settings. These standards may be subject to change, based on the clinical setting, programs factors, and associated risks. Additional requirements for these students are set forth in sections G.2 and G.3 below.

2. Athletics

Students with an infectious disease who participate in intercollegiate athletics, intramurals or club sports shall disclose such infection to the pertinent coach, coordinator, and/or trainer. Such students may also be required to follow the infectious disease policies of a pertinent intercollegiate athletic conference or association. An infected student may be prohibited by a college from participating in athletic events that present a significant risk of bleeding injuries or other risk of transmission. Such determinations shall be made by the college in consultation with a qualified health professional.

3. Studying Abroad

Students who seek to participate in overseas programs or projects may be required by the host country to be tested for certain infectious diseases.

F. Requirements Applicable to Employees and Students

Employees and students with infectious diseases such as those listed in section B.2 above shall be subject to the following reasonable requirements.

1. Precautions

Employees and students with an infectious disease are strongly encouraged to receive care and education; take appropriate precautions; and utilize universal precautionary measures.

2. Testing

Employees and students with an infectious disease will not be required by the M CCS to be tested. Those persons wishing to be tested will be referred to private or public health services.

3. Confidentiality

Infectious disease information disclosed to the M CCS by employees and students may be re-disclosed by the M CCS only to those persons with a need to know and/or in order to protect the health and safety of other students and employees.

4. Misconduct

Employees and students with a potentially fatal infectious disease shall not engage in conduct that intentionally, knowingly or recklessly transmits the disease. Violations of this policy may result in discipline, including employee termination and student expulsion, as well as civil liability and criminal prosecution.

G. Requirements Applicable to Health Science and Related Programs

The following provisions shall apply to the colleges' health science and related programs.

1. Faculty

Faculty in all health programs shall serve as positive role models in the care of clients with infectious disease by striving to increase and improve the faculty member's knowledge and skill and to render to each client the full measure of the faculty member's ability. All care shall be provided with respect for the dignity of the client, unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of the health programs.

2. Faculty and Students

Students and faculty with asymptomatic Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) will be allowed to perform direct client care in accordance with the affiliating facility's guidelines and policies. The curriculum of the MCCS health programs should include training on infection control for students enrolled in those programs. All other students and employees shall receive information on infectious disease, its transmission and prevention.

3. Students

- a. All students in all health programs must be taught the principles of infection control and their application (e.g., universal precautions) in the classroom and laboratory setting prior to caring for any client in the clinical setting. These principles of infection control include those related to client contact and the proper use and disposal of equipment and supplies.
- b. Students in all health programs are expected to care for clients with any infectious disease. If a student who does not have a pre-existing condition refuses to care for a client, counseling will be provided regarding the student's concerns and career goals. If after counseling the student still refuses to care for such a client, the student may be dismissed from the program.
- c. All students working in clinical settings at affiliating agencies will be provided with supplies necessary to meet pertinent medical guidelines.

- d. All students who are pregnant, believe they may be immuno-compromised, or exhibit a diagnosed skin condition, must so inform their immediate college health science or designated supervisor. If the facts of the particular case warrant, such students may not be assigned to care for clients who have transmissible infections.

H. Employee Vaccinations

Employees in positions with a foreseeable risk of contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials shall be provided with training and offered certain vaccines as required by law. The following vaccinations shall be offered free of charge to these employees and to any other individuals who are occupationally exposed within the MCCS:

1. Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) - after first birthday - unless exempt or serological proof of immunity;
2. Varicella titer;
3. Adult type diphtheria/tetanus within the past 10 years;
4. Purified Protein Derivative (PPD) – test which, if positive, must have negative chest x-ray and be asymptomatic; and
5. Hepatitis vaccine followed by a titer.

An employee who is exposed to one of these diseases in the workplace and who declines the vaccination must sign a waiver releasing the college and every other component, employee, officer, or trustee of the MCCS for any and all liability related to contracting a work-related infectious disease.

I. AIDS Information Statement

MCCS supports educating of the college communities about the transmission and prevention of AIDS and the dangers of high-risk behavior. To that end, the American College Health Association, the Center for Disease Control, the United States Public Health Service, and the American Council on Education recommend that the MCCS disclose the following information.

Current epidemiological data indicates that the AIDS virus is not spread by casual person-to-person contact, and that students or employees with AIDS, AIDS-Related Complex, or a positive HIV antibody test do not pose a health risk to other students and employees in an academic setting. The virus that causes AIDS is transmitted through infected blood, blood products, body fluids, semen, and vaginal secretions; intimate sexual contact; sharing of contaminated hypodermic needles; and from infected mothers to unborn children. To date, the major groups infected with AIDS have been homosexual or bisexual men and intravenous drug users. However, AIDS is also spreading into the general heterosexual population and is expected to increase in larger numbers in this group. Sexual partners of the above groups, persons with multiple sexual partners, and those who received blood transfusions prior to spring 1985 are at the highest risk.

J. Construction

This policy shall be construed and applied as then-current medical guidance warrants.

REFERENCES: 5 M.R.S.A. §19201 et seq.; and 20-A M.R.S.A. §12706 (1), (15) and (19)

DATE ADOPTED: June 24, 2009

DATE(S) AMENDED: