



## **Public Health**

### **Purpose**

Stephen F. Austin State University recognizes an obligation to promote public health on campus by acting to protect students, faculty, and staff from the spread of contagious and infectious diseases. An effective and responsible approach to safeguarding public health on campus requires that legitimate concerns about the potential for transmission of diseases in university settings neither be sensationalized nor minimized, but that university officials work closely with other interested parties to establish policies and procedures that inhibit the likelihood of contagion while promoting an educational environment characterized by safety, continuity, and calm.

### **Persons Affected**

This policy applies to employees, faculty, students, visitors, volunteers, contractors, or vendors.

### **Definitions**

Public health policy: the laws, regulations, actions, and decisions implemented within society in order to promote wellness and ensure that specific health goals are met.

### **Policy**

When circumstances arise that require review, the vice president of student affairs or their designee will convene a Public Health Committee, consisting of appropriate faculty and staff members. This committee will assist the vice president in coordinating the university's efforts to fulfill its responsibility concerning public health.

### **Procedures**

The committee will review the guidelines of recognized authorities including the World Health Organization, the National Centers for Disease Control, and the Texas Department of State Health Services Procedure information.

- A. Based on the severity of the public health issue being addressed, the Public Health Committee may make recommendations to the president that certain policies, plans, and/or protocols be initiated, suspended or modified on an emergency basis, as needed
  1. In the event of public inquiry concerning university policy on public health or health-related matters at SFA, the chief marketing and communications officer, or their designee, will serve as the official spokesperson for the university.
    - a. Medical records of individuals shall remain confidential, but public information will be disclosed upon request in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.



- i. Requests for such information should be referred to the university's general counsel.
  - a. If a public health issue arises that could involve the continuity of business and academic functions of the university, other ad hoc committees may be impaneled as needed to address those particular issues.

**Related Statutes or Regulations, Rules, Policies, or Standards**

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g

Tex. Health & Safety Code Ch. 81, 181

Tex. Gov't Code Ch. 552

**Responsible Executive**

Vice President of Student Affairs

**Forms**

None

**Revision History**

September 1, 2023 (original)