

Communicable Diseases Plan

The purpose of this document is to clarify roles for applicable Commonwealth University (CU) departments should a case of communicable disease occur within the CU community (student, faculty, or staff member). A coordinated, rapid response is crucial in limiting the spread of 1) illness and 2) misinformation.

A communicable disease can spread from person to person and can lead to small, isolated outbreaks or full-scale pandemics. Common communicable diseases include, but are not limited to, measles, mumps, tuberculosis, mpox, and meningococcal disease.

CU's communicable disease response will incorporate the latest guidance available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) and the PA Department of Health ([PA DOH](#)).

Any University employee or department receiving information about a suspected case of communicable disease shall relay this information immediately to the Institutional Public Health Coordinator (Public Health Coordinator). The informant should try to have at least the following information:

- 1) affected student's name and ID number**
- 2) source of information (e.g. name and phone number of treating physician or hospital)**

The Public Health Coordinator notifies 1) the Director of Student Health Services and provides all available information, 2) the impacted Campus Administrator, and 3) the Executive Director of Strategic Communications and Marketing. If it is determined there is proof or strong enough suspicion of communicable disease to warrant a full-scale institutional response, the following procedures will be implemented.

1. The Public Health Coordinator serves as the nexus for institutional communication, maintains regular contact with the Director of Student Health Services, and contacts the:

- a) Impacted Campus Administrator(s) initially and regularly, concerning known and subsequent suspected cases
- b) Executive Director of Strategic Communications and Marketing, initially and regularly to help support the dissemination of informational messaging to internal and external audiences via University email, social media, University website, local media, etc.
- c) Environmental, Health, and Safety Director
- d) Vice President, Department of Student Affairs.
- e) Director of Residence Life if affected student lives in a residence hall

Additionally:

- For multiple cases, coordinates institutional response efforts
- Serves as a resource for all University departments
- Refers all medical questions to the Director of Student Health Services

- Refers all media inquiries to the Executive Director of Strategic Communications and Marketing

2. The Campus Administrator ensures alignment with PASSHE protocols and informs the:

- a) University President
- b) University Provost
- c) Cabinet
- d) Athletics Director if needed
- e) University departments as needed

3. Executive Director of Strategic Communications and Marketing

- a) Works with the Public Health Coordinator to create and disseminate information internally (students, faculty, staff) and externally.
- b) Responds to media inquiries as needed

4. Environmental, Health, and Safety Director

- a) Contacts the Director of Facilities initially, and regularly as needed
- b) Notifies Associate Vice President for Human Resources
- c) Works with the Facilities Department to coordinate the provision of cleaning support as needed

5. Director of Student Health Services/medical staff/nurse on duty

- a) Follows Student Health Services Standard Operating Procedure for Communicable Disease
- b) Works directly with the PA DOH as needed
- c) Updates the Public Health Coordinator as needed
- d) Collaborates and communicates with University departments as needed or as directed by the PA DOH

6. Director of Residence Life

- a) Provides information to Student Health Services, the PA DOH, and University departments as requested
- b) Requests the assistance of the Residence Life staff in helping Student Health Services if needed (i.e. housing questions/concerns, access to housing)
- c) Disseminates informational materials provided by the Public Health Coordinator as needed

- d) Refers all medical questions to Student Health Services

7. Director of Athletics ensures alignment with NCAA and PSAC guidelines and:

- a) Provides information to Student Health Services, the PA DOH, and University departments as requested
- b) Disseminates informational materials provided by the Public Health Coordinator as needed
- c) Refers all medical questions to Student Health Services

8. Associate Vice President for Human Resources

- a) Informs affected employees of leave options

Information Management Guidelines

- a) All media inquiries shall be referred to the Executive Director of Strategic Communications and Marketing
- b) All requests for information from students and parents shall be referred to the Institutional Public Health Coordinator
- c) All leave policy and related inquiries from employees shall be referred to the Associate Vice President for Human Resources