



**Policy HR 14.6**  
**NOLS Response to Pandemic Events**  
Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees: 9/24/09  
Revised: 01/24/2013; 03/26/20

This policy addresses strategies for screening and preventing the transmission of pandemic disease among employees in the event of a pandemic situation. It is intended to be consistent with the guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and will be updated as CDC guidance changes. Therefore, employees are expected to comply with the current and future guidelines.

**I. Rationale**

The rationale for the use of additional precautions during pandemic events, as compared with seasonal influenza and similar illnesses, include the following:

- a. The risk of serious disease and increased mortality from a highly pathogenic pandemic infection may be significantly higher than from infection by seasonal influenza viruses.
- b. Each human infection represents an important opportunity for a pandemic disease strain to further adapt to humans and gain the ability to transit more easily among people.
- c. Reduced human-to-human transmission of pandemic infection is essential to conserve community medical resources and assure access to hospital care for life threatening illness.

**2. Employees and volunteers with suspected or probable pandemic infection restricted from work**

Suspected or probable pandemic infection cases involving NOLS employees and volunteers will be restricted from work as soon as identified and will be asked to follow guidelines supplied by the Clallam County Health Department, Washington State Department of Health and the CDC.

Suspected or probable pandemic infection cases involving NOLS employees and volunteers must be medically cleared upon resolution of symptoms with and according to the guidelines from the Clallam County Health Department before returning to work. Under no circumstance will an employee or volunteer be allowed to return to work without such medical release.

Any employee or volunteer arriving from a Travel Advisory Area must contact the Clallam County Health Officer for medical clearance before arrival at NOLS facilities. Appropriate screening for symptoms must take place prior to arrival on NOLS premises for any purpose. A

Travel Advisory Area is an area designated by the CDC where disease is occurring, and where non-essential travel is discouraged. The risk for the traveler is considered to be much higher because of community transmission or inadequate containment in a Travel Advisory Area.

### **3. Use of accrued leave during pandemic events**

In the event employees must be absent from work for reasons related to NOLS established pandemic response policy and guidelines, It is NOLS' intent that employees will, to the extent possible, be given opportunities to minimize use of leave balances and/or to utilize paid leave during this time so as to not reach the point of leave without pay. Leave time related to pandemic event response will be drawn first from the employee's available sick leave balance. Subsequent leave usage will be drawn from other accrued leave balances in the following order, unless the employee specifies otherwise: Personal Leave, Management Leave, Vacation Leave, Available flex time may also be utilized. NOLS' Emergency Closure Leave may also apply in closure scenarios. When no available leave balances remain, leave time will be considered as leave without pay.

Other leave provisions, such as Washington State Paid Family Medical Leave benefits, may also apply. NOLS will comply with state or federally mandated emergency leave provisions as required by law, and will provide such emergency leave in accordance with the provisions of said mandates.

It remains within the broad discretion of the Library Director to approve paid leaves on a case-by-case or general basis to best respond to the needs caused by the pandemic at the time of the problem.

### **4. Pandemic event response implementation**

Steps to be implemented as the severity of the pandemic event increases, as directed by public health authorities:

Level 1: Heightened respiratory hygiene and hand washing/hand sanitizing precautions are in effect. All coughs and sneezes must be covered, hand sanitizer and hand washing is to be used throughout the day and before eating.

Level 2: Employees who come to work with symptoms of associated with the infection are requested to go home or are required to wear a mask while at work. If they go home, their leave time will be charged as described above.

Level 3: Employees and others living in employees' households are encouraged to be vaccinated, if a vaccination is available. The Library will pay for employee vaccinations received at the Library's request.

Level 4: Employees who come to work with symptoms associated with the infection will be sent home. Their time will be charged to paid administrative leave for that day and leave time will be charged as described above, for any subsequent days.

Level 5: Employees who are sharing households with persons who are ill will not be allowed on NOLS premises. Leave time will be charged as described above.

Level 6: When a state of emergency or similar order, is declared by the Clallam County Health Officer, the Board of Commissioners, or other agency with such authority, NOLS will comply with all directives issued.

Level 7: When a state of emergency has been declared, vaccination, if available, is mandatory. Proof of vaccination will be required before any employee may report to work. Employees who are not vaccinated will not be allowed to work until they are vaccinated or until the vaccination mandate has been lifted. Leave time will be charged as described above.

Level 8: When a state of emergency has been declared, all employees will be sent home and not allowed to return to work until the state of emergency is lifted or appropriate direction is issued by the County Health Officer or the Board of Commissioners. All NOLS facilities will be closed during this time. Leave time will be charged as described above, in addition remote work opportunities may be available to some staff.

### **Administration**

The Director, and all managers and supervisors are responsible for managing this policy.