# Communicable Disease Procedure

This procedure is governed by its parent policy. Questions regarding this procedure are to be directed to the identified Procedure Administrator.

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| **Functional category** | Operations |
| **Parent policy** | Emergency and Continuity Management Policy |
| **Approval date** | January 24, 2023 |
| **Effective date** | January 24, 2023 |
| **Procedure owner** | Vice President, Learner Experience |
| **Procedure administrator** | Director, Student Services |

## Overview

NorQuest College (college) will ensure that information about notifiable communicable diseases are shared with the college community. This document sets out the procedures that will be followed if a notifiable communicable disease is reported to a member of the college community which has not been identified as being a part of an Epidemic or a Pandemic.

Authority to establish this procedure is derived from the NorQuest College Board of Governors Policy No. 5 which delegates authority to the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to establish policies and procedures for the college's management and operation.

# Procedure

Everyone on campus has a role to play in responding to incidents of communicable diseases.

## General

If a member of the college community is feeling ill, the individual should contact their physician.

In the absence of a general physician, through the Centre for Growth and Harmony, members of the college community will be provided with information about local medical centers.

- If a member of the college community becomes aware of any communicable disease that may have entered the college community, The Centre for Growth and Harmony is to be informed and they will create an initial response while also consulting with the college Occupational Health and Safety Consultant (OHS), as well as the Emergency Operations Committee (EOC)in creating a college wide response plan.

## Notifiable Communicable Diseases

- In the event that a notifiable communicable disease is identified as a risk to the college community, Public Health will inform the College. Public Health may notify the College through a number of different avenues, such as:
    - NorQuest College general telephone number
    - NorQuest College Occupational Health & Safety (OHS)
    - Executive Directors
- If a member of the college community is contacted by Public Health they are to contact Management within the Centre for Growth and Harmony.
- The Centre for Growth and Harmony Management and CGH Nursing team, along with NQC OHS consultant will follow Public Health policies and procedures to manage the risk.
- The member of the college community who has been identified as having a communicable disease is to provide a letter from a physician to the Centre for Growth and Harmony (student) or People (employee) to confirm they have been medically cleared prior to returning to the campus.
- Each member of the college community has the right to their privacy and confidential medical information being held in the strictest confidence. This information will be handled in accordance with the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, *Health Professions Act*, and Public Health regulations for notifiable diseases.

- In the event that a communicable disease is identified as being a part of an epidemic/pandemic by Alberta Health Services or a greater governing body (World Health Organization, federal or provincial government of Canada) or has been identified as a significant health risk to the college community, please refer to the Epidemic/Pandemic Appendix within the Emergency Response Plan.

**Additional Responsibilities within the college**

The college Notifiable Communicable Disease Checklist will assist employees in responding.

- Medical professionals within the Centre for Growth and Harmony are to obtain the latest recommendations about the management and prevention of the spread of the communicable disease identified within the college.
- Wellness Management and the Centre for Growth and Harmony Nurses may request that Public Health assist with monitoring and outbreak containment processes of notifiable communicable diseases, as required.
- Management within Wellness may utilize the Incident Command System (ICS) for notifiable communicable diseases, to liaise with their medical professions and Occupational Health and Safety in creating a coherent and swift response plan.
- Management within Wellness will provide reasonable support to their medical team to ensure swift containment and resolution of a notifiable communicable disease outbreak.
- People is to alert the Centre for Growth and Harmony and Occupational Health and Safety if they are aware of an employee with a possible notifiable communicable disease.
- Occupational Health and Safety will consult with the Centre for Growth and Harmony in creating a long-term college response.

**Health risks not identified by Public Health**

- There may be times where health risks are present in the college community, but are not identified as a notifiable communicable disease by Public Health. For example, pneumonia might not be listed by Alberta Health as a notifiable communicable disease. However, in certain circumstances the college community might benefit from additional information regarding these illnesses which will be provided by the Centre for Growth and Harmony.

If the college community becomes aware of and/or affected by illness not identified by the *Public Health Act* or in the custody or control of a custodian as defined under the *Health Information Act* (HIA), any necessary disclosure will be done in accordance with the *Health Professions Act* and section 32 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Communication with information and recommendations on prevention and treatment may be prepared by a nurse and provided to the Program Chair or People for distribution to identifiable individuals if necessary.

## Definitions

**College Community:** Any student, faculty, administrative or staff member of the college, member of the public serving in a recognized capacity for the college, and employee of an agency contracted by the college.

**Communicable Disease:** a disease that may be transmitted directly or indirectly from one individual to another.

**Epidemic:** a disease that has unexpectedly increased in a specific geographical area

**Incident Command System (ICS):** a proven industry standard, on-scene, all hazard incident management structure that utilizes a standardized organizational structure and approach in managing emergencies or significant events.

**Medical Professional**: this includes Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses, and Registered Practical Nurses.

**Notifiable Communicable Disease:** disease as defined by the *Public Health Act* and Communicable Diseases Regulation; that must be reported to the local medical officer of health in accordance with Public Health regulations.

**Pandemic**: an epidemic occurring worldwide, or over a very wide area, crossing international boundaries and usually affecting a large number of people.

**People and Culture:** NorQuest College Human Resource Department

# Related information

## NorQuest College

- [Emergency and Continuity Management Policy](#)
- [Emergency Response Plan](#)
- *[Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act Policy](#)*
- [Notifiable Communicable Disease Checklist](#)

## External

- [Alberta Health Notifiable disease guidelines and related documents](#)
- *[Alberta Human Rights Act](#)*
- [Communicable Diseases Regulation](#)
- *[Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)*
- *[Health Information Act](#)*
- *[Health Professions Act](#)*
- *[Public Health Act](#)*

# Next review date

February 2026

# Revision history

| Date | Version Number | Action |
|---|---|---|
| February 2018 | V1 | New |
| March 2019 | V2 (published as V1) | Update to document links and addition of Notifiable Communication Disease Checklist |

| August 2019 | V3 (published as V1-C) | Compliance Office template & reorganization update |
|---|---|---|
| January 2023 | V4 | Review and updated for clarity and links |

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