

POLICY STATEMENT ON AIDS

I. The policies of Rocky Mountain College concerning Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) are designed to be sensitive to privacy, to the opportunity to be employed and to acquire an education. They also must accommodate the rights of others to be free from unwarranted risk of exposure to a potentially fatal disease. The overriding consideration will be the protection of all members of the College Community.

II. These policies are based on three assumptions.

A. We assume that the information about AIDS published by the Centers for Disease Control reflects the best and most accurate of current medical knowledge. If that is so, then the establishment of policies and guidelines based on that information is reasonable. (According to the Centers for Disease Control, the virus that causes AIDS can be transmitted through sexual contact, the invasion of contaminated blood or blood products into body tissue, from mother to unborn child, or from breast feeding. While the virus has been isolated from bodily fluids including blood, semen, saliva, urine and breast milk, current epidemiologic evidence has implicated only blood, semen and breast milk in the transmission of the disease. No evidence supports a case for AIDS being transmitted by other contact, by objects handled by people with AIDS, through the air, or from contaminated environmental surfaces.)

B. We consider individuals infected with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) to include those people diagnosed by a physician as having AIDS, AIDS Related Complex (ARC), those people diagnosed by a physician as having other illnesses due to infection with AIDS or who test positive for the HIV antibody.

C. We assume that these policies will be reviewed and revised periodically to reflect current medical information concerning the disease.

III. The College will adhere to the following policies relating to AIDS.

A. Admission and/or employment decisions will not be made on the basis of known or suspected cases of AIDS, ARC or HIV. Testing for HIV will not be a precursor to admission or employment at Rocky Mountain College.

B. At this time, there is no reason for mandatory testing of students or employees for the AIDS antibody.

C. AIDS will be treated like any other serious communicable disease. It is the position of the College that there presently is no known reason to exclude persons that test HIV positive from academic, social, cultural, housing, or employment activities on campus as long as that individual behaves in a responsible manner in light of his or her medical condition. (Broadly speaking, 'responsible behavior' means that the individual must demonstrate that he/she has received medical and psychological counseling about the disease and how to prevent its transmission to others.) The individual also must learn how to manage the condition and must

take appropriate precautions for the protection of others. As with other serious communicable diseases, each case will be monitored and evaluated on an individual basis. If the appropriate authorities believe that an individual with AIDS is not practicing responsible behavior, the authorities reserve the right to remove the individual from the College environment in order to protect all members of the College community.

D. Medical records of students and employees are confidential. Under normal circumstances and in the absence of legislation to the contrary, no specific information concerning complaints or diagnosis will be provided without the expressed written permission of the patient. Exceptions may be made in the following instance:

The College recognizes its obligation to report diagnosed and verified cases of AIDS to the appropriate disease control centers and will do so.

E. Safety recommendations by the Center for Disease Control and Montana Department of Health will be adopted as appropriate precautions in laboratory, food service, and cleaning situations.

F. The best response of a college to this epidemic is education. Rocky Mountain College will actively share information on this disease, the resources available to deal with it, and related issues with members of the faculty, administration, staff and student body. Such a program should help prevent the spread of AIDS and lessen anxiety concerning it with-in the campus community. This program will be on-going.

G. Since medical information regarding AIDS is continually changing and being amended, it should be understood that it is the intention of Rocky Mountain College to adhere to guidelines as periodically issued by the U.S. Public Health Service.

H. This policy is subject to change at any time. To obtain the most recent College AIDS policy contact the Vice President for Student Affairs.