

Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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TRANSMITTABLE DISEASE

POLICY

HEPATITIS B

Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities have transitioned to community based work, community homes, schools and day service programs. In 1991, the routine vaccination of children for Hepatitis B was first recommended. Since 2000, the number of reported cases of Hepatitis B infections has continued to drop. (CDC, 2024) Some individuals born prior to regular vaccination for the Hepatitis B virus may have been exposed to the Hepatitis B virus, have had the infection, or are a carrier of the Hepatitis B virus. To minimize the risk of exposure to the Hepatitis B virus between carriers and staff, or among individuals, the following policy will be adopted:

1. If a carrier of Hepatitis B surface antigen (HbsAg) is identified, staff will report the finding to the Director of Early Intervention and Nursing Services. Information concerning an individual's carrier status will be provided to staff on a "need to know basis".
2. Direct care staff will be instructed in and be expected to follow universal precautions and infection control measures.
3. If an HbsAg carrier continually places others at increased risk of exposure because of certain behaviors, a reasonable plan will be developed to reduce such exposure yet minimize unnecessary isolation or lost program time.
4. Employees who have occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials are encouraged to be vaccinated against Hepatitis B. The vaccination is voluntary and is provided by the Board at no cost to the employee.

AIDS

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a progressive, irreversible destruction of the immune system. Most commonly, AIDS is transmitted by sexual behaviors or needle or syringe use. (CDC, 2018) Based on current evidence, casual person to person contact poses no risk (CDC, 2018). AIDS is not transmitted by air, water, saliva, sweat, tears, closed-mouth kissing, insects, pets, or by sharing toilets, food, or drink (CDC, 2018). The risk of transmission may be greater among individuals with neurological handicaps who lack control of their bodily secretions and/or exhibit violent behavior. Therefore, decisions regarding the type of classroom or program setting for individuals with potentially infectious diseases will be based upon the behavior, neurological development and physical condition of the individual, and expected types of interaction with others. Decisions regarding staffing and/or programming for individuals with AIDS will be made by a multidisciplinary team on a case by case basis with the following considerations:

1. Will the health status of the individual, as determined by his/her physician, allow participation in program activities?
2. Does the individual exhibit behavioral characteristics which increases risk of exposure to the disease to others? Certain types of aggressive behavior may cause introduction of trace amounts of blood directly into the blood stream.

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3. Does the individual have any open sores or skin eruptions that cannot be covered?

When an individual with AIDS participates in a Stark County Board of DD program, staff members having frequent direct contact with the individual will be informed of their health status in accordance with ORC 3701.241 through 3701.249. The number of informed staff; however, will be kept to a minimum to protect the individual's right to privacy. The number of informed staff will be sufficient to assure proper programming and to observe behavioral and/or medical problems that could increase the potential for AIDS transmission.

EMPLOYEES

The transmission of Hepatitis B and/or AIDS from an employee to another employee or to an individual would involve behavior that is not associated with the work place. Therefore, decisions concerning Board employees who are Hepatitis B carriers or who have AIDS will be based upon:

1. The overall health status of the employee as determined by his/her physician.
2. The ability of the employee to perform his/her job.

The confidentiality of such information will be maintained and every effort will be made to protect the rights of those involved. Research concerning transmittable diseases continues and revisions to this policy will be made in accordance with guidelines from the Center for Disease Control.

Historical Resolution Information		Reviewer(s):
Date	Resolution Number	Director of Early Intervention and Nursing Services
2/26/19	02-07-19	
3/22/22	03-15-22	
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