

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

POLICY ON HIV/AIDS

TITLE AND COPYRIGHT

Title Policy on HIV/AIDS
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1. DEFINITIONS AND APPLICATION

The University of Venda acknowledges that the HIV/AIDS pandemic poses a serious risk to human capital in any organization in terms of productivity and loss of life. The University therefore recognizes the need for integrated and comprehensive strategies to manage the impact of HIV/AIDS at the workplace. Consequently, the University has developed the HIV and AIDS policy that creates an enabling environment for the implementation of relevant programmes and projects in order to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The University of Venda is a rural based Higher Education institution located in Thohoyandou, Vhembe district of the Limpopo province.

There are approximately 11000 registered students who are predominantly black. They come mainly from Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces. However, the University has students from other parts of South Africa, SADC and other African countries.

The University has eight schools, namely, Agriculture; Environmental Sciences; Education; Law; Management Sciences; Health Sciences; Mathematical and Natural Sciences and Human and Social Sciences.

The institution therefore reserves the right to, at any time, in its sole discretion, revise and amend this policy from time to time.

1.1 DEFINITIONS

“university” means the University of Venda.

“student” means a person registered at the University of Venda for studies during a particular academic year.

“employee” means an academic, administrative or service member of staff employed on permanent or contract basis at the University of Venda.

“infected person” means a person who is tested and found reactive to HIV antibodies.

“affected person” means a person who is not infected but whose parents, relatives, friends, co-workers or neighbours are infected by HIV and could be sick or have died from AIDS.

“Post Exposure Prophylaxis” means the administration of antiretroviral medications to a person who has been exposed to HIV to prevent the transmission of the disease.

1.2 APPLICATION

The policy is applicable to all staff and registered students at the University of Venda.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to enable management to set up projects and programmes through the HIV/AIDS Unit, Student Counseling Bureau and Campus Health and Wellness unit which combat the spread of HIV/AIDS.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

The University of Venda is committed to fighting the HIV/AIDS epidemic using the HIV/AIDS Unit as well as the Campus Health and Student Counselling Services Units as main drivers of the programmes. It will, therefore, endeavour to protect the rights of all employees and students who are infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.

The University of Venda is a responsible global citizen which upholds high critical and moral standards in its business. In this respect, the HIV/AIDS policy is a fundamental instrument that provides an enabling environment to fight the pandemic. The policy reflects Univen’s commitment to prevent the occurrence of further HIV infections and mitigate the status quo. The University Council is committed to the implementation of the policy.

4. POLICY GUIDELINES

- 4.1 All employees and students must be made aware of the HIV/AIDS policy during the orientation process.

- 4.2 The University shall endeavour to provide appropriate equipment and materials to protect employees from the risk of occupational exposure to HIV/AIDS.
- 4.3 Employees and students who are exposed to the risk of contracting HIV (e.g. School of Health Sciences and Department of Microbiology and those working at the Clinic and emergency units) will be provided with the universal infection control precautions to eliminate the risk of transmission through blood.
- 4.4 Every employee appointed at the University and newly registered students will be given the HIV/AIDS policy upon appointment or registration.
- 4.5 Staff and students shall not be discriminated on the basis of their HIV and AIDS status.
- 4.6 All staff and students shall have access to HIV/AIDS information which is available.
- 4.7 Students living with HIV and AIDS shall continue with education as long as they are able to study provided the student submits a medical certificate of fitness for duty.
- 4.8 The University shall ensure that students and employees who fall victim to rape are given support in terms of counseling and the necessary care (prophylactic treatment) to reduce the risk of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections.
- 4.9 Employee or students who wish to determine their HIV status may arrange to be tested voluntarily subject to the completion of an informed consent document at the University's expense. Employees and students must be prepared to undergo pre-test and post-HIV test counseling. The HIV test must be conducted by an HIV trained health professional.
- 4.10 All HIV/AIDS matters shall be treated with strict confidentiality. Disclosure of HIV status of an employee or student by a medical or HIV professional without a written consent shall constitute a breach of confidentiality and will be dealt with in terms of the Disciplinary Procedure Manual.
- 4.11 All employees and students living with HIV and AIDS shall be treated in a just, humane and life affirming way. No employee or student shall be discriminated against on the basis of their HIV status.

- 4.12 Students who are infected and affected shall not be denied the right of employment, education and training opportunities due to their HIV status as long as they are able to carry on with their studies.
- 4.13 Employees who are infected with HIV and AIDS would be allowed to continue to work for as long as they are medically fit and able to perform their work. An employee who is infected with HIV/AIDS and becomes too ill to perform his /her duties due to HIV related sickness will after submission of satisfactory medical reports apply for disability benefits.
- 4.14 No student or employee may refuse to study/work or be housed with students/employees living with HIV and AIDS.
- 4.15 HIV screening test shall not form part of pre-employment examination unless it is an inherent requirement of the job.
- 4.16 Employee and students living with HIV and AIDS will be given the necessary support in order for them to work or study without disruption or harassment from fellow employees or students.
- 4.17 Employees or students living with HIV and AIDS are required to behave responsibly so as to ensure that they do not pose a risk of infection to other employees and students.
- 4.18 HIV/AIDS shall not be used as justification for non-performance. If an employee living with HIV/AIDS performs below expectations or is unable to perform his/her job, the university may insist on a health assessment to determine whether the employee is medically fit to continue working.
- 4.19 Employees who are HIV-positive will continue with their employment until they become medically incapacitated or until it is medically advisable that they stop working. At this stage, the university policy on disability and retirement will apply.
- 4.20 HIV/AIDS will be infused in the curriculum.

5. PROMOTION OF HIV/AIDS AWARENESS AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

- 5.1 The HIV/AIDS Unit will be responsible for the implementation of the following activities inter alia:
 - 5.1.1 Orientation / Induction programmes for students and employees on the HIV/AIDS pandemic.
 - 5.1.2 Organising and conducting workshops for employees and students in order to promote awareness

6. IMPLEMENTATION

To ensure that HIV/AIDS activities and programmes are properly co-ordinated and managed, the following structures / persons will be responsible for the implementation of the HIV/AIDS policy and related programmes on campus.

6.1 THE HIV/AIDS UNIT

The University will establish an HIV/AIDS unit which will be responsible for the following functions:

6.1.1 CO-ORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT OF HIV/AIDS ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES

- 6.1.1.1 To initiate the development and implementation of HIV/AIDS programmes and projects.
- 6.1.1.2 To develop and implement HIV/AIDS programmes and projects in the community.
- 6.1.1.3 To provide a resource centre for any information related to HIV/AIDS.
- 6.1.1.4 To organize HIV/AIDS awareness activities for the university.
- 6.1.1.5 To provide VCT and couple counseling services.
- 6.1.1.6 To give support to people dealing with the infected and affected students and staff.
- 6.1.1.7 To refer clients to appropriate service providers.
- 6.1.1.8 Provision of condoms free of charge and to ensure that they are accessible to students and staff.
- 6.1.1.9 To manage STIs, TB and other opportunistic infections.
- 6.1.1.10 To liaise/work together with Staff Wellness Unit on advocacy, referral and counseling.
- 6.1.1.11 To liaise with other HIV/AIDS committee and compile a monthly report on developments and activities of the Unit.
- 6.1.1.12 To provide training and developmental activities for employees and students.

6.2 THE HIV/AIDS COMMITTEE

The HIV/AIDS Committee will be responsible for the following functions:

- 6.2.1 Overseeing and monitoring of all HIV/AIDS related activities.
- 6.2.2 Assisting the university in fundraising for HIV/AIDS programmes/activities.
- 6.2.3 Advise the University Management on issues related to HIV and AIDS.

- 6.2.4 Ensure that all HIV/AIDS programmes disseminate accurate and up to date HIV/AIDS information to the University community.
- 6.2.5 Review of the HIV and AIDS policy in line with the relevant legislations when the need arises.

6.3 HIV/AIDS CO-ORDINATOR

The HIV and AIDS Co-ordinator will be responsible for the management of all HIV and AIDS matters within the University and will also be responsible for the following functions:

- 6.3.1 Ensuring that the activities of the HIV/AIDS Unit are carried out.
- 6.3.2 Co-ordinating HIV and AIDS programmes and projects at the University.
- 6.3.3 Assisting all departments, schools, centres, divisions and sections of the University in the development of their own HIV/AIDS programmes.
- 6.3.4 Liaising with other tertiary institutions and organizations on HIV/AIDS.
- 6.3.5 Providing the University HIV/AIDS Committee with bi-monthly reports about developments and activities related to HIV/AIDS.
- 6.3.6 Convening the HIV/AIDS Committee meetings.
- 6.3.7 Organizing and conducting workshops for employees and students.
- 6.3.8 Supervising employees in the HIV/AIDS unit.
- 6.3.9 Mentoring and supporting people dealing with HIV/AIDS issues.
- 6.3.10 Conduct research in collaboration with academic staff and students. This will include the establishment of networks with NGOs and other organizations to source external funding to support the HIV/AIDS projects.
- 6.3.11 Training of Counsellors.
- 6.3.12 Establishment of support groups on campus and networks with the University links and other private and public entities.

7. COUNSELING, SUPPORT AND CARE SERVICES

- 7.1 The University will provide staff and students with the following counseling, support and care services:
 - 7.1.1 The University will ensure that all employees and students have access to general counseling and support services.
 - 7.1.2 The counseling provided by the University shall cover legal rights, social welfare referrals, advice about medication, nutrition and support structures.
 - 7.1.3 The University shall train counselors to ensure that counseling services are available at all times when the need arises.

- 7.1.4 The counselors, including lay counselors, shall ensure that all counseling records are kept confidential. Lay counselors shall take an oath of secrecy and confidentiality which shall be a condition for their further deployment.
- 7.1.5 The University will provide all counselors, including lay counselors with regular counseling and support.

7.2 SUPPORT GROUPS AND HOME-BASED CARE

- 7.2.1 To ensure successful implementation of the HIV/AIDS programmes, the University HIV/AIDS Co-ordinator will ensure that support groups are established within the University.
- 7.2.2 The University must also ensure that Home based programmes in partnership with the HIV/AIDS Unit and other private and public networks are established.

8. ADVOCACY, COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING

- 8.1 The University shall not discriminate against members of staff or students on the basis of their HIV and AIDS status. The University shall provide free HIV/AIDS testing and counseling support to members of staff and students who are infected or affected by HIV and AIDS.
- 8.2 The University shall also provide free counseling services and psycho-social support to parents and guardians or close relatives of the infected students or employees.

9. RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTATIONS

- 9.1 Policy on Leave
- 9.2 Policy on Retirement
- 9.3 Policy on Death and Income Disability Benefit Schemes

10. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

10.1 LEGISLATIONS

- 10.1.1 The constitution of the Republic of South Africa
- 10.1.2 Labour Relations Act
- 10.1.3 Employment Equity Act
- 10.1.4 Basic Conditions of Employment Act
- 10.1.5 Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination

- 10.1.6 Medical Schemes Act
- 10.1.7 Occupational Health and Safety Act



10.2 GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

- 10.2.1 The National and Provincial Health policy
- 10.2.2 Department of Education Policy on HIV/AIDS
- 10.2.3 Human Rights Charter
- 10.2.4. The Code of Good Practice on HIV/AIDS and Employment

11. REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed after three years or as and when the need arises.

12. RECORD OF CHANGES

DATE OF APPROVAL BY COUNCIL	AUTHOR(S)	DATE OF REVIEW
27 November 2009	Mr T J Manenzhe	27 November 2012
 <p>Date stamp and signature by the Secretary of Council</p> 		

14. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

HR.....	Human Resources
WWW.....	World Wide Web
UNIVEN.....	University of Venda
“HIV”.....	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
“AIDS”.....	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
“VCT”.....	Voluntary Counseling and Testing
“PEP”.....	Post Exposure Prophylaxis
“STIs”.....	Sexually Transmitted Infections
“PMTCT”.....	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV
“TB”.....	Tuberculosis
“NGO”.....	Non-Governmental Organization



01 December 2009

Vice Chancellor & Principal

Date

