

Section:	Health, Safety and Environment (HS)
Subject:	Communicable Diseases
Legislation:	<i>Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i> (RSA 2000 cF-25); <i>Health Information Act</i> (RSA 2000 cH-35); <i>Public Health Act</i> (RSA 2000 cP-37).
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APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
**President and CEO**

**POLICY**

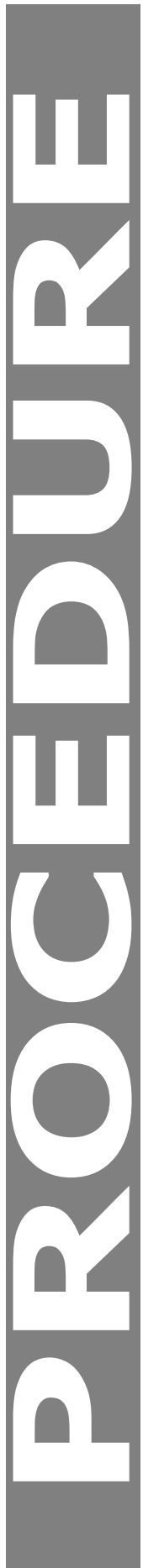
The policy of the Board of Governors is to recognize the rights of SAIT employees and students infected with blood borne pathogens such as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or Hepatitis B or C to continue in their employment or academic pursuits without discrimination, insofar as they are capable of fulfilling their responsibilities and so long as the health, safety and well-being of others is not endangered.

**PROCEDURE**

**DEFINITIONS**

- Blood borne pathogens** Pathogenic microbial agents found in the blood and other body fluids such as semen and vaginal fluid and which may be transmitted from one individual to another through direct contact by these fluids.
- Blood and body fluid exposure** An incident in which blood or body fluid comes into contact with an individual’s skin, mucous membrane or through percutaneous injury.
- Employees** A person employed on SAIT’s payroll, whether paid by annual salary or hourly wage.

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<b>Facilities</b>	Any building, ground or area that SAIT owns, uses or occupies and that is under the jurisdiction of SAIT's Board of Governors.
<b>Personal protective equipment</b>	Gloves, gowns, masks and eye protection or face shields. When used correctly, personal protective equipment provides a barrier between a potentially infectious person or material and others, preventing the transfer of pathogens from one person to another.
<b>Routine practices</b>	A comprehensive set of Infection Prevention Control (IPC) measures developed for use in the routine care of all patients at all times in all healthcare settings. They are intended to minimize or prevent healthcare associated infections (HAIs) in all individuals in the healthcare setting.

## GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

1. All schools/departments must act in accordance with routine practices.
2. An infected or at-risk individual is obliged to take appropriate action to protect that individual and others.
3. The Safety and Community Services department and the School of Health and Public Safety shall ensure that current information about HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C infection is available and appropriate safety procedures are in place to avoid the spread of the viruses.
4. Current medical evidence indicates that HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C are not spread by casual contact but only by the exchange of bodily fluids such as blood, semen or vaginal fluid through such means as unprotected sexual intercourse or sharing of needles. Employees and students will not, on the basis of a positive HIV, Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C test, be denied access to SAIT's facilities.
5. Students enrolled in some School of Health and Public Safety programs may be at higher risk of exposure to blood borne pathogens due to the nature of their training. This procedure allows students infected with blood borne pathogens to continue in their academic studies without discrimination while limiting the risk of exposure to others.
6. Any individual requesting HIV, Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C testing shall be referred to that individual's physician, an infectious disease physician, the Health Services Clinic, or the Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) Clinic for counseling, testing and follow-up. The

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Health Services Clinic shall maintain in confidence all information arising from any tests and all other information pertaining to an individual's personal health as made known to its personnel, and shall make this information known to other parties only with that individual's written agreement, or as required by law or reasonably required to obtain legal or medical advice.

7. SAIT shall provide personal protective equipment for employees and students as required.

## PROCEDURE

1. If an employee or student has been inadvertently exposed to blood and/or body fluids, the incident should be reported to Safety and Community Services. The person exposed should complete an Incident Notification Form and a Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) report and will be offered Blood Body Exposure Protocol testing and follow up. Test results will be forwarded to the ordering physician. The person exposed may choose to have the results forwarded to the Health Services Clinic.
2. All employees and students who are exposed to blood and/or body fluids must follow routine practices, including treating all blood and body fluids as if they are infectious. In general, employees and students should minimize direct contact with blood and/or body fluids and take precautions against penetrating wounds from needles and other sharp materials or equipment.
3. In the School of Health and Public Safety, only those students who have read and signed an informed consent will be allowed to perform invasive procedures on other students and to have invasive procedures performed on them by other students. Furthermore, students will only be allowed to perform invasive procedures on other students once they have been deemed competent through an assessment using simulation devices (for example, phlebotomy/intravenous arms) and then only under the direct supervision of faculty.
4. Protective clothing and equipment shall be worn and used according to the established protocols of a given procedure to prevent skin and mucous membrane exposure when blood or body fluid exposure is anticipated.
5. Routine practices should be followed when providing first aid in any area of SAIT, especially if there is potential for contact with blood or body fluids.
6. In practicing good sanitation, disposable gloves shall be used when cleaning up body fluids. The area of any spill of blood or body fluids shall be cleansed with a one-in-ten diluted bleach solution.

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7. Employees and students who are diagnosed as being HIV positive, being Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C positive or having Autoimmune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) shall be provided access to counseling with the Health Services Clinic to help them with personal, medical and/or financial difficulties arising from the infection and/or diagnosis. The Employee Services department shall provide relevant employee benefits coverage information to affected employees.
8. Educational materials on HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C shall be made available to the SAIT community through the Health Services Clinic, Student Development and Counselling, and the Reg Erhardt Library. Overview information shall be included in new student and employee information sessions.
9. Safety and Community Services shall review this procedure when there is a substantive change in routine practices.

## **POLICY/PROCEDURE REFERENCE**

HS.3.1 Blood Borne Pathogens policy

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