

Policy Name: Communicable Disease Policy	Date Approved: October 2026
Policy Category(ies): Health and Safety	Date Effective: October 2026
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Responsible Office or Official: Student Health Services	Recommended Review Cycle: Annual

I. Purpose/Policy Statement

Missouri Western State University is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for students, employees, and visitors. This policy establishes a framework for the prevention, assessment, and management of communicable diseases within the campus community while balancing individual rights with the health and safety of others.

This policy supports coordination with local and state public health authorities and aligns with the University's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) for broader public health incidents.

Missouri Western State University will follow applicable federal, state, and local public health laws and guidance, including recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS).

The University will:

- a) Protect the confidentiality of individuals' health information
- b) Assess communicable disease risks on an individual or situational basis
- c) Implement reasonable measures to reduce transmission risk
- d) Coordinate with public health authorities as necessary

II. Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to:

- a) All students
- b) All employees
- c) University-sponsored activities, programs, and facilities

III. Definitions

A. Communicable Disease

An illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxic products that can be transmitted directly or indirectly to a susceptible host, as defined by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (19 CSR 20-20.010).

B. Licensed Healthcare Provider

A medical professional authorized to diagnose and/or treat illness within the scope of their licensure.

C. Reportable Disease

Diseases required to be reported to public health authorities in accordance with Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services regulations.

D. University Response Team

A coordinated group of university officials activated, as needed, to assess and respond to communicable disease situations. This may include representatives from:

- a) Esry Student Health Center
- b) Human Resources
- c) Risk Management & Safety
- d) Student Affairs
- e) University Police
- f) Other departments as appropriate

IV. Roles and Responsibilities

A. Esry Student Health Center

- a) Provides guidance related to student health concerns
- b) Assists with communicable disease education and prevention efforts
- c) Coordinates with public health authorities for student-related cases

B. Human Resources

- a) Serves as the primary point of contact for employee-related concerns
- b) Coordinates with employees and their healthcare providers as appropriate
- c) Ensures compliance with applicable employment policies and protections

C. Risk Management & Safety

- a) Provides coordination support for risk assessment and mitigation strategies
- b) Assists with environmental health, safety, and exposure control considerations
- c) Assists with environmental health and safety coordination in collaboration with Physical Plant and designated EHS personnel
- d) Coordinates with the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) when broader response actions are required

D. University Actions

- a) Environmental cleaning and disinfection protocols, when necessary, will be implemented in coordination with Physical Plant and Environmental Health and Safety functions to support mitigation of potential exposure risks.

E. University Response Team

- a) Activated as needed for complex or high-risk situations
- b) Evaluates risk to the campus community
- c) Recommends operational adjustments, restrictions, or response measures

V. Individual Case Management

A. Assessment of Risk

Students or employees diagnosed with a communicable disease may continue normal activities unless a Licensed Healthcare Provider determines that they pose a significant risk to others.

B. Medical Guidance and Restrictions

- a. Individuals may be required to provide documentation from a Licensed Healthcare Provider outlining any necessary restrictions.
- b. Students should provide documentation to the Esry Student Health Center.
- c. Employees should coordinate through Human Resources.

C. University Actions

Based on medical guidance and risk assessment, the University may implement reasonable measures, including:

- a. Temporary restrictions on participation in classes, work, or activities
- b. Modifications to housing or work arrangements
- c. Environmental cleaning or safety protocols as appropriate

D. Return to Activities

Individuals may resume normal activities upon clearance from a Licensed Healthcare Provider, when no longer posing a significant risk to themselves or others.

VI. Privacy and Confidentiality

All medical information will be handled in accordance with applicable privacy laws, including HIPAA where applicable. Information will be shared only with individuals who have a legitimate need to know in order to perform their duties.

VII. Coordination with Public Health Authorities

The University will coordinate with the City of St. Joseph Health Department and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services as appropriate for:

- a) Reportable diseases
- b) Exposure guidance

- c) Public health recommendations

VIII. Communicable Disease Response (Outbreaks or Widespread Events)

In the event of a widespread communicable disease or public health emergency:

- a) The University may activate its Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)
- b) A coordinated response structure will be implemented
- c) Additional measures may include:
 - 1) Temporary operational changes
 - 2) Public health messaging
 - 3) Coordination with external agencies

Decisions will be made based on public health guidance, institutional risk, and operational considerations.

IX. Tuberculosis (TB) Compliance

Missouri Western State University maintains a separate Tuberculosis (TB) compliance process administered through the Esry Student Health Center.

This process includes:

- a) Screening
- b) Follow-up testing (as needed)
- c) Documentation and compliance tracking

Students and employees must comply with TB requirements in accordance with the University policy and applicable state regulations.

X. Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with reasonable health and safety measures, including required restrictions or documentation, may result in:

- a) Student conduct action
- b) Employee administrative action in accordance with the University policy

XI. Related Policies and References

- a) Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Regulations
- b) CDC Guidelines for Communicable Diseases
- c) University Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)
- d) Tuberculosis (TB) Compliance