

Chapter Name:	<b>Personnel Policies</b>	<b>Policy 2-29</b>
Policy Title:	<b>Communicable Diseases</b>	
Date Approved:	<u>10/94</u>	
Date Revised:	<u>02/03, 08/15, 3/2020</u>	<b>Page 1 of 5</b>

**2-29 Communicable Disease**

College of The Albemarle’s decisions involving persons who have communicable diseases shall be based on current and well-informed medical judgments concerning the disease, the risks of transmitting the illness to others, the symptoms and special circumstances of each individual who has a communicable disease, and a careful weighing of the identified risks and available alternatives for responding to an employee with a communicable disease.

**I. Communicable Disease**

Communicable disease shall be defined in accordance with N.C.G.S. Section 130A-2 as follows: An illness due to an infectious agent or its toxic products which is transmitted directly or indirectly to a person from an infected person or animal through the agency of an intermediate animal, host, or vector, or through the in animate environment.

Communicable diseases include, but are not limited to, measles, influenza, viral hepatitis-A (infectious hepatitis), AIDS, AIDS-Related Complex (ARC), leprosy, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), including the SARS-CoV-2 (coronavirus), Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), and tuberculosis. College of The Albemarle may choose to broaden this definition when deemed necessary to protect the college community and in accordance with information received through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state, and/or county health departments having jurisdiction over the college’s campus locations.

- A. College of The Albemarle will not discriminate against any job applicant or employee based on whether the individual has a communicable disease. Applicants and employees shall not be denied access to the workplace solely on the grounds that they have a communicable disease. College of The Albemarle reserves the right to exclude a person with a communicable disease from the workplace facilities, programs and functions if the organization finds that the individual poses a direct threat to the health and safety of the individual or others that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation. The college will base its determination that the individual poses a direct threat on an individualized assessment of the individual’s present ability to safely perform the essential functions of his or her job. Additionally, the individualized assessment will be based upon reasonable medical judgment that relies on the most current medical knowledge and or the best available objective evidence. The college will

consider the duration of the risk, the nature and severity of the potential harm, the likelihood that the potential harm will occur, and the imminence of the potential harm.

- B. College of The Albemarle will comply with all applicable statutes and regulations that protect the privacy of persons who have a communicable disease. Every effort will be made to ensure procedurally sufficient safeguards to maintain confidentiality about persons who have communicable diseases are implemented.
- C. College of The Albemarle will take proactive steps to protect the workplace in the event of an infectious disease outbreak. It is the goal of College of The Albemarle during any such event to operate effectively, ensuring all essential services are continuously provided and that employees are safe within the workplace.
- D. College of The Albemarle is committed to providing authoritative information about the nature and spread of infectious diseases including symptoms and signs to watch for, as well as required steps to be taken in the event of an illness or outbreak.

## **II. Preventing the Spread of Infection in the Workplace**

- A. College of The Albemarle will ensure a sanitary workplace through regularly scheduled cleaning of objects and areas that are frequently used, such as bathrooms, breakrooms, classrooms, conference rooms, door handles and railings. A committee will be designated to monitor and coordinate events around an infectious disease outbreak, as well as to create guidelines to be executed to promote safety through infection control.

All employees are expected to take reasonable steps to reduce the transmission of infectious disease in the workplace. The best strategy remains obvious; frequent hand washing (for a minimum of twenty seconds) with soap and warm water and covering your mouth when you sneeze or cough with your arm or tissue, discarding used tissues immediately in wastebaskets. Employees are strongly encouraged to use the alcohol-based hand sanitizers that are stationed throughout campus buildings and in common areas.

- B. Unless otherwise notified, our normal attendance and leave policies will remain in place even during an infectious disease outbreak. Employees who believe they may face particular challenges reporting to work during an infectious disease outbreak should take steps to develop any necessary contingency plans. For example, employees with children may need to arrange for alternative forms of childcare should local schools close.

Chapter Name:	<b>Personnel Policies</b>	<b>Policy 2-29</b>
Policy Title:	<b>Communicable Diseases</b>	
Date Approved:	<u>10/94</u>	
Date Revised:	<u>02/03, 08/15, 3/2020</u>	<b>Page 3 of 5</b>

Employees should also speak with supervisors about the potential to work from home temporarily or on an alternative work schedule. Employees may also request a reasonable accommodation for a disability.

**I. Limiting Travel**

The President has the authority to restrict or cancel staff travel when deemed necessary to protect the health or safety of employees or students. Employees who travel as an essential part of their job should consult with their direct supervisor on travel obligations during any public health crisis.

**II. Teleworking**

In the event of an emergency such as weather disaster or pandemic, College of The Albemarle may allow or require employees to temporarily work from home to ensure business continuity.

See Policy 2-39 - Temporary Teleworking Policy

**III. Staying Home When Sick**

Often times, employees report to work even though they feel ill. College of The Albemarle provides paid sick leave and other benefits, such as Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave and Short-term Disability to compensate employees who are unable to work due to illness. See Policy 02-12 – Family and Medical Leave.

During an infectious disease outbreak, the college will send out recommendations from medical sources regarding reporting to work. It is advised that employees do not report to work while they are ill and/or experiencing the following symptoms (to include but not limited to): fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people with an infectious illness such as the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) should stay at home, unless seeking medical care. The decision to discontinue home isolation precautions should be made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments. Employees who report to work ill will be sent home in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal health authorities' guidelines.

**IV. Requests for Medical Information and/or Documentation**

If you are out sick, report feeling the symptoms of a communicable/infectious disease, or show symptoms of a communicable/infectious disease, it may become necessary to request information from you and/or your healthcare

Chapter Name:	<b>Personnel Policies</b>	<b>Policy 2-29</b>
Policy Title:	<b>Communicable Diseases</b>	
Date Approved:	<u>10/94</u>	
Date Revised:	<u>02/03, 08/15, 3/2020</u>	<b>Page 4 of 5</b>

provider. In general, the college would request medical information to confirm your need to be absent, to show whether and how an absence relates to a communicable/infectious disease, and to certify your fitness to return to work. During the event of a pandemic, the CDC recommends that employers do not require employees obtain medical certification or a return to work note. Cooperation is appreciated when medical information is requested as it pertains to a communicable/infectious disease.

**V. Confidentiality for Medical Information and/or Documentation**

Like all medical information, any information disclosed by a student or employee about a communicable disease will be kept strictly confidential and disclosed only to those individuals with a legitimate need to know. All medical records provided to the college shall be treated as strictly confidential and kept separate from the employee’s personnel files in accordance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended. Students’ medical records shall be strictly confidential and kept separate from students’ academic files in accordance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended. Any release of information from a confidential medical file shall be in accordance with the applicable law and regulations including but not limited to the FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974 (“FERPA”), as amended.

Unless otherwise required by federal or state law, no person, group, agency, Insurer, employer or institution will be provided medical information without prior specific written consent of the affected individual.

**VI. Social Distancing Guidelines for Workplace Infectious Disease Outbreaks**

In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, College of The Albemarle may implement the following social distance guidelines to minimize the spread of the disease amongst employees:

1. Avoid face-to-face meetings. Employees are encouraged to use the telephone, online conferencing, e-mail or instant messaging to conduct business as much as possible, even when participants are in the same building.
  
2. If a face-to-face meeting is unavoidable, minimize the meeting time, choose a large meeting room and sit at least six feet from each other if possible. Avoid person-to-person contact such as shaking hands.

Chapter Name: **Personnel Policies**

**Policy 2-29**

Policy Title: **Communicable Diseases**

Date Approved: 10/94

Date Revised: 02/03, 08/15, 3/2020

**Page 5 of 5**

3. Avoid any unnecessary travel and cancel or postpone non-essential meetings, gatherings, workshops and training sessions.
4. Do not congregate in work rooms, copier rooms or other areas where people socialize.
5. Bring lunch and eat at your desk or away from others.
6. Encourage students and community members to request information via phone or e-mail in order to minimize person-to-person contact.

## **VII. Outside activities**

Employees may be encouraged where applicable to avoid recreational or other leisure classes, meetings, activities, etc. where employees may come into contact with contagious people.

The college recognizes that efforts to increase awareness of communicable diseases and provide information to help prevent further spread of the disease must be one of its goals.

College of The Albemarle assumes responsibility for conducting an educational process designed to reach campus constituencies (students and employees) in an effort to provide basic information about communicable diseases. This process will be designed to reach members of the college community as needed. The Director of Human Resources may schedule training for purposes of education.