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**Area:** Employee Health  
**References:** System Administration, System Wide  
**Applicability:** Aspirus System Wide

## Employee Health: Control of Communicable and Infectious Diseases Policy (System)

### PURPOSE:

TO PROVIDE A COMMUNICABLE/INFECTIOUS DISEASE SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM THAT PREVENTS AND CONTROLS THE INCIDENTS AND SPREAD OF COMMUNICABLE/INFECTIOUS DISEASE AMONG EMPLOYEES AND PATIENTS.

### DEFINITIONS:

**Infectious disease** is a disease caused by the entrance into the body of organisms, such as bacteria, viruses, fungi or parasites.

**Communicable diseases** is a disease that may be transmitted from one infected person to another, or from animal to a human; directly or by modes, such as airborne, waterborne, foodborne, or vector borne transmission; or by contact with an inanimate object, such as contaminated surfaces in the environment.

**Prophylaxis** is treatment administered following an individual's exposure to a communicable/infectious disease to prevent the development of an infection, or the progression of an infection to an active disease, or prevent transmission and disease in others.

**Furlough** provides a mechanism for the exclusion from work for a health care worker who has had an occupational exposure to a communicable/infectious disease, in order to prevent transmission of the communicable/infectious disease to patients and other health care workers.

**Prospective Employee** is an applicant to which a job offer has been extended, but is contingent on meeting the new hire requirements for employment.

**"Food Handler"** is an individual working with unpackaged food, food equipment or utensils, or food-contact surfaces.

**Valid Vaccination Record** is a legitimate medical record or a computerized Internet database application that has been specifically developed to record and track immunization dates and information.

# POLICY:

- A. All Independent and Locums providers, contract staff, students, and volunteers are required to follow the same requirements as Aspirus employees and providers and for the purposes of this policy all will be referred to as "Health-Care Workers" (HCW).
- B. Aspirus will comply with the Center of Disease Control, local, state and federal recommendations and requirements, for the management and reporting of communicable/infectious diseases among health care workers.
- C. Employee Health will work in collaboration with the Aspirus Infection Prevention Department in the monitoring and investigating of potentially harmful communicable/infectious disease exposures and outbreaks among Aspirus Health Care Workers.
- D. Employee Health or designee will provide post-exposure evaluation and appropriate prophylaxis for any health care worker who has a work-related exposure to a patient with a communicable/infectious disease. Employee Health will assure that all post-exposure evaluations and prophylaxis are provided to the exposed health care worker in accordance with the Center of Disease Control guidelines, or as ordered by the Employee Health Medical Director, or designee. Appropriate measures to identify and prevent additional work-related exposures will be implemented in collaboration with the Infection Prevention Department and Department Leaders as necessary.
- E. Employee Health or designee, will follow all applicable Center of Disease Control guidelines, state and federal laws and regulations, and this policy, in determining when a health care worker with a work or non-work related communicable/infectious disease will be required to take leave from his/her position or otherwise be restricted from continuing his/her job duties.
- F. In the event that a health care worker sustains a work-related illness as determined by Employee Health, compensation benefits may be available and could include: approved medical expenses, compensation for lost time if furloughed, or disability benefits, through the Aspirus Workers Compensation Policy. A mandatory personal leave of absence may be required during the incubation period of a communicable illness, in which PTO may be used if available. Absences that are considered a serious health condition may be eligible for Family Medical Leave, if the employee is eligible for and entitled to Family Medical Leave; the time away from work (up to 12 weeks) will be applied to the employee's Family Medical Leave entitlement.
- G. For non-employed health care workers, Aspirus Employee Health, Aspirus Occupational Health, or designee, will provide assistance in managing and reporting of the communicable/infectious disease exposure to the exposed person's employer. The exposed person's employer will be notified as soon as feasible following the exposure.
- H. During the pre-employment health assessment all health care workers will be required to complete a screening for any past or current communicable/infectious diseases including Mycobacterium tuberculosis. The results will be know prior to the assumption of job duties.
- I. During the pre-employment health assessment a review of all prospective health care worker's immunization status of the following vaccine-preventable diseases will be completed: measles, mumps, rubella and varicella. For health care workers that have exposure to blood or bloody body fluids per their job description, will additionally be assessed for immunization status for Hepatitis B Virus.
- J. Reasonable accommodations may be made for a health care worker who has a specific acute or chronic communicable/infectious disease(s) and may not be excluded from employment/job duties unless a significant and direct threat exists to other health care workers and/or patients.

- K. A periodic health and safety assessment will be completed for all health care workers who have frequent or direct contact with patients and/or as determined by job description, job duties, and/or work location.
- L. All health care workers are required to inform an Aspirus EH registered nurse, Aspirus Infection Control and/or his/her department manager, or designee, of any known or suspected contact to a patient, or person in the community, with a communicable/infectious disease.
- M. All work-related exposures to communicable/infectious disease will be managed collaboratively by Employee Health and Infection Prevention including the EH Medical Director and IP Medical Director. Exposed health care workers will be evaluated by an EH registered nurse and appropriate screening, testing and/or prophylactic treatment will be administered. All post-exposure prophylaxis, or treatment, is provided based on CDC recommendations, and/or as directed by the EH Medical Director, or designee.
- N. A health care worker suspected of having a communicable/infectious disease or illness is responsible for reporting the communicable/infectious disease or illness to an EH registered nurse, their department manager, or designee. Aspirus Infection Prevention will be notified if the disease or illness meets the definition of a reportable communicable/infectious disease.
- O. In the event of a communicable/infectious disease outbreak, Employee Health in collaboration with Aspirus Infection Prevention will initiate measures to provide effective protection to health care workers and patients.
- P. A health assessment will be conducted by the EH registered nurse, or designee, on an as-needed basis to evaluate a health care worker's return-to-work status following a communicable/infectious illness or exposure to communicable/infectious disease.
- Q. For food handlers, Aspirus will follow the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's, FDA Food Code 2009: Chapter 2 – Management and Personnel, Food Guidance and Regulations when managing Aspirus HCWs who as part of their job duties handle unpackaged food, food equipment and utensils, or food contact surfaces (Food Handler).
- R. Communicable disease exposure reports will be completed as required by Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), local, state and federal regulations and law, reviewed and signed by the Employee Health Medical Director and reported to the respective Aspirus Business Unit's Infection Prevention team/committee.
- S. Infection Control Committee and Reports
  1. Employee Health will participate in active Infection Prevention programs as requested.
  2. An Employee Health representative will participate as needed or requested at any Infection Control Committee within the Aspirus System, to assist in periodic review and assessment of aggregated data gathered on health care workers to identify and determine the need for corrective action.
  3. Aspirus Infection Prevention will notify the Public Health Department of any health care worker with a communicable/infectious disease or condition as required by local regulations.

## REFERENCES:

Immunization of Health Care Workers: Recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the Hospital Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC MMRW November 25, 2011/60 (RR07); 1-45

U.S. Food and Drug Code 2009: Chapter 2 – Management & Personnel

Control of Communicable Disease Manual, 19th edition (2008) edited by David L. Heymann, MD, and published by the American Public Health Association

Centers for Disease Control 1998 Guideline for Infection Control in Health Care Personnel.  
Wisconsin Department of Health Services Division of Public Health/Wisconsin Bureau of Communicable Diseases Communicable Disease Epidemiology Section

## Attachments

No Attachments

## Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
Approver	Kevin O'Connell: PHYSICIAN	04/2019
Infection Prevention Approval	Nikki Mueller: INFECTION PREVENTIONIST	04/2019
Approver	Ann Line: SYSTEM DIRECTOR OF EMPLOYEE HEALTH & WELLNESS	03/2019
Approver	Elisha Doering: SYSTEM MANAGER OF EMPLOYEE HEALTH & WELLNESS	03/2019
Policy Author	Elisha Doering: SYSTEM MANAGER OF EMPLOYEE HEALTH & WELLNESS	03/2019

## Applicability

Aspirus Clinics, Inc., Aspirus Iron River, Aspirus Ironwood Hospital & Clinics, Inc., Aspirus Keweenaw, Aspirus Langlade, Aspirus Medford, Aspirus Ontonagon, Aspirus Post Acute Care, Aspirus Riverview, Aspirus Wausau, Aspirus, Inc.