



**African Population and  
Health Research Center**

*Transforming lives in Africa through research.*

# HIV / AIDS POLICY

Date of Review: October 2021  
Date of Approval: November 2021  
Next Review Date: November 2024  
Next Review Date: November 2027

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) is an international non-profit organization that implements policy-relevant research on population, health and wellbeing in sub-Saharan Africa. Our goal is to transform lives on the continent by generating evidence for meaningful action.

The Center:

- Acknowledges the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa, where its research activities are based;
- Seeks to minimize the social, economic and developmental consequences of HIV/AIDS to the Center and its staff;
- Recognizes the distress and trauma that HIV/AIDS presents to employees and their families;
- Commits to providing a safe and supportive working environment free from prejudices against HIV/AIDS infected and affected individuals; and
- Within its budget, the Center commits itself to providing resources and leadership to implement a compassionate HIV/AIDS program.

## **2. DEFINITION**

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a virus that attacks the body's immune system.

Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) occurs at the most advanced stage of HIV infection. HIV targets the body's white blood cells, weakening the immune system.

## **3. APPLICATION**

This policy applies to all staff with regular or temporary contracts and shall be used within the provisions of other APHRC policies.

## **4. PRINCIPLES**

The Center affirms that:

- Staff living with HIV/AIDS shall be protected against all forms of discrimination and/or harassment and accorded dignity and respect due to all staff members and in accordance with the laws of the countries in which it operates;
- Any staff who breaches confidentiality, discriminates, stigmatizes, or harasses others because they are known or suspected to be infected with HIV/AIDs will be subjected to disciplinary action;
- HIV sero-status shall not constitute a reason to preclude any person from employment provided he/she complies with accepted work performance standards and, where necessary, recognized medical authorities indicate that his/her condition and presence in the workplace does not threaten himself/herself or other employees;
- APHRC does not require employees to take an HIV test as a condition of employment. However, where parties external to the Center require that an employee take a HIV/AIDS test, it will be the responsibility of the employee to comply with such requirements. Specifically, employees must be

aware that certain benefits provided by the Center will only accrue in full once these tests are carried out (including life insurance). Where the employee opts to undertake the prescribed tests, he/she will not be compelled to disclose the results to the Center. Where disclosure is made, the Center will take all precautions to ensure the confidentiality of the HIV status of the staff member;

- Employees living with HIV/AIDS are entitled to the same rights and benefits as non-infected employees, subject to the limitations and/ or exclusions imposed by the benefit underwriters/providers;
- Continuing development and implementation of Workplace HIV/AIDS policy and programs will be done in consultation with staff;
- All staff are responsible for acquiring basic knowledge of HIV prevention, treatment, care, and support. They are encouraged to visit [http://aids.about.com/od/frequentlyaskedquestions/HIV\\_AIDS\\_FAQs.htm](http://aids.about.com/od/frequentlyaskedquestions/HIV_AIDS_FAQs.htm) for information on HIV and AIDS;
- All staff members are responsible for taking care of their health and seek necessary prevention, treatment, and support.
- A spirit of compassion and understanding for HIV-infected and affected people will be promoted throughout the Center.

## **5. EDUCATION ON HIV/AIDS**

The Center recognizes that:

- HIV/AIDS is not transmitted through casual contact in the workplace. A person becomes infected by engaging in unprotected sexual intercourse, sharing needles or syringes with infected persons, and infected blood transfusions. HIV-infected mothers may transmit the disease to their children through pregnancy, childbirth, or breastfeeding.
- Under normal working conditions, HIV/AIDS does not present a risk to the health and safety of co-workers or partners. Based on the current medical and scientific evidence, APHRC recognizes that HIV/AIDS is not transmitted through personal casual contact. Staff are therefore expected to continue working relationships with HIV/AIDS-infected staff. There are no grounds for an employee to refuse to share a workplace with a colleague who is infected with HIV.

## **6. HIV/AIDS PROGRAM IN THE WORKPLACE**

### **Coordination and implementation**

The Human Resources Manager's office at the Center will:

- Communicate the HIV/AIDS policy to all staff;
- Identify and liaise with local HIV/AIDS service organizations and other resources in the community;
- Create a supportive and non-discriminatory working environment for those infected with HIV/AIDS;

- Implement, monitor, and evaluate the Center's HIV/AIDS program continuously to ensure that it is adapting to improvements in the area; and
- Advise Center Management and the Board of program implementation and progress.

### **Program components**

The HIV/AIDS program shall provide staff access to:

- Information and education on the prevention of HIV/AIDS infection, treatment and support of staff;
- Voluntary testing and counseling (VCT) for HIV/AIDS, the results of which it will take all reasonable precautions to keep confidential;
- Information on protective materials e.g condoms, educational material as a contribution towards the prevention of HIV transmission; and
- Workplace support for all staff affected indirectly or directly with HIV/AIDS.

The Center will also establish mechanisms to eliminate real or perceived HIV/AIDS related discrimination and promote/protect the dignity of staff infected or affected by HIV/AIDS.

### **Interactions with partner organizations**

The Center recognizes its potential to serve as a positive model for partner organizations in the region. It will strive to share educational materials and policy documents for the prevention and management of HIV/AIDS whenever and wherever necessary and or possible.

## **7. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

There will be continuous monitoring and the policy will be reviewed by the Board every three years or earlier if necessary.

AFRICAN POPULATION AND HEALTH RESEARCH CENTER (APHRC)

**HIV/AIDS Policy**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (*Employee's Name*), have received a copy of the

HIV/AIDS policy dated November 2024. I have read and understood it and agree to adhere, at all times, to the stipulated terms. I acknowledge that this policy is part of the contract of employment. I also understand that I shall be subjected to the stipulated consequences if I fail to adhere to the terms.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(*Employee Signature*)