

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE GUIDE

A. INTRODUCTION

BRCC's policies and procedures are intended to protect all members of our community while on campus and when participating in college related or sponsored activities. This guide promotes the health and safety of BRCC employees and students by providing information to prevent the contraction and spread of communicable diseases, and advises the appropriate response to a communicable disease outbreak.

B. RESPONSE

BRCC will alert the campus community when a communicable disease threat, may affect members of campus community. The guidance provided is in case a communicable disease or public health emergency is declared. College communicable disease prevention, mitigation, and response activities are guided by the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Virginia Community College System. In the event of such an emergency, BRCC will notify the College community of the emergency, take actions to protect the health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and visitors, and provide additional guidance if necessary.

The following procedures should be followed if a communicable disease emergency such as a regional communicable disease outbreak, pandemic, or public health emergency is declared by federal, state, or local health officials; or by College officials. Consult your healthcare provider for all other routine, seasonal, or individual health issues. Routine, seasonal, and individual health issues DO NOT need to be reported to university officials unless advised to do so by your healthcare provider.

Employees:

Faculty or staff diagnosed with or who believe they have a communicable disease should:

- Seek medical attention if necessary
- Stay at home when sick and avoid close contact with others to the extent possible
- Do not return to work until advised to do so by a health care professional or, in the absence of medical consultation, do not return to work for the duration of the illness and 24-hours after symptoms abate
- Notify your supervisor
- Record your time away from work as sick leave
- Avoid traveling when sick to limit the spread of a communicable disease, unless otherwise deemed appropriate by a health care professional
- Use antibiotics and antivirals appropriately and exactly as prescribed for the full duration of the prescription – do not self-medicate or share medications with others
- Maintain awareness of the situation and the progression and nature of the communicable disease emergency by monitoring media outlets

- Faculty: Arrange alternate teaching schedules to avoid cancellation of class when possible.

Supervisors:

Supervisors who become aware of an employee exhibiting communicable disease symptoms or diagnosed with a communicable disease must not release the employee's name, identifying information, or condition to other employees. All employee healthcare concerns must be

forwarded to the Human Resource Department. Supervisors and employees can contact Human Resources with any questions or concerns they may have regarding workplace issues surrounding communicable disease.

Please note: In the event the Commonwealth declares a communicable disease to be a public health threat or public health emergency, the DHRM Public Health Emergency Leave Policy may be partially or fully implemented: Policy Number: 4.17 Emergency Disaster Leave

Students:

- Seek medical attention if necessary
- Stay at home when sick and avoid close contact with others to the extent possible
- Do not return to class or work until advised to do so by a health care professional or, in the absence of medical consultation, do not return to work for the duration of the illness and 24-hours after symptoms abate
- Notify your professors, instructors, supervisor, and family as necessary
- Avoid traveling when sick to limit the spread of a communicable disease, unless otherwise deemed appropriate by a health care professional
- Use antibiotics and antivirals appropriately and exactly as prescribed for the full duration of the prescription – do not self-medicate or share medications with others
- Maintain awareness of the situation and the progression and nature of the communicable disease emergency by monitoring media outlets

Confidentiality:

All student and employee medical information is considered private and confidential, and will be handled in compliance with legal requirements and professional ethical standards.

- The College will implement and maintain procedural safeguards to protect the privacy interests of persons in the campus community who have a communicable disease in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), as well as all federal, state, and local regulations
- The College will not disclose the identity of any employee or student who has a communicable disease, except as authorized or required by law.

C. PREVENTION

Vaccines, antibiotics, antivirals, innate immunity, and/or acquired immunity can provide some protection against certain communicable diseases. Not all communicable diseases are treatable, nor are current treatments guaranteed to protect against a communicable disease. Therefore, it is important to limit the spread of a communicable disease before it has the potential to cause serious illness/disease by taking the following steps:

- Wash hands frequently
- Cover mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
- Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces
- Practice a healthy lifestyle: exercise, eat a balanced diet, and get sufficient sleep
- Handle and prepare food safely: keep foods at correct temperature, cook foods (especially meats) thoroughly, wash produce, and observe expiration dates
- Follow universal precautions when working with bloodborne pathogens. This means treating all human body fluid as potentially infectious and using appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Avoid public places, work, or school when sick to prevent the spread of a communicable disease
- Maintain appropriate immunizations and vaccinations based upon the region in which you live and work, and your exposure risk.

D. PLAN

It is important to have a plan in place within your unit or department to respond to staffing and other business issues that may arise during a communicable disease emergency, or when employees are unable to attend work due to illness. A unit plan should:

- Designate employees who will work during a communicable disease emergency either onsite or at an alternate location (including home)
- Cross-train staff to provide at least three levels of backup for critical positions
- Develop telework agreements with those staff who may have to work from home or an alternate location

E. RESOURCES

For additional information about a specific communicable disease including symptoms, prevention, treatment, and communicable disease outbreak, please visit the following websites:

- United States Department of Health and Human Services: <http://www.hhs.gov>
- Virginia Department of Health: www.vdh.virginia.gov
- Your personal health care provider(s) or physician.

Additional resources, including travel alerts and current pandemic disease emergencies are on the following websites:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov>
- CDC Traveler's Health webpage: wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx
- World Health Organization (WHO): [Travel and health \(who.int\)](http://www.who.int/travelandhealth)
- U.S. Pandemic Flu Website: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>
- U.S. State Department Travel Alerts webpage:
<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html>