

NEOMED ACADEMIC POLICY	Policy No: 3349-AC-207
ACADEMIC POLICY TITLE: Exposure to Environmental Hazards in the Educational Setting Policy	EFFECTIVE DATE: March 18, 2019 REVISED: June 20, 2023
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: Office of Student Services	Approval Authority: Provost

(A) PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to delineate the management of incidents of exposure to environmental hazards that occur to students while they are in the educational setting.

(B) SCOPE

This Policy applies to all students enrolled in the Colleges of Medicine, Pharmacy, and Graduate Studies at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED).

(C) DEFINITIONS

- (1) “Educational Setting” is any setting at which an enrolled NEOMED student is engaging in curricular-related activity associated with a credit-bearing course.
- (2) “Environmental hazard” is a hazard resulting from chemical, biological, or physical agents in the student’s environment that poses a potential risk to the student’s health.
- (3) “Exposure Incident” is the unplanned exposure to an environmental hazard that occurs in the Educational Setting.
- (4) “Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)” is any specific equipment that provides protection from Environmental Hazards (i.e., mask, gloves, goggles, lab coat) to the wearer.
- (5) “Work Practice Controls” are task specific controls that alter the way a task is performed to provide protection to the worker (student) and to mitigate the risk of an Exposure Incident. These may include, but are not limited to, decreased exposure time, substitution, elimination, handwashing, handling and disposal of tools.

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(D) POLICY STATEMENT

(1) Prevention

All students will receive training that will include information about the specific Environmental Hazards to which they may be exposed as part of their curriculum, precautions, work practice controls, personal protective equipment (PPE) and the students' responsibilities listed in Section (5)(c) of this Policy. This information will be appropriate to students' level of training and area of training. This training will be provided via the Office of Student Services or specific educational site personnel.

(2) Managing Exposure Environmental Hazards in the Educational Setting

(a) Effective Management

Effective management of exposure to Environmental Hazards requires coordination among multiple units within the University, including clinical education sites and any other location where a student may be exposed to Environmental Hazards as part of his/her educational experience. Effective management requires training in prevention of injury and in management of injuries when they occur.

(b) First Aid Directives

All students who experience an Exposure Incident while engaged in curricular activities will be directed to perform basic first aid immediately. These first aid directives will be the same as those provided to employees with occupational injuries or exposures and will be developed by each affiliated clinical education site. The directives, in general, are to:

- (i) Remove yourself from the Environmental Hazard or potential exposure setting;

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- (ii) Wash all exposed skin with soap and water;
- (ii) Flush any chemical splashes to nose, mouth, or skin with water;
- (iii) Irrigate eyes with clean water, saline, or sterile wash;
- (iv) Seek medical attention if necessary.

(3) Reporting Exposure Incidents

- (a) All students are expected to be educated about the protocol for reporting Exposure Incidents, including to whom to report such incidents and/or where to report for treatment, during their orientation at each educational facility. Generally, students should use the following procedures:
 - (i) If the Exposure Incident occurs on the NEOMED Rootstown campus, immediately notify the course director responsible for the educational experience.
 - (ii) If the Exposure Incident occurs in a NEOMED Research laboratory, immediately notify your Lab Supervisor and the Office of Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety.
 - (iii) If the Exposure Incident occurs at a clinical education site, first notify the clinical director or preceptor and then report to the Employee Health Clinic, designated medical department or facility for that institution, for treatment and/or evaluation according to the site guidelines. If the Exposure Incident occurs after normal business hours, students should report to the nearest hospital emergency department.
 - (iv) If the Exposure Incident occurs during an educational experience or rotation site that is not affiliated with NEOMED, students should

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directly report to the emergency department at that institution or follow instructions provided by the site.

- (v) After initial notification of an Exposure Incident to the appropriate site contact, students should contact the NEOMED Credentialing/Immunizations Staff at 330.325.6888 within twenty-four (24) hours of the exposure, regardless of the site at which the exposure occurred, to document the incident.
- (b) Students should provide as much of the following information to the Credentialing/Immunizations Staff (and to the hospital medical education office or pharmacy site personnel) regarding the Exposure Incident.
 - (i) WHEN: The date and time of exposure;
 - (ii) WHERE: The location of exposure (e.g., hospital, office, etc.);
 - (iii) WHAT: The source of exposure (e.g., chemical, particulate, etc.)
 - (iv) HOW and HOW LONG: How the exposure occurred (e.g., skin, mucous membrane, percutaneous, etc.) and for how long the exposure occurred (e.g., seconds, minutes, hours, etc.);
- (4) Treatment
 - (a) The cost of treatment and/or evaluation will be billed to students' health insurance.
 - (b) If the site physician believes that medication is indicated, he/she will prescribe it in accordance with practices of the affiliated hospital. These medications will generally be the same medications prescribed for employees with exposure to the same Environmental Hazards.

The cost of these medications will be billed to students' health insurance.

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(c) In all cases of Exposure Incidents, students will be responsible for following up with a health care provider for subsequent testing, counseling, and/or continued prescription of medication (if appropriate).

(5) Responsibilities

(a) Office of Student Services

The Office of Student Services, with assistance from the Student Health and Insurance Committee, is responsible for:

- (i) Participating in the regular review of appropriate policy for the management of exposure to Environmental Hazards in the Educational Setting;
- (ii) Working with the medical education office at each clinical education site to ensure their understanding of this Policy;
- (iii) Ensuring that students have twenty-four (24) hour/day access to advice about the nature of Exposure Incidents and the need for medical evaluation or medication; and,
- (iv) Informing students about this Policy and providing training specific to the Environmental Hazards expected in the Educational Setting unless otherwise provided by other educational site personnel (i.e. course director, course staff, etc.).

(b) Affiliated Hospital Offices of Medical Education

Affiliated hospital offices of medical education are responsible for:

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- (i) Working with the site director for clinical education or the clerkship site director, as appropriate, to inform faculty about this Policy; and,
- (ii) Working with the Student Health and Insurance Committee to address any student-specific issues and to regularly review this Policy.

(c) Students

Student are responsible for:

- (i) Completing any Environmental Hazards training required by NEOMED;
- (ii) Wearing any required personal protective equipment (PPE) necessary to mitigate the hazard;
- (iii) Following any precautions or Work Place Controls put in place by NEOMED or the clinical education sites;
- (iv) Identifying the appropriate contacts at the NEOMED Rootstown campus and at clinical education sites;
- (v) Communicating with the Credentialing/Immunizations Staff in the Office of Student Affairs within twenty-four (24) hours of an Exposure Incident; and,
- (vi) Maintaining health insurance that includes coverage of any examinations, testing, screening, and preventive and therapeutic treatment required as a direct result of the exposure to Environmental Hazards in the Educational Setting.

(6) Clearance to Return to the University

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(a) Medical Clearance

It shall be the responsibility of treating health care providers to evaluate students who have been exposed to an Environmental Hazard and to provide written clearance for their return to the University at such time when they no longer pose a risk to the health of others.

(b) Academic Clearance

If the Environmental Hazard exposure results in an extended absence from student learning activities (as set forth below), the Student Health and Insurance Committee shall refer students to their respective College for academic clearance. Authorization to return to the curriculum following an extended absence is provided by the following:

- (i) College of Graduate Studies – Vice Dean;
- (ii) College of Medicine – Senior Associate Dean, Academic Affairs; and
- (iii) College of Pharmacy – Senior Associate Dean, Education.

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REFERENCES

CROSS-REFERENCES

Exposure to Blood-borne Pathogens (Academic Policy #3349-AC-203)

Infectious Disease Policy (University Policy #3349-10-50)

FORMS

REVISION HISTORY:

Revised June 20, 2023

Must be reviewed by the Responsible Department and revised as necessary at least every five years.

LEGAL