

Policies of the University of North Texas Health Science Center	Chapter 05 Human Resources
05.513 Employee's / Student's Rights While Assuring Patient Care	

Policy Statement.

It is the policy of the University of North Texas Health Science Center to assure patients' care and treatment will not be negatively affected if a center employee requests not to participate in an aspect of care.

The organization will consider the impact of a caregiver's personal cultural values, ethics, and religious beliefs on the care provided. However, in no instance will the mission of the organization be compromised. In accordance with applicable law, treatment and care will be provided to persons in need without regard to disability, race, creed, color, age, gender, religion, or national origin.

Application of Policy.

Faculty, Staff and Students

Definitions.

None

Procedures and Responsibilities.

Procedure / Duty

1. In order to carry forth with proper care and treatment of patients, while accommodating the needs of employees and patients based on disability, race, creed, color, age, gender, religion or national origin; the health science center will utilize the following methods in interviewing candidates.
 - a.) During the interview in the hiring department, applicants will be provided a complete description of the job for which they are applying. The description will include expected care to be provided, as well as the types and ages of patients to be served.
 - b.) During the departmental interview, the candidate will be asked if he/she can and will perform all aspects of the expected care. If the candidate informs the interviewer(s) that he/she is unable to meet the responsibilities of the position due to a conflict with cultural values, sense of ethics, and/or religious beliefs, the interviewer is required to document the reasons the applicant is unable to perform any portion of the job requirements.

Responsible Party

UNTHSC Hiring Department

- c.) Prior to completing the hiring process, the interviewer will contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer for the purposes of receiving guidance concerning necessary accommodations in the event the applicant is hired. An individual's cultural or religious beliefs shall not be a basis for rejecting the applicant.
2. The following methods will be used when an employee or student objects to certain modes of treatment and care based on disability, race, creed, color, age, gender, religion or national origin.
 - a.) If an employee or student finds his/her responsibilities in conflict with his/her cultural values, sense of ethics, or religious beliefs; the employee should notify his/her immediate supervisor or course director. Examples of such conflicts may be: blood transfusion, termination of pregnancy, skin grafts, hospice care vs. active treatment, caring for a patient with tobacco use privileges, etc.
 - b.) As permitted by the situation, the employee's/student's request must be committed to writing as soon as reasonably possible and must include the specific aspects of care from which they are requesting to be excused and the reasons for making the request.
 - c.) The supervisor or department director/chair will, based upon the employee's/student's documentation and information provided, notify the Vice President for Health Affairs and Executive Dean/Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the EEO Officer. Taking into consideration the employee's/student's objections, the need for appropriate patient care, as well as all mitigating circumstances; a determination will be made. The employee/ student shall be promptly notified of the decision.
 - d.) The requesting employee/ student is responsible for providing appropriate patient care until alternate arrangements can be made. Refusal to provide care may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination/dismissal. At no time will an employee's request be granted if doing so would negatively affect the care of the patient, except as provided by law (see Tex. Rev. Civ. Statutes, Article 4512.7). The department chair/head or the Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs will make a viable attempt in a timely manner to make reasonable accommodations for all justified and documented employee's/student's requests for exclusion from patient care or treatment resulting from a conflict with the employee's/student's personal values or beliefs.

e.) If the conflict can be resolved without transferring the employee (i.e., reallocation of staff responsibilities), the employee may elect to remain in his/her current position. An employee in good standing may also request, without regard for said accommodation, (after his/her probationary period) a transfer to any other department where the issues for which the accommodation has been made do not exist. With written supervisory permission, the employee may also be allowed to transfer during the probationary period.

f.) At any time the employee/ student disagrees with the decision of his/her supervisor or course director, he/she may immediately cease the accommodation proceedings and seek appeal through the center's grievance policy or the Student Grievance and Appeal committee.

References and Cross-references.

Tex. Rev. Civ. Statutes, Article 4512.7

Forms and Tools.

None

Approved: 9/1/2006

Effective: 9/1/2006

Revised: