



East African University Rwanda



HIV/AIDS POLICY

2014

1. Policy Statement

East African University Rwanda (EAUR) has developed a policy on Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

The key elements of our policy are to:

- Provide health information to all employees on HIV/AIDS, its magnitude, impact and preventative measures.
- Implement non-discriminatory policies, procedures and practices in managing individuals who have HIV/AIDS.
- Approach individuals who have HIV/AIDS in the same manner as those with any other progressive or debilitating illness and with all the support this entails.
- Clearly define HIV/AIDS policies and procedures taking into account local and International practices, procedures, culture and legislation.
- Join forces with other organisations to counter HIV/AIDS and alleviate its impact by sharing the results of our internal research and supporting their efforts where appropriate.

2. Policy Objective

The objective of the HIV/AIDS policy is to minimize, monitor and manage the impact, spread and consequences of HIV/AIDS disease in as far as it affects the employees and the operations of East African University Rwanda.

3. Policy Applicability

The policy applies to all employees of the University

4. The Need for an HIV/AIDS Policy

The HIV/AIDS policy has been developed for following key reasons:

Social Responsibility

The actual and potential growth and impact of HIV/AIDS disease on people of productive and economically active age poses an enormous global and business challenge. EAUR considers that it has a corporate social responsibility to support HIV/AIDS preventative efforts and to protect the basic human rights of those in the workplace who are HIV positive.

We will also contribute to reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS with campaigns to educate and protect our employees and where possible their families.

Employee Health and Well Being

Employees are critical to the success of our business. The loss of an employee is not only a personal and family tragedy, but also results in direct and indirect loss to the Organization in terms of medical costs, retraining, recruitment, and productivity.

EAUR is committed to the protection and maintenance of its employees' health and wellbeing within affordable limits.

Non-Discriminatory Policies, Procedures and Practices

Misconceptions and misinformation regarding HIV/AIDS can contribute to discriminatory management policies, practices and behaviours resulting in panic, and poor employee morale and working relationships between employees and those infected with HIV/AIDS. EAUR therefore recognizes a need to disseminate standard, consistent and

factual information on the HIV/AIDS disease and to educate our employees to minimize and manage HIV/AIDS infection.

Workplace as an Educational Centre

Employees spend a considerable part of their lives in the workplace. The workplace therefore has an advantage as a location EAUR can use to establish, implement and promote HIV/AIDS prevention strategies and programmes.

5. Minimizing – HIV/AIDS Spread

Education Programme and Dissemination of Information

EAUR will develop and regularly disseminate information on the magnitude of the disease and developments in scientific research, especially those relating to prevention. To implement this effectively, EAUR will distribute HIV/AIDS leaflets, posters, fliers and other media based information to all employees and will encourage staff attendance on HIV/AIDS health talk's awareness presentation.

EAUR will also strive to make all relevant information, which will be held centrally by Human Resources accessible to all managers, employees, and where possible, employees families.

Support for Preventative Programmes

EAUR will actively identify with reputable local and international Non Government Organizations (NGO's) and medical networks to contribute to our HIV/AIDS prevention and education programmes including counseling, awareness education and distribution of free condoms within the Organization. In addition, we will educate employees on the risks associated with Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD's) and encourage affected individuals to seek complete treatment.

6. Monitoring the Impact of HIV/AIDS

Personnel Database

We will collect and maintain personnel data and information on the spread and magnitude of HIV/AIDS within the Organization. The type of personnel data will include:

- Personnel health records including: sick leave, absenteeism due to illness, type of illness (if known), incidence of compassionate leave, death by cause (if known), early retirement by reason and type of illness and employee turnover by reason for leaving.
- Benefits paid out to those affected by illness by type of employee including medical costs, sick pay, subsidised medical/health care, compassionate leave, medical related severance pay, retirement and death benefits, funeral support (coffin, transport) and other illness related benefits.

The HR function must ensure that all data on HIV/AIDS is collected and maintained confidentially and used for monitoring purposes only. Line management, the HR function or any other party should not use the information to affect any aspect of the Terms and Conditions of Employment or the employee/employer relationship.

Country Data Base

Although constrained by medical confidentiality and quality of public data collection, the HR function should, where possible, collect as much data and information as available within the country on:

- National statistics on the incidence of various diseases which cause illness and death.
- Health facilities available including contact and email addresses, and telephone and fax numbers for major hospitals, clinics etc.

7. Managing HIV/AIDS within East African University Rwanda

Job Applicants

EAUR is an Equal Opportunity employer and will not use HIV testing when recruiting job candidates. We will ensure that job candidates who are known to have HIV/AIDS are treated no differently from those who have any other life-threatening and non-contagious disease. Fitness to perform a job will be the only criterion that shall apply.

HIV Testing and Screening

EAUR will provide voluntary free testing and counseling services to staff and will encourage staff to use these services.

Testing is always authorized by the employee and accompanied by pre- and post-test counseling.

Should a test prove positive then the outcome must be regarded as a matter between the staff and the doctor concerned.

Confidentiality of HIV/AIDS information

EAUR employees are under no obligation to notify the Organization of HIV/AIDS infection. Unless disclosure is required under following circumstances;

- The information is legally required.
- There is a risk factor on other staff and patients
- The employee's health is affecting their own and hence Organization performance.
- Long employee absence necessitates management to obtain the employees' medical status.
- Anonymous information may be given to a public body for the express purpose of studying the epidemiology of HIV.

Should it become known in EAUR that an employee is HIV+ then management should ensure the absolute confidentiality of this information, and make every effort to protect that person from stigmatization and discrimination?

To ensure maintenance of confidentiality these Policy and procedure statements should be implemented and communicated to a few designated doctors and to all those who handle personnel information. Any unwarranted disclosure by any EAUR employee will be treated as an act of gross misconduct warranting disciplinary action.

Counseling of HIV/AIDS infected employees

EAUR will encourage counseling service provision where requested for all HIV infected employees.

HIV/AIDS and Disciplinary Measures

EAUR recognizes that HIV/AIDS infected employees are vulnerable to discriminatory policies, practices and behaviours, and loss of training, promotion and career opportunities. This can cause great distress and alienation.

EAUR regards any form of discrimination and harassment, directly or indirectly, towards HIV/AIDS infected employees as a gross misconduct warranting strict disciplinary action.

Harassment is any form of verbal or non-verbal behaviour that is directed at the infected individual resulting in the individual feeling threatened, insecure or distressed.

Examples of harassment include:

- Offensive gestures and facial expressions.
- Derogatory remarks, jokes and ridicule.
- Invasive personal questions.
- Discriminatory behaviours and practices.

- Staring.
- Offensive letters, memos, emails and publications.
- Patronising comments and nicknames.
- Making fun of the individual.

Discrimination of HIV/AIDS infected employees will not be condoned. This includes treating those affected differently or not applying a professional judgment in making personnel decisions.

Employees Involvement

All employees, or their representatives (HIV Peer Group) and particularly those infected by HIV/AIDS should be involved in the formulation and implementation of local policy.

Segregation and Isolation of HIV/AIDS Affected Employees

No employee will be isolated, or segregated, within the Organization's premises on the grounds of being infected with HIV. Where an employee has a contagious disease as a result of HIV infection, they will be treated in exactly the same manner as if a non-HIV infected employee had contracted the infection.

HIV/AIDS and First Aid

EAUR is committed to maintaining a safe work environment for all its employees, clients and visitors in the working premises.

EAUR will therefore take all reasonable and practical steps to ensure that:

- A representative number of employees in all functional units is trained to provide First Aid in cases of emergency including taking appropriate precautions to reduce the risk of transmitting blood borne infections, including HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B.
- First Aid facilities, and particularly all necessary equipment for dealing with spillages of body fluids, are fully stocked and replenished regularly. This equipment will

include disposable gloves and aprons, suitable bleaches/disinfectants; disposable towelling and impervious plastic bags for disposal of used materials.

Sick Leave and Absence through HIV/AIDS illness

Employees who are prevented from performing their duties due to HIV/AIDS illness will be granted sick leave to regain their health. Sick leave is allowed under the terms and conditions below:

- The employee's immediate manager should approve sick leave subject to a medical certificate from EAUR medical practitioner.
- Long term illness and absences from work will be permitted within local employment conditions as for any other employee. In special circumstances staff will be allowed to utilise their leave entitlement to cater for long term absence.
- After the expiry of a stated period, sick leave may be extended at the sole discretion of EAUR management. An independent medical opinion and certificate must be obtained from EAUR doctor but with prior consent sought from the employee.

Redeployment and Termination of HIV/AIDS Infected Employees

Where EAUR is advised by a medical authority that an employee is unfit to carry out normal duties, and there are no grounds to indicate that improvement is likely in the foreseeable future, then an interview must be held with the employee to explore alternative future employment positions including:

- Re-deployment to lighter duties.
- Alternative employment terms and conditions including shorter daily or weekly working hours.
- Termination on capability and medical grounds.

In exploring the above alternatives the following guidelines must be observed:

- A qualified medical opinion is obtained before any final decision is taken.
- Alternatives are discussed and explored gradually with the employee first being advised that their absence from work places their employment at risk.
- A date to terminate is set if there is no return to work.
- All interviews and actions agreed are confirmed in writing to the employee.
- EAUR management must ensure compliance with local and International legislation and, policies and procedures on termination, deployment, sick leave, absenteeism, and grievance policies and procedures.

8. Management Roles and Responsibilities

The Human Resources Officer will approve broad written policy guidelines and strategies to assist EAUR in minimizing; monitoring and managing HIV/AIDS impact and spread in as far as it affects the employees and operations in the organization.

VERSION CONTROL

Version Number	13
Prepared by	Dr. Ismael Buchanan Aboui
Version Reference number	EHIVP/13/2017
Description	EAUR HIV-AIDS POLICY
Policy owner	East African University Rwanda (EAUR)
Responsible division	Directorate of Quality Assurance
Internally validated	Yes
Date of Internal Validation	
Approved by	Board of Directors (BOD)
Date of approval	
Amendments	
Proposed Review date	
Web address of this policy	www.eaur.ac.rw

POLICY APPROVAL FORM

Checked by:

**Prof. Joseph GAHAMA
Vice-Chancellor /EAUR**

Signature_____

Approved by:

**Prof Dr. Eugene Ndabaga
The Chairman of the Board of Directors**

Signature_____

Done at Nyagatare on:_____