



HIV/AIDS Awareness Policy

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HIV/AIDS Awareness Policy				Version No.: 001			
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I. Overview

Republic Act 8504, Philippine AIDS prevention and Control Act of 1998, recognizes that workplaces play a vital role in reducing and/controlling the spread of HIV/AIDS thru workplace awareness and education programs.

II. Purpose

This policy is aimed to inform and guide the employees of DigiPlus Interactive Corp. and its subsidiaries in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of HIV/AIDS and to address the stigma and discrimination attached to HIV/AIDS.

III. HIV/AIDS

What is HIV?¹

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is a virus that attacks the body's immune system. If HIV is not treated, it can lead to AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome).

There is currently no effective cure. Once people get HIV, they have it for life.

But with proper medical care, HIV can be controlled. People with HIV who get effective HIV treatment can live long, healthy lives and protect their partners.

Origin of HIV²

HIV infection in humans came from a type of chimpanzee in Central Africa. Studies show that HIV may have jumped from chimpanzees to humans as far back as the late 1800s.

The chimpanzee version of the virus is called simian immunodeficiency virus. It was probably passed to humans when humans hunted these chimpanzees for meat and came in contact with their infected blood.


Over decades, HIV slowly spread across Africa and later into other parts of the world. The virus has existed in the United States since at least the mid to late 1970s.

How to know if you have HIV³

¹ Source/reference: <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/whatishiv.html>

² *Ibid.*

³ *Supra* note 1.

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The only way to know if you have HIV is to get tested. Knowing your HIV status helps you make healthy decisions to prevent getting or transmitting HIV.

Symptoms⁴

For many, yes. Most people have flu-like symptoms within 2 to 4 weeks after infection. Symptoms may last for a few days or several weeks.

Having these symptoms alone doesn't mean you have HIV. Other illnesses can cause similar symptoms.

Some people have no symptoms at all. The only way to know if you have HIV is to get tested.

Stages of HIV⁵

When people with HIV don't get treatment, they typically progress through three stages. But HIV treatment can slow or prevent progression of the disease. With advances in HIV treatment, progression to Stage 3 (AIDS) is less common today than in the early years of HIV.

Stage 1: Acute HIV Infection

- People have a large amount of HIV in their blood and are very contagious.
- Many people have flu-like symptoms.
- If you have flu-like symptoms and think you may have been exposed to HIV, get tested.

Stage 2: Chronic Infection


- This stage is also called asymptomatic HIV infection or clinical latency.
- HIV is still active and continues to reproduce in the body.
- People may not have any symptoms or get sick during this phase but can transmit HIV.
- People who take HIV treatment as prescribed may never move into Stage 3 (AIDS).
- Without HIV treatment, this stage may last a decade or longer, or may progress faster. At the end of this stage, the amount of HIV in the blood (viral load) goes up and the person may move into Stage 3 (AIDS).

Stage 3: Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

- The most severe stage of HIV infection.
- People with AIDS can have a high viral load and may easily transmit HIV to others.
- People with AIDS have badly damaged immune systems. They can get an increasing

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Id.*

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number of opportunistic infections or other serious illnesses.

- Without HIV treatment, people with AIDS typically survive about three years.

Contracting HIV/AIDS

HIV is transmitted through:

- Unprotected sex with HIV infected person
- From an infected mother to her child (during pregnancy, at birth through breast feeding)
- Intravenous drug use with contaminated needles
- Transfusion with infected blood and bodily fluids; and
- Unsafe, unprotected contact with infected blood and bleeding wounds of an infected person.

IV. Guidelines

- Every October⁶ 1 of each year, the Human Resources Dept. shall conduct an HIV/AIDS awareness program, taking into account the standardized information package developed by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).
- Said awareness program may be conducted by any of the following methods:
 - Townhall
 - Posting in Bulletin Boards and issuing Flyers
 - E-mail blast
 - Other means of information dissemination (i.e. Lark, etc.)

V. Non-Discrimination


- No employee shall be discriminated on account of the his/her actual, perceived, or suspected HIV/AIDS status.
- Spreading information about another employee's actual, perceived, or suspected HIV/AIDS status.

VI. Responsibilities

Company

- Implement and monitor this policy
- Ensure that this policy is not contrary to law and updated as needed.

⁶ Aids awareness month.

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Employees

- a. Be aware on how HIV/AIDS is acquired and avoid engaging in activities that can lead to infection.
- b. Be aware on how to control and not spread HIV/AIDS.
- c. Inform the HRD if they suspect they have or have been infected by HIV/AIDS. The HRD shall keep confidential such disclosure.

VII. Awareness


The HRD shall post copies of this policy in conspicuous places. Any employee who shall, without authority, deface, remove, or tamper, said posting, in part or in whole, shall be subjected to disciplinary/corrective action.

The respective line leaders shall immediately cascade this policy to their subordinates via e-mail or other platforms (i.e. Teams, Viber, etc.). Any line leader who fails to cascade or implement shall be subjected to disciplinary/corrective action

VIII. Corrective Action

Any employee who is found to have violated this policy shall be subjected to the following corrective action(s):

	Written Warning	Suspension	Termination
Defacing, Removing, or Tampering of signage or posted Policy		1 st Offense	2 nd Offense
Failure to Cascade or Implement	1 st and 2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense	4 th Offense
Spreading another employee's actual, perceived, or suspected HIV / AIDS status.	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense

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Discrimination due to HIV / AIDS Status	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense
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It is understood that the imposition of the above-mentioned penalties shall, before imposition, undergo the due process requirement under the law. Such an imposition, however, is without prejudice to any court action or remedy that is available to the company taking into consideration the reputational risks involved in every case.

IX. Repealing Clause

All existing policies inconsistent with this policy are hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

X. Effectivity

This Policy shall take effect immediately after its posting.

-nothing follows-