



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

NUMBER: 93-02	DATE: 6/23/93
REVISIONS: 3-9-10	
ISSUED BY: City Manager	SIGNED: <i>Gregory A. Sundstrom</i>

SUBJECT: AIDS IN THE WORKPLACE

PURPOSE: To ensure equal opportunity in all employment practices to individuals considered handicapped or disabled under the American's With Disabilities Act or the Michigan Handicapper's Civil Rights Act due to a communicable disease such as AIDS, HIV, and Hepatitis B.

POLICY:

It is the policy of the City of Grand Rapids as an employer to assure equal opportunity in all employment practices and procedures for employees and applicants for employment regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, handicap, age or marital status. The City of Grand Rapids is committed to and wholly approves the United States Government's definition of a handicapped/disabled individual as an individual:

1. Who has a determinable physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity.
2. Who has a record of having such an impairment.
3. Is perceived or regarded as having such an impairment.

In conjunction with this definition, Communicable diseases such as: Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Hepatitis B (HBV), and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) are considered protected disabilities in both federal legislation (the American's With Disabilities Act – ADA) and state legislation (the Michigan Handicapper's Civil Rights Act – MHCRA). The City of Grand Rapids will accept and process complaints from City employees who believe they have been discriminated against in employment practices and procedures because of a communicable disease including, but not limited to, the above mentioned diseases.

I. Administration

The City Manager has overall responsibility for compliance with this policy and designates the Diversity and Inclusion Office to be responsible for procedure implementation and compliance.

II. Hygiene and Safety Issues

A. Definitions

1. Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is caused by a virus that infects and destroys the white blood cells of the body; it interferes with the ability of the body to fight infection. Because of this virus, the human body is not able to prevent and resist infections and diseases which may result in death. AIDS is currently incurable.
2. Hepatitis-B Virus (HBV) is a major cause of acute and chronic hepatitis, cirrhosis (liver disease), and primary hepatocellular carcinoma (liver cancer). Most infected individuals recover, but severe HBV infections can be fatal. Many people infected do not experience physical symptoms. The usual symptoms of acute infection are similar to influenza, i.e., fatigue, fever, nausea, muscle and joint aches, jaundice, etc.
3. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). The virus which can lead to the disease AIDS. This virus causes a loss or deficiency in the immune system response which results in the infected individual being susceptible to a wide variety of illnesses which can lead to the onset of AIDS.

B. Modes of Transportation

It must be stressed and understood that HIV, HBV, and AIDS are not transmitted through sneezing; coughing; touching; eating or drinking from common utensils; or merely being around an infected person through casual contact with a household member, relative, co-worker, or friend. AIDS, HIV, and HBV are transmitted through the blood and possibly other bodily fluids of the infected individual. The most common forms of transmission are blood-to-blood, or semen-to-blood.

C. Basic Hygiene/Preventative Measures

Because the possible "carriers" of the above mentioned diseases can show no identifiable physical symptoms, the precautions set forth in the City of Grand Rapids Policy on Communicable Diseases must be followed when coming in contact with any questionable substances.

III. Guidelines

- A. No employee or prospective employee shall be required to have his/her blood tested for exposure to HIV, AIDS, or HBV.
- B. As with any medical condition, the City of Grand Rapids is committed to the confidentiality requested and required by employees (or applicants for employment) who request accommodations for a condition such as HIV, AIDS, or HBV.
- C. It is the policy of the City of Grand Rapids not to discriminate against any employee in employment practices, working conditions, or privileges, based on the fact or the perception that the employee has been exposed to the HIV virus or that the employee has AIDS or HBV, provided that the individual's medical condition does not prevent him/her from carrying out job duties, with reasonable accommodations if necessary, while maintaining acceptable performance standards.
- D. Education and training programs containing accurate information about AIDS and its transmission shall be available for all employees. These programs shall be designed to increase the knowledge and sensitivity of employees about AIDS and to decrease irrational fears about exposure to AIDS through normal workplace contact.
- E. Program policies and procedures will be evaluated periodically in order to respond to new medical and health-related developments.

IV. Complaint Procedures

Any employee (or applicant for employment) who believes he or she has been discriminated against due to the disability of contracting or the perception of having one of the communicable diseases mentioned previously should immediately notify the Diversity and Inclusion Office and request an investigation of the situation.