

HIV AND AIDS POLICY  
OF THE  
WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

**DIRECTORATE: HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

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## **HIV AND AIDS POLICY OF THE WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) acknowledges and affirms the seriousness of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, and its destructive impact on the educational system within this Province. The Department intends to take appropriate and constructive steps to respond to this epidemic as effectively as possible.

#### **1. VISION AND MISSION**

The Western Cape Education Department aims at protecting and managing employees living with HIV in a humane manner, without prescribing or controlling their personal behavior, and simultaneously ensuring a safe and healthy work environment.

#### **2. POLICY OBJECTIVES**

This Policy sets the path to develop and implement strategies to control and reduce the impact of the HIV and AIDS epidemic on employees of the WCED by:

- ◆ providing management and employees with a framework within which to identify, understand, and come to terms with the reality of HIV and AIDS;
- ◆ seeking to control and minimize the social, economic and developmental consequences of the epidemic to all employees;
- ◆ ensuring a safe and healthy work environment;
- ◆ creating an organizational climate based on respect for human rights, and a humane and compassionate attitude to employees infected with HIV and AIDS;
- ◆ ensuring access to care and support benefits of employees living with HIV;
- ◆ maintaining employee stability and productivity in the workplace as much as possible;
- ◆ creating and implement appropriate mechanisms to prevent and control the spread of HIV and AIDS;
- ◆ fostering a work environment in which employees can be open about their HIV status without fear of discrimination; and
- ◆ ensuring consistency of the practice of HIV and AIDS management.

### 3. PRINCIPLES

The WCED will ensure:

- ◆ The creation of a workplace environment that is conducive to openness about this epidemic, the prevention of new HIV-infections among employees, and the acceptance, care and support for employees living with HIV and/or AIDS.
- ◆ Non-discrimination against people living with HIV through recognition of their rights, and preserving sound employment policies and practices.
- ◆ Conducting intervention programmes based on positive discrimination through catering for the differentiated needs of employees, e.g. through awareness, information and media campaigns that are tailor-made for low-literate employees as opposed to educated employees.
- ◆ That the HIV and AIDS status of an employee will remain confidential at all times, and disclosure of information without the employee's written consent warrants disciplinary measures, the disclosure of such status is legally privileged unless required by law (e.g. to deal with a case of discrimination), or in the interest of the organisation.
- ◆ That work environments with a high risk of contracting HIV will be identified and suitable protective gear (e.g. plastic aprons and Latex gloves) will be provided to reduce the risk of HIV-transmission as part of a comprehensive safety in the workplace program.
- ◆ That HIV-testing is prohibited and will not be part of the selection criteria of employment. However, voluntary HIV-testing and counselling among WCED employees is encouraged.
- ◆ That all HIV and AIDS intervention programmes are explicitly driven by a targeted approach, both in terms of acquiring adequate knowledge and skills, and programmes aimed at prioritised target groups, including female employees, employees living with HIV, management, and cleaning staff.

### 4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The following statutory framework mandates the development and application of this Policy:

- 4.1 **The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 108 of 1996** gives all employees the right to fair labour practices, and the equality clause entitles them to equality and freedom from unfair discrimination.
- 4.2 **The Employment Equity Act, No 55 of 1998** prohibits all forms of unfair discrimination, and in addition it permits HIV-testing only when authorised by the Labour Court.
- 4.3 **The Labour Relations Act, No 66 of 1995** prohibits unfair labour practice by protecting employees from being dismissed simply because they are HIV-positive and from being discriminated against with regard to employee benefits, staff training and other work related opportunities.

- 4.4 The Occupational Health and Safety Act, No 85 of 1993** requires the employer to create a safe working environment, in a HIV AND AIDS context, and also ensure that proper equipment needed to protect employees against infection and appropriate training in the use of universal precaution is provided.
- 4.5 The Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Disease Act, No 130 of 1993** provides for compensation for disablement caused by occupational injuries or diseases contracted by employees in the course and scope of their employment, or for death resulting from such injuries or diseases.
- 4.6 The Basic Conditions of Employment Act, No 75 of 1997** sets out the minimum conditions of employment standards, to which every employee is entitled, amongst others, maximum working hours and the minimum number of sick leave days.
- 4.7 The Medical Schemes Act, No 131 of 1998** sets terms and conditions applicable to the admission of a person as a member of a medical aid fund, which is determined by the contributions on the basis of income or the number of dependants or both, and does not provide for any grounds, including age, sex, past or present state of health and the frequency of rendering of relevant health services other than for the provisions as prescribed.
- 4.8 The Promotion of Access to Information Act, No 2 of 2000** makes provision for the promotion of equal access to services and prohibition of unfair discrimination on grounds of race, gender, disability, hate speech and harassment. Furthermore, no person may broadcast or disseminate any information, publish or display any advertisement or notice that could reasonably be understood to demonstrate clear intentions to unfairly discriminate against any person.
- 4.9 The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, No 3 of 2000** makes provision for procedurally fair administrative action, which materially and adversely affects the rights or legitimate expectations of any person.

## **5. SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

This Policy applies to all employees, prospective employees, employees on contract including health professionals, and covers all workplaces under the jurisdiction of the Western Cape Education Department.

## **6. IMPLEMENTATION**

### **6.1 Approach and Strategies**

- ◆ This epidemic has devastating effects on the education system as a whole; therefore, HIV and AIDS interventions must go beyond awareness raising. The emphasis will be on capacity building, taking all necessary steps possible to protect employees from exposure to HIV and minimise the rate of infection.
- ◆ Behaviour is central to the prevention and management of this epidemic; therefore ongoing education on HIV and AIDS (including sexually-transmitted infections and opportunistic infections such as tuberculosis) and related aspects are essential and must be conducted at all levels.

- ◆ Explore opportunities to link the protection of the rights of employees living with HIV, promoting their health and wellness to maintain productivity as long as possible, and the prevention of HIV transmission (protecting those with a HIV-negative status).
- ◆ Effective HIV and AIDS programmes in the workplace require a concerted team effort, in which partnerships have a vital role to play in defeating this epidemic.
- ◆ The WCED will form partnerships with other stakeholders (namely, other government departments, non-profit organisations, individuals - especially those living with HIV and AIDS, etc.) that have experience in developing and implementing a workplace HIV and AIDS programmes. These partnerships will aim to empower all the stakeholders through sharing of information, experience, skills and available resources.

## **6.2 Recruitment (Employment Access)**

- 6.2.1 The HIV-status of a person will not constitute a reason to preclude any person from employment.
- 6.2.2 No applicant will be required to undergo HIV-testing in order to determine his/her fitness for employment, in any occupation or position.
- 6.2.3 Indirect screening methods such as questioning to inquire about HIV-tests and/or questions related to individual sex behaviour will not be permitted on application forms or during job interviews.

## **6.3 Performance (Employment Safety and Security)**

- 6.3.1 Employees who are HIV-positive may not be subject to any form of negative (harmful) discrimination, nor dismissed on the basis of their HIV-status or medical condition and will be protected against such discrimination;
- 6.3.2 When considering dismissal, an employee living with HIV due to ill health will be dealt with as follows:
  - ◆ An investigation to determine the extent of the employee's incapacity will be undertaken, focusing on functional grounds (on the employee's capacity to do a defined job) as opposed to medical grounds (i.e. HIV or AIDS status) exclusively.
  - ◆ Prior to being declared incapacitated the employer will ascertain the possibility of securing alternative employment or adapting the duties or work circumstances of the employee living with HIV to accommodate his/her disability.

## **6.4 HIV-testing**

- 6.4.1 No HIV-testing will be conducted in the workplace, except in the case of accidental occupational exposure in order to ascertain the HIV-status of the affected employee(s) and to access the benefits of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).
- 6.4.2 Compulsory HIV-testing may only take place where the Labour Court has declared such testing justifiable in accordance with Section 7(2) of the Employment Equity Act;

- 6.4.3 In cases where the Labour Court has authorized HIV-testing, it should be conducted in terms of the conditions prescribed with regard to the provision of counseling and confidentiality in respect of job categories or employees including the period during which authorization applies.
- 6.4.4 Once an employee tests positive on the baseline test during the post exposure prophylaxis procedure, the WCED would reserve the right to refer the employee for further treatment options.
- 6.4.5 Voluntary HIV-testing is encouraged as an AIDS prevention mechanism, and the first step to promoting the wellness of persons living with HIV.

## **6.5 Confidentiality**

- 6.5.1 The HIV or AIDS status of an employee will remain confidential at all times. Disclosing the status of an employee without her/his written consent warrants disciplinary measures, unless such disclosure is legally required.
- 6.5.2 The disclosure of HIV or AIDS status will not be used to unfairly discriminate against an employee in any way.
- 6.5.3 An employee is under no obligation to inform the employer of her/his HIV or AIDS status at any time.

## **6.6 Employment conditions and practices**

- 6.6.1 Employees living with HIV have the same rights and obligations as other employees with regard to employment conditions and practices.
- 6.6.2 HIV-status will not be a deciding factor in job status, training/education, promotion or transfer. Any changes in job status should be based on existing criteria of equality of opportunity, merit and capacity to perform the work to a satisfactory standard.
- 6.6.3 Employees with HIV and AIDS are accepted within a non-discriminating employer-employee relationship and are provided with adequate care and support.
- 6.6.4 An individual's HIV-status may not be used to negatively influence their tenure.
- 6.6.5 The rights of employees living with HIV are respected, and unacceptable behavior such as victimization, stigmatization, social isolation, and rejection will invoke disciplinary measures.
- 6.6.6 The existing sick leave procedures will also be applicable to employees with HIV and AIDS without prejudice. Management must therefore familiarise themselves and be kept up to date with the regulations and conditions concerning leave.
- 6.6.7 Management will make every possible effort to give employees access to HIV-testing and counseling, particularly for educators who have less free time than public servants.

- 6.6.8 No employee will be dismissed merely on the basis of her/his HIV-status, nor shall such a status influence retrenchment procedures. As a result, no employee will be removed from his/ her normal place of work, or from her/his normal duties, or isolated because she/he has been identified as a person with HIV or AIDS.
- 6.6.9 Refusal to work with an HIV-positive person will not be accepted as a valid excuse for non-compliance with work performance requirements.
- 6.6.10 If an employee is continually unable to perform his or her normal duties, as determined by that person 's manager or supervisor, reasonable accommodation must be sought, failing which extended leave followed by early retirement, if necessary, should be applied for.

## **6.7 Managing HIV and AIDS in the Workplace**

Appropriate programmes to manage the HIV and AIDS challenge across all divisions and levels of the WCED will be implemented and verified, targeting specific vulnerable groups on an ongoing basis.

The WCED will:

- 6.7.1 Conduct awareness programmes to sensitise and empower employees with knowledge, attitudes and skills that enable them to deal with HIV and AIDS issues.
- 6.7.2 Give employees access to VCT services to enable them to establish and cope with their HIV and AIDS status.
- 6.7.3 Conduct unlinked anonymous testing (with informed consent) to determine the HIV-prevalence rate for statistical purposes within the Department.
- 6.7.4 Take measures to identify and reduce the risk of HIV-transmission in the work environment, and manage occupational exposure by identifying employees/ units at high risk of contracting HIV.
- 6.7.5 Maintain a supportive and caring environment by providing the necessary resources such as protective Latex gloves, and ensuring the employees have been trained to use it properly.
- 6.7.6 Encourage employees to always be cautious and use protective equipment, whenever assisting an employee in areas of high risk of HIV-transmission.
- 6.7.7 Ensure that contaminated materials are disposed of safely where there has been accidental contact with blood as part of applying universal infection control steps.
- 6.7.8 Inform and advise HIV-infected employees on regulatory procedures, the options that are available to them, and the benefits of certain actions to enable them to plan for their future.
- 6.7.9 Require proof from a medical practitioner treating the employee who has been declared medically unfit due to HIV and AIDS, or suffering from a chronic illness, or send such an employee for an independent medical examination.

6.7.10 Make provision for supporting both educators who are absent from work owing to HIV and AIDS-related illness, and also colleagues who are affected by such absence (e.g. harming their mental health).

## **6.8 Employee Benefits and Compensation**

6.8.1 The WCED will assist an employee who becomes infected with HIV as a result of an occupational injury or accident to apply for compensation in terms of procedures governing compensation for occupational injuries and diseases.

6.8.2 The Directorate: Personnel will ensure that employee benefits are non discriminatory and supportive to all employees including those infected with HIV.

6.8.3 Information from benefit schemes on the medical status of an employee will be kept confidential and will not be used by the employer or any other party to affect any other aspect of the employment contract or relationship.

6.8.4 The Directorate: Human Resource Development will make the necessary counseling and advisory services available to, amongst others, inform employees on their rights and benefits from medical schemes, life insurance, pension/provident and unemployment fund. This will include information on intended changes to the structure, benefits and premiums.

6.8.5 The WCED will assist employees and negotiate on their behalf to locate affordable Medical Aid, which includes the provision of anti-retroviral medication.

## **7. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION**

7.1 An effective communication and information strategy, which promotes openness and acceptance of this epidemic, is regarded as a priority issue by WCED management; therefore a protocol outlining the WCED's HIV and AIDS communication strategy will be developed, implemented and verified against measurable outputs and outcomes.

7.2 Information and communication will link closely with needs-based education and training, for instance to familiarize HIV-positive employees with their rights and responsibilities.

7.3 Times for communication and information sharing sessions will be arranged as ongoing interventions and in a manner that suits the operational requirements of the WCED.

7.4 Regular reporting mechanisms on HIV and AIDS issues are created by including HIV and AIDS as a permanent standing agenda item on meetings to share relevant information with employees, enabling progress reports to be made available to employees and provide a sound board for employees to express their concerns about this epidemic.

7.5 Communication will be aimed at specific priority target groups such as women (who are the most vulnerable to HIV-infection), and persons infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. Information will be clear, trustworthy, accurate,

sensitive to cultural diversity, and take the literacy level of target groups into consideration.

- 7.6 The WCED will establish and implement mechanisms for information gathering, dissemination and management e.g. circulars, memorandum, leaflets, posters, baseline data, HIV and AIDS- related surveys and progress reports to increase literacy about specific HIV and AIDS aspects. The database will not contain any confidential information about the HIV-status of employees.
- 7.7 The HIV/AIDS Committee will ensure that opportunities exist to report on progress and to table their plans at management meetings so that non-compliance may be raised with relevant managers.
- 7.8 Adequate opportunities will be organised to raise the awareness and commitment of management at all levels, and equip them with appropriate skills towards in dealing with HIV and AIDS issues effectively. On the other hand, there are equally important target groups such as the cleaning staff at schools that require information and education about universal infection control measures in particular.

## **8. PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKING**

- 8.1 The HIV and AIDS epidemic is growing at such a rate and its effects are so destructive and require teamwork. The WCED will develop partnerships with other organisations and provincial departments for the sharing of resources, expertise, information and experience to address HIV and AIDS challenges.
- 8.2 The WCED will utilise all opportunities to interact with civil society to contribute in a constructive manner towards achieving the mission and objectives of the National STI and HIV and AIDS Programme.
- 8.3 The WCED will serve on structures such as the Interdepartmental HIV/AIDS Committee to ensure a uniform and concerted response to counter the effects of this epidemic.
- 8.4 The WCED will encourage and provide assistance in establishing an HIV/AIDS Forum, or other support and information groups in specific workplace settings such as schools. Peer educators and peer counsellors will receive special training.
- 8.5 WCED will cultivate relationships with appropriate HIV/AIDS forums, organizations and non-profit organizations, especially networks of people living with HIV and AIDS.

## **9. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 9.1 All employees in managerial positions are responsible for ensuring compliance and implementation of this Policy.
- 9.2 Management and supervisors will ensure that all categories of employees attend and participate in awareness programmes, subject to operational requirements.

- 9.3 Supervisors will take immediate and appropriate corrective action where warranted, e.g. when there is evidence of discrimination against employees living with HIV.
- 9.4 The Directorate: Human Resource Development will offer care and support for employees living with HIV, e.g. by referring such persons for professional counseling and allowing them to negotiate extension of leave (in accordance with applicable regulatory framework) where warranted. It will also be responsible for sensitising employees through organizing HIV and AIDS awareness and wellness programmes to encourage openness, acceptance of employees living with HIV. It will also arrange for training of peer educators.
- 9.5 The Directorate: Personnel Management will deal with employees that are incapacitated by HIV and AIDS in accordance with applicable regulatory framework.
- 9.6 The WCED will appoint a suitable person responsible for planning and coordinating HIV and AIDS activities in conjunction with the Directorate: Human Resource Development.
- 9.7 The HIV/AIDS Committee will be responsible for guiding, implementing, reviewing and monitoring HIV and AIDS Policy and Workplace Programs.

## **WORKPLACE PROGRAMMES**

### **10.1 Planning**

The WCED will follow a scientific (logical) approach to manage the HIV and AIDS challenge. This implies, amongst others, sound planning of all intervention programmes, including baseline assessment as a starting point for programme design. In addition individual programmes will be based on a logical planning framework, specifying outcomes, the required input and means of verification.

The best impact will be achieved through a combination of well-designed sustainable intervention programmes, rather than a brief single one (e.g. awareness raising only). The WCED's response to this epidemic will consist of a repertoire of complementary programmes applied in a holistic (systems) approach. This will ensure that the strong points of each individual programme are used collectively to achieve the highest impact possible. HIV and AIDS programmes will take place during working hours, unless warranted after normal working hours.

At the same time, HIV and AIDS programmes conducted by the WCED will not operate in isolation, but tie in with existing employee assistance and human resource development programmes (EAP, etc), because this epidemic is multifactorial and thus requires a multisided management strategy.

### **10.2 Recommended Intervention Programmes**

The most effective response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic is achieved through the combination of interventions where the strong points of different strategies and programme can be applied collectively to increase the impact. The HIV and AIDS response of the WCED will thus consist of a range of complementary programmes, which must be target group driven and customized to fit the specific needs, socio-

cultural profile and circumstances of the employees. The recommended programmes are as follows:

### **10.2.1 Awareness**

Prevention starts with awareness raising, e.g. to sensitise employees on HIV and AIDS and STI-infection risks through leaflets and ribbon distribution, poster displays, organizing industrial theatre shows and video sessions on HIV and AIDS-related topic in lunch hours, voluntary HIV-counseling and testing, celebrating World AIDS Day etc.)

### **10.2.2 Education**

Education is the vehicle to enable employees to make informed decisions and become literate about HIV and AIDS issues. Relevant issues include the identification of HIV-infection risk areas in the workplace, the legal framework applicable to HIV and AIDS, myths and fears surrounding HIV/AIDS and sexuality, the rights and obligations of employees living with HIV, the correct use of male and female condoms, and the role of life skills in dealing with sexual health issues.

HIV and AIDS-related education targeting all levels and categories of employees will be provided on a continuous basis. Support staff such as administrative staff and cleaners will be included in regular HIV and AIDS training workshops. School Management Team members and Principals in particular will receive special educational support and/or workshops to build their capacity for carrying out their duties in this regard. In addition, the training of peer educators and counselors, for instance in schools and colleges will receive high priority.

### **10.2.3 Infection Control**

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure a safe workplace environment. Special attention will be paid to the thorough application of universal HIV-infection control regulations, and providing personal protective equipment such as first aid kits with adequate Latex gloves and disposable aprons at every work site.

### **10.2.4 Wellness Promotion**

A special programme will focus on promoting the health and well-being of employees living with HIV, e.g. through educating them about positive living (cultivating a healthy body, mind and soul) to maintain productive as long as possible. This programme will include empowerment with relevant life skills such as stress management.

### **10.2.5 Care and Support**

Within the desired caring workplace environment the WCED will establish care and support groups for persons infected and affected by HIV. Assistance will be provided to employees to utilize specialised non-school based services (counseling, etc) through a referral system. Employees will be encouraged to volunteer their time and skills towards this programme.

## **11. RESOURCES**

11.1 The WCED will allocate adequate resources (including time, and funding) to implement every aspect of the HIV and AIDS plan.

11.2 Resource allocation will focus on

- ◆ specific intervention programmes (awareness, employee education, media campaigns, professional counseling, etc) as well as temporary substitution of employees due to absence related to HIV and AIDS;
- ◆ providing assistance to employees to deal with HIV challenges (e.g. discrimination against PLWAs, and professional counseling) within the context of the existing EAP structure;
- ◆ ongoing access to VCT through accredited and independent service providers.
- ◆ provide first aid kits to schools, particularly where the risk of occupational transmission of HIV is high;
- ◆ counter the harmful effects of the diminishing workforce because of uncontrollable AIDS-related deaths by providing more funds for substitution of educators infected by HIV particularly in curriculum areas, school and colleges with already limited human resources;
- ◆ train employees (including educators and learners) in first aid as well as HIV and AIDS peer education and counselling skills to be made available on site on an ongoing basis.
- ◆ providing support to HIV-infected employees without medical aid.

11.3 In order to take the necessary infection control measures personal protection equipment will be provided to all employees, as follows:

- ◆ At least two pairs of industrial-strength gloves will be provided to cleaners annually.
- ◆ Latex gloves, and a case or pouch to store them in, will be provided to all employees (e.g. educators), and extra pairs should be made available upon request.
- ◆ First aid kits and personal protective gear such as disposable plastic aprons will be stored in an easily accessible venue.

11.4 Since the effective use of condoms is regarded as an integral part of a comprehensive HIV and AIDS workplace programme condoms will be provided to all employees, via a condom dispenser or otherwise, on an ongoing basis. The dispenser should be maintained and serviced by the non-CS employees. This will be accompanied by relevant education and information provided to all WCED employees.

## **12. MANAGING NON-COMPLIANCE**

12.1 The grievances of employees living with HIV, and non-compliance with this Policy will be dealt with in terms of agreed grievance and disciplinary procedures.

12.2 Unfair discrimination displayed towards any individual who is either HIV-positive or perceived to be so, by any stakeholder, will be punishable through application of such grievance procedures.

### **13. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND RESEARCH**

13.1 All aspects of the HIV and AIDS programme of the WCED will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis according to clear assessment criteria to ensure that:

- ◆ justification can be given for actions taken;
- ◆ an impact and progress track record is maintained;
- ◆ the extent of success is measured; and
- ◆ a profile of strategies as well as methods of best practice is established.

13.2 Ethical aspects will receive thorough attention, and feasible mechanisms and protocols will be created before the gathering and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data in all research projects related to HIV and AIDS under jurisdiction of the WCED.

### **14. STATUS OF THE POLICY**

14.1 The HIV and AIDS epidemic is not a stable problem which can be controlled easily. This Policy shall thus be reviewed and modified regularly (at least every alternative year) to bring it in line with changing circumstances as well as the latest epidemiological and scientific information in this field.

14.2 No HIV and AIDS programme running at a given point will be interrupted temporarily while the Policy review is in process.

## **APPENDIX A. GLOSSARY**

In this Policy any expression of core concepts will have the following meaning unless otherwise indicated:

**ART** - Anti-retroviral therapy

**AIDS** - Acquired Immune deficiency Syndrome.

**Care** – steps taken to promote a person’s well-being through medical, spiritual, psycho-emotional and others means.

**Confidentiality** - Keeping personal information about an employee from others unless the employee has consented to the disclosure.

**Counseling** – A structured process to help a person take control over problems or challenges in his or her own life.

**Discrimination** – Treating someone differently and unfairly compared to how you want to be treated yourself.

**ELISA test** – The test used to identify the presence of HIV-antibodies in a person’s blood.

**Epidemic** – A disease that spreads rapidly through a demographic segments of the human population e.g. everyone in a given geographic area or every one of a certain age or sex.

**Evaluation** – Assessment of the impact and results (outcomes) of specific actions taken at a given time.

**High-risk behavior** – engaging in activities or following procedures with a high probability to harm you, such as ignoring universal HIV-infection control steps in the workplace.

**HIV** - Human Immunodeficiency Virus. The virus slowly damages a person’s immune system. The immune system protects the body against infections and diseases.

**HIV-negative** – You do not have the HI-virus in your body.

**HIV-positive** - You do have the HI-virus in your body.

**Immune system** - A complex system of cells and substances that protects the body from harmful effects of infection and disease.

**Informed consent** - The employee has been given all the information necessary to make a knowledgeable (well informed) and voluntary decision.

**Life Skills** – skills that enable people to interact meaningfully and successfully with other people and their environment, as well as dealing with specific life tasks.

**Monitoring** – The ongoing assessment of actions over a period of time to build a track record of what is being done.

**Occupational exposure**- Exposure to blood or blood products which may be HIV-infected during the course of performing duties at work.

**Pandemic** – a disease occurring throughout the population of a country, a people or the world.

**PEP** – post exposure prophylaxis (medication taken to counter the effects of accidental exposure to blood or blood products).

**Pre-test counseling** - A counselor discusses the facts of HIV and AIDS with the employee, how the employee feels and what the HIV test means before the blood test is taken.

**Prevention** – To deal with, hinder or stop a potentially harmful practice or threat before it occurs.

**Policy** – A document setting out an organization's position on a particular issue such as HIV and AIDS, and a framework for effective dealing with this matter.

**Positive living with HIV** - The ability to cope with HIV by way of maintaining a healthy body, mind and soul.

**Post-test counseling** - This is when a counselor informs the employee of the results of the test. The counselor will also discuss ways in which the employee can live with the HIV status if he is HIV positive, or how to stay negative if he is HIV negative.

**Rapid testing** – A testing procedure which enables a result within 10 to 30 minutes.

**Support** – Services and assistance that could be provided to help a person deal with difficult situations and challenges such as being HIV-positive.

**STIs** - Sexually transmitted infections, including syphilis, gonorrhoea, chancroid and HIV. They are passed from one person to another during sexual intercourse.

**Treatment** – Medical steps taken to care for and manage illness.

**Unlinked anonymous testing** - Testing of unlinked coded specimen collected solely for surveillance purposes. Informed consent is required, and no personal identification, e.g. names or employee numbers are revealed. It is also not accompanied by counseling.

**Vaccine** – An injection that prevents people from becoming sick.

**VCT** – Voluntary Counseling and Testing

**Virus** – A small organism (germ) that can cause diseases, such as polio, measles, colds and HIV.

**Voluntary disclosure** – Telling others that you are HIV-positive or that you have AIDS, without being forced to do it.

**Voluntary testing** – going for an HIV-test without being forced to do it.

**Wellness management** – Putting steps in place to enable you to remain healthy and productive, and live a quality of life.

**Window period** – The period between HIV-infection and when HIV-antibodies can be detected.

**Workplace programme** - Organized actions taken to address a specific issue, problem or challenge within a given workplace such as a school, hospital or factory.