



**African Population and
Health Research Center**

HIV / AIDS POLICY

Revised: November 2018

HIV/AIDS Policy

PREAMBLE

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; and
- Within its budget, commits itself to providing resources and leadership to implement a compassionate HIV/AIDS program.

PRINCIPLES

The Center affirms that:

- Staff living with HIV/AIDS shall be protected against all forms of discrimination and/or harassment and accorded with dignity and respect due all staff members and in accordance with the laws of the countries in which it operates;
- HIV sero-status shall not constitute a reason to preclude any person from employment provided he/she complies with accepted work performance standards and recognized medical authorities indicate that his/her condition and presence in the work place does not threaten himself/herself or other employees;
- APHRC does not require employees to take an HIV test as a condition for employment. However, it must be understood that where parties external to the Center require that an employee takes 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 have the option of disclosing (or not disclosing) the results to the Center. Where disclosure is made, the Center will take all precautions to ensure confidentiality of HIV status of the staff member;
- Individuals infected 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 HIV/AIDS policy and programs will be done in consultation with staff;

- All staff have the responsibility to acquire basic knowledge of HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. Staff are encouraged to visit the following website for information on HIV and AIDS. http://aids.about.com/od/frequentlyaskedquestions/HIV_AIDS_FAQs.htm; and
- A spirit of compassion and understanding for HIV-infected people will be fostered throughout the Center.

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 health and safety of co-workers or customers. On the basis of 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 workplace with a colleague who is infected with HIV.

HIV/AIDS PROGRAM IN THE WORKPLACE

Co-ordination and implementation

The Center will, through the office of the Human Resources Manager:

- Communicate HIV/AIDS policy to all staff at all times;
- Identify and liaise with local HIV/AIDS service organizations and other resources in the community;
- Foster 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:

