

Infectious Diseases Policy

The Bristol Methodist District. (Charity Number 1134873)

First Issued	January 2025
Last review	January 2025

1 Introduction

- 1.1 We have developed this policy on minimising the risk of infectious diseases spreading in the workplace through effective prevention and management.
- 1.2 It seeks to ensure that you are aware of the issues relating to infectious diseases at work.
- 1.3 It also provides guidelines for managers and supervisors on minimising the risk of you contracting diseases while at work, and on dealing with infections if they are contracted. Infectious diseases can be airborne, blood borne and faecal-oral borne.
- 1.4 This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to anyone working for us. This includes employees, workers, contractors, volunteers, interns and apprentices.

3 Business case

- 3.1 Infectious diseases emerge and spread quickly across the world as a result of global travel and other interconnections.
- 3.2 Workplaces can be incubators for disease, particularly if hygiene and infection control is poor, or if employees go to work when they are unwell. These diseases can have a potentially significant impact on the business.
- 3.3 An employee who is off sick with a flu-related illness is typically absent for 6-days. As well as the direct costs of infection-related sickness absence, there are also indirect costs associated with lost productivity, damaged customer confidence and poor service levels.

4 Minimising the risk of disease transmission

- 4.1 We have a duty of care to maintain a healthy and safe working environment. This includes minimising the risk of you contracting an infectious disease from colleagues, customers or clients.
- 4.2 We will promote awareness and understanding of the issues and concerns relating to the transmission of infectious diseases in the workplace, including risks associated with more serious infections such as measles or mumps.
- 4.3 To achieve this, we will provide information on the nature and spread of common infectious diseases, and the procedures to be followed in the event of an individual illness or an outbreak affecting a significant number of employees.

5 When staff have contracted infectious diseases

- 5.1 If you have an infectious disease, you will not be excluded from work, nor have your duties restricted, as long as you are physically and mentally fit for work and your continued attendance in the workplace does not present a significant risk of disease transmission to other employees, customers or clients.

- 5.2 The decision as to whether or not you should stay away from the workplace will consider:
- 5.2.1 how your infection is transmitted and the ease of transmission;
 - 5.2.2 the typical duration of the infection; and
 - 5.2.3 the potential harm that the infection could cause to others.
- 5.3 You have a responsibility to minimise the risk of disease transmission in the workplace and are expected to employ good hygiene control measures and use personal protective equipment (PPE) where provided.

6 Immunisation/vaccination

- 6.1 From time to time, we may decide that it is appropriate to offer our employees vaccinations and/or immunisations. This may include, for example, a winter flu vaccination.
- 6.2 If you are an employee, any cost of such vaccination will be met by us.
- 6.3 Prior to any immunisation programme, we will raise awareness of the potential seriousness of the infection, the business case for controlling it, and the role of immunisation in preventing infectious diseases in the workplace.

7 Standard hygiene practices at work

- 7.1 We will develop routine procedures for hygiene control, considering professional guidelines and advice from statutory bodies, such as Public Health England (PHE) and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).
- 7.2 We will take steps to raise awareness of these procedures through education, training materials and induction sessions. You are encouraged to adopt effective hand hygiene practices and, for example, sterilise shared kitchen utensils when necessary.

8 Personal protective equipment

- 8.1 If you are issued with PPE to minimise the risk of work-related infection, you should use it appropriately and clean your hands immediately after removing gloves or facemasks.

9 Disease outbreak

- 9.1 In the event of a disease outbreak affecting a significant number of employees we may form a working group of Line Managers and other designated individuals to monitor and coordinate activities to control the outbreak.
- 9.2 This could include managing exclusions and restrictions from work and the reassignment of duties.

10 Relationship with other policies

- 10.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with our policies on absence management.
- 10.2 Line managers, occupational health and other designated individuals must ensure that personal data, including information about individuals' health, is handled in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

11 Review

- 11.1 This policy may be reviewed at any time at the request of any member of staff, but it will be automatically reviewed two years after initial approval and thereafter on a biennial basis unless organisational changes, legislations, guidance, or non-compliance prompt an earlier review.

12 Definitions

12.1 The Bristol Methodist District ("we", "us", "our")

12.2 The Employee ("you", "your")

Document control box

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