**Employee Communicable Diseases Policy**

This policy sets forth the procedures Hospital will follow to protect patients, visitors and staff from exposure to communicable diseases, to the extent practicable. Hospital reserves the right to follow relevant clinical guidance for specific communicable diseases as it becomes available or is developed by appropriate medical staff.

Hospital will evaluate and respond on a case-by-case basis when possible to any suspected or confirmed cases of unusual or highly infectious communicable illnesses among staff that are readily capable of transmission in a normal business or patient care setting. Such individual review, evaluation and response should take into consideration applicable federal and state laws; the recommendations of the U.S. Public Health Service, the Centers for Disease Control, and various professional associations; other relevant medical, scientific and legal literature; the expressed desires and opinions of the individual with such illness and the individual’s personal physician; and Hospital’s commitment to the protection, to the extent possible, of both public health and individual rights.

Hospital will not discriminate against employees with any suspected or confirmed communicable illness. Employees who continue to meet functional job requirements, maintain acceptable performance standards, and comply with all other required occupational health policies for mandatory screenings and vaccinations may continue to work so long as the medical evidence indicates that their condition or illness does not pose a threat to themselves or others. Staff with suspected or confirmed communicable illnesses will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, when possible, to determine what, if any, restrictions are appropriate based on the nature of the individual’s illness, his or her health status, and the nature of his or her duties, including patient contact, along with any other factors deemed medically relevant by Hospital. Such restrictions or modifications may include, but are not limited to, changes in job functions or duties, assignments to a different location, changes in work schedules or removing the individual from the work setting. Hospital will make every effort to implement such restrictions as confidentially as possible. In the case of a large epidemic or pandemic, case-by-case evaluation may not be possible, and Hospital reserves the right to impose broad restrictions on all or any number of staff.

**Treating Patients or Staff with Communicable Illness**

Hospital is obligated to provide safe, effective, quality care to all patients or staff suffering from a communicable illness. Thus, staff with patient care responsibilities are expected to be at work when scheduled. Employees responsible for patient care may not refuse to provide treatment within their scope of practice solely because the patient has a suspected or confirmed communicable illness. Staff with certain conditions placing them at higher risk of infection and/or complications, including but not limited to compromised immune system and pregnancy, may be reassigned to duties with lower risk of exposure to the communicable illness.

**Protocols for Employees with Suspected or Confirmed Communicable Illness**

Any employee who believes he or she is at risk of contracting or has contracted a communicable illness that may be transmitted in the workplace or patient care setting must contact Human Resources to report the symptoms or illness. During certain communicable disease outbreaks, such as a large epidemic or pandemic, all employees may be required to undergo mandatory health screenings and/or report their health status to their supervisor on a regular basis. During such conditions, Hospital may require individuals who travel to and from areas with active communicable illness outbreaks to report all such travel to Human Resources and to undergo medically appropriate testing or screenings before returning to work. Hospital also may restrict or suspend employment-related travel when such conditions exist.

Employeeswith suspected or confirmed communicable illnesses are encouraged to seek proper medical care, preferably from their personal, primary physician. Hospital reserves the right to require an employee to be assessed by its designated physician at any time to determine fitness for duty or identify relevant work restrictions. All information concerning an employee’s suspected or confirmed communicable illness will be treated with the same degree of care for its confidentiality as any other protected health information and as required by HIPAA. Information from fitness for duty evaluations may be shared with Human Resources as necessary to ensure appropriate staffing for hospital operations.

Employeeswho know or have reason to believe they have a communicable illness are required to take appropriate action to ensure their own protection and that of patients and visitors to the hospital. No employee who suspects or is confirmed to have a communicable illness may engage in any activity that creates a material risk of transmission to patients or other staff. Employees are required to follow any and all guidelines and protocols established by Human Resources for the reporting, screening and treatment of communicable illnesses, together with any and all restrictions or alterations on the employee’s duties or assignments.

**Extended Absences/Quarantine**

Certain communicable illnesses may require an employee to remain away from the workplace for a period of time to avoid exposure to other staff, patients and visitors. To ensure those with symptoms stay home to care for themselves or family members with symptoms of or confirmed communicable illness, employees will not be penalized for requesting leave.

When medically required at the sole discretion of Hospital, and/or as recommended or required by the CDC or a state or local public health authority, employees will be expected to comply with quarantine or similar restrictions prescribed by Hospital or relevant authority. Where quarantine is imposed due to an employee’s exposure while performing work for Hospital, the employee will be paid regular pay and will not have sick or vacation balances reduced during the period of quarantine. Such period will last until the specified quarantine ends or the employee becomes actively ill with the communicable disease, whichever comes first. Nonwork-related exposure resulting in quarantine/absence will be paid based on the availability of the employee’s sick or vacation time. FMLA and/or workers’ compensation may apply during the period of quarantine. For employees who do not have available sick or vacation time, such time may be advanced upon approval of Human Resources.

Under certain conditions affecting all Hospital staff, such as a large epidemic or pandemic, Hospital may enact or adopt emergency time off policies to cover absences due to illness. Once exhausted, standard time off and leave policies apply.

In the case of a vaccine-preventable communicable disease outbreak, employees who refuse vaccination and who pose a risk of exposing patients to the vaccine-preventable communicable disease will be sent home until the risk of possible workplace exposure is mitigated. In these cases, the employee will be required to use their personal leave time. If the employee becomes ill with the vaccine-preventable communicable disease, he or she will be required to use his or her sick leave or personal leave time in accordance with Hospital’s leave policies.