

# New River Policy



<b>POLICY NAME</b>	Infectious Disease/Pandemic Procedure		<b>POLICY NO.</b>	NR 1.5
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICE</b>	Administration Human Resources	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	<b>DATE APPROVED</b>	
<b>DATE OF LAST REVISION</b>	February 24, 2022	<b>DATE OF NEXT REVIEW</b>	February 2024	

## SCOPE

New River Community and Technical College community including students, employees, contractors and community members.

## Compliance – Legislative Rule

West Virginia Code § 18B-1-6 – Rulemaking

## POLICY STATEMENT

New River Community and Technical College will facilitate strategies designed to reduce risks to students, staff, and the general public, consistent with occupational health and safety obligations. New River Community and Technical College will utilize the guidelines set forth by the Center for Disease control (CDC) and other appropriate federal, state and local public health authorities in relation to the epidemic or pandemic to make decisions and implement mitigation strategies.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the strategies and actions that New River Community and Technical College intends to take to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases that are epidemics or pandemics and control the transmission of infectious diseases.

## GENERAL PROVISIONS

New River Community and Technical College recognizes that an endemic or pandemic may significantly impact the college community. This policy will focus on planning for a severe pandemic with effects that would extend beyond health consequences to include social and economic disruption. There is no one-size-fits-all approach that will work in responding to and recovering from a pandemic, therefore New River CTC will make responsible decisions in the best interests of our students, employees and community.

## TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Influenza	Viral illness notable for resilience and adaptability.
Infectious Disease	Diseases caused by pathogenic microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi; the diseases can be spread, directly or indirectly, from one person to another.
Endemic	A disease persisting in a population or region, generally having settled to a relatively constant rate of occurrence. This makes the disease spread and rates predictable.

Epidemic	An unexpected increase in the number of disease cases in a specific geographical area.
Pandemic	Worldwide outbreak of a new influenza virus. Pandemics happen when a novel influenza virus emerges that infects and can be efficiently transmitted between humans. Pandemic influenza is different from other outbreaks because of the characteristics of influenza viruses – their propensity to change, the ability to spread easily among people, and the routes of transmission – make the disease challenging to contain. Throughout history, influenza pandemics have led to widespread illness and death. Pandemic influenza is not a theoretical threat; rather, it is a recurring threat.
Preparedness and Communication	Activities that should be undertaken before a pandemic to ensure preparedness, and the communication of roles and responsibilities to all levels of government, segments of society and individuals.
Surveillance and Detection	Domestic and international systems that provide continuous “situational awareness,” to ensure the earliest warning possible to protect the population.
Response and Containment	Actions to limit the spread of the outbreak and to mitigate the health, social and economic impacts of a pandemic.
Community Mitigation Measures	Incorporating actions and response measures people and communities can take to help slow the spread of novel influenza virus. Community mitigation measures may be used from the earliest stages of an influenza pandemic, including the initial months when the most effective countermeasure—a vaccine against the new pandemic virus—might not yet be broadly available.

## SECTION 1: PREPAREDNESS AND COMMUNICATION

Preparedness is the foundation of the entire spectrum of activities, including surveillance, detection, containment and response efforts.

1. The College will convene a Task Force with members from various disciplines and campuses to provide on-going management, oversee implementation, to guide the process, conduct risk assessment and monitor the guidelines outlined by the Center for Disease Control (CDC).
2. The Task Force will also coordinate with applicable state agencies for reporting, contact tracing, testing and vaccination strategy. The Task Force will then make recommendations as to the protocols and community mitigation measures that need to be in place.
3. Communication – New River CTC will use communication methods that are accessible for all students, faculty and staff. The college website, email system and emergency alert system will be the main venues to provide guidance, information, resources, and updates. Additionally, signage will be posted in appropriate areas for additional communication and guidance.

## SECTION 2: SURVEILLANCE AND DETECTION

Early warning of a pandemic and our ability to closely track the spread of an influenza outbreak is critical to being able to rapidly employ resources to contain the spread of the virus. We recognize that a virus with pandemic potential anywhere represents a risk to populations everywhere. Once health authorities have signaled sustained and efficient human-to-human spread of the virus has occurred, a cascade of response mechanisms will be initiated.

1. The Task Force will monitor the outbreak and spread of the virus through local resources as well as the CDC updates and recommendations.
2. The Task Force will meet regularly to discuss the protocols to mitigate spread of the virus on campus.

## SECTION 3: RESPONSE AND CONTAINMENT

### PREVENTION/MITIGATION STRATEGIES

1. **Vaccination** – vaccination is the leading prevention strategy for protection. Evidence shows that people who are up to date with their vaccines are at a substantially reduced risk of severe illness and death compared to unvaccinated people. When infections occur among vaccinated people, their illnesses tend to be milder than among those who are unvaccinated. Even vaccinated people who are infected can be infectious and can spread the virus to others. To reduce the risk of becoming infected, and spreading it to others, students, faculty, and staff should continue to use layered prevention strategies.
2. **Consistent and correct mask use** - When people consistently and correctly wear a well-fitting fitted mask, they protect others as well as themselves. Consistent and correct mask use by people who are not up to date on their vaccines is especially important indoors and in crowded settings, and when physical distancing cannot be maintained.
3. **Physical Distancing** - Physical distancing means keeping space of at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) between people who are not in the same household in both indoor and outdoor spaces. In general, CDC recommends people who are not up to date on their vaccines should continue to practice physical distancing.
4. **Restricting gatherings** – It may be necessary to restrict the number of people gathering in a location in order to ensure physical distancing.
5. **Screening and/or testing** – A person may be infected yet asymptomatic without a recent known or suspected exposure. Screening and/or testing allows for early detection, isolation and disease prevention.
6. **Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette** - Covering coughs and sneezes and keeping hands clean can help prevent the spread of serious respiratory illnesses. Wash hands immediately after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. Washing your hands is one of the most effective ways to prevent yourself and your loved ones from getting sick, especially at key times when you are likely to get and spread germs. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol to clean hands.
7. **Stay home when sick** - Students, faculty, and staff who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu), should stay home and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care, regardless of vaccination status. Staying home when sick is essential to keep infections out of schools and prevent spread to others.
8. **Isolation** is used to separate people with confirmed or suspected infection from those without. People who are in isolation should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others.
9. **Quarantine** is a strategy used to prevent transmission of infection by keeping people who have been in close contact with someone with infection apart from others.
10. **Cleaning and Disinfection** – the maintenance team will follow the appropriate CDC cleaning and disinfecting protocols for high touch surfaces, shared objects, classrooms, restrooms, breakrooms, etc., utilizing disinfectants that remove any remaining germs on surfaces to reduce the risk of spreading infection.
11. **Telework** – Telework agreements must be submitted and approved as outlined in NR 6.1 Telework Procedure.
12. **Remote learning options** – If an outbreak occurs in a specific class or cohort it may become necessary to conduct instruction via distance learning modalities.

The Task Force will utilize these strategies in addition to any other protocols or recommendations from the Office of the Governor of WV, CDC and/or authorized health agencies as well as adhering to government issued mandates that may be put in place. The Task Force will take into consideration the regional and/or county circumstances in each campus location to implement the appropriate strategies and if necessary additional or exceptional strategies for a particular location.

**EXCEPTIONS/EXCLUSIONS**

N/A

**REVIEW**

This policy shall be reviewed on a regular basis with a time frame for review to be determined by the President or the President's designee. Upon such review, the President or President's designee may recommend that the policy be amended or repealed.

**APPROVAL SIGNATURES**


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 President

Date

**RELATED POLICIES, OTHER REFERENCES AND ADDITIONAL NOTES**

N/A

**ASSOCIATED FORMS**

N/A

HISTORY		
REVISION DATE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE	VICE PRESIDENT APPROVAL
02/24/2022	Replace Procedure 15 - Influenza and Pandemic Outbreak, new policy format, enhanced definitions and added detailed procedure.	

New River Community and Technical College expects all faculty, staff and students to be familiar with and adhere to all applicable college policies.