The Challenge of HIV/AIDS in the WORKPLACE: A Guide for the HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

A PUBLICATION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL HOTEL AND RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

AND THE
JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS

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The IH&RA is a global network of independent and chain operators, national associations, hospitality suppliers and educational centres in the hotel and restaurant industry in more than 150 countries. As the voice of the industry, it represents, protects, promotes, and informs its members to enable them to achieve their objectives.

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Produced by
The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
and
The International Hotel and Restaurant Association

Geneva and Paris 1999
“AIDS is a disease that can and must be contained through education and understanding if our industry is to meet the challenges of the new millennium.”
Michael B. Peceri, CHA, IH&RA Past President

“AIDS is a bottom line issue: it impacts productivity and turnover, employee morale, health costs and buying power.”
James Reinnoldt, General Manager - Asia, Northwest Airlines

“It is inevitable that a firm doing business in the developing world will pay for AIDS. It is just a question of when and how much.”
Lee Smith, Former President, Levi Strauss International

“AIDS is a business and societal challenge - not just a health issue.”
Government Official, Thailand

“We must create a work environment that is responsive to the needs of people who are already affected. Most important is the creation in the workplace of an attitude to AIDS that minimizes the negative emotional and social consequences of the disease.”
I.M. Booth, Chairman, President & C.E.O., Polaroid Corporation

“In terms of the Human Development Index, a one per cent increase in the incidence of HIV results in a country losing 2.2 years of development.”
Asian Development Bank and United Nations Development Program - HIV Project

“With governments around the world straining under the pressure of massive economic and social change, the hope of solving many problems lies in the development of public/private partnerships. Governments and non-governmental organizations have a substantial role to play. But they - we - cannot do it alone. We need the private sector’s help in the fight against HIV/AIDS.”
Dr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS

“The risk of AIDS is not about ‘who’ you are or ‘where’ you are. AIDS is about ‘what’ you do.”
Centre for Disease Control

“All sectors and spheres of society have to be involved as equal partners to address the challenge of AIDS... The AIDS pandemic is getting worse at a rate that make a collective global effort imperative.”
President Nelson Mandela, Honorary President of the Global Business Council
Foreword

The IH&RA has developed this publication for the global hospitality industry to address the issue of HIV/AIDS in the workplace. The need for guidelines on building an industry response to the AIDS issue at the international level was first highlighted by the IH&RA Think-Tank on Human Resources Strategy, held in 1995. The findings of its White Paper on the Global Hospitality Industry “Into the New Millennium”, published in 1996, underlined the growing concern of consumers with regard to health issues. These concerns and their impact on the hospitality business were reiterated in the IH&RA Think-Tank on Safety and Security, convened in August 1998.

The Guide provides information for hotels and restaurants of all sizes to develop their own HIV/AIDS policies and educational awareness programmes, and to help employees understand the causes and risks associated with this global epidemic, or pandemic.

The necessity for the highest level of management to take a pro-active role in developing the response to HIV/AIDS cannot be over-emphasised. By confronting HIV/AIDS directly and responsibly, hoteliers and restaurateurs join the many businesses around the world already leading the fight against HIV/AIDS by providing accurate information to employees and their families, as well as developing effective workplace policies and supportive environments.

An HIV/AIDS workplace programme does not have to be either complicated or costly. By planning ahead, setting aside time and using this and other resources, hospitality professionals can develop an effective programme to manage the impact of HIV/AIDS successfully.

This is the first time the Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS) has formed a partnership with a global trade association to address this pandemic. The result is, we believe, highly effective and we would like to thank UNAIDS for their generous support and encouragement in producing these guidelines.

Dr. Osmane Aidi
President, IH&RA
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- the Documentation Centre

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Our thanks to the Thai Business Coalition on AIDS for their co-sponsorship of this publication.

The Thai Business Coalition on AIDS is a non-profit alliance among the private business sectors with the goal of supporting the business response to HIV/AIDS through appropriate policies and workplace education.
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Introduction

BUSINESS IN A WORLD OF HIV/AIDS

Nearly everyone today has heard of AIDS and knows that it is a serious threat to life. It is less well known that HIV - the virus that causes AIDS — is continuing to spread throughout the world at alarming levels. Now designated a global epidemic (pandemic), infection with HIV is having an increasingly serious impact on personal lives, society, and the economy.

- In 1997 alone, over 5.8 million people became newly infected with the HIV virus, amounting to 16,000 new infections each day
- In the same year, more than 2.3 million people died from AIDS. Since the epidemic began in the early 1980s, AIDS has claimed the lives of nearly 12 million people world-wide
- Well over 32 million people are currently living with HIV and AIDS, most of whom are in their peak years of economic productivity
- A study by McGraw Hill has estimated that by the year 2000, the global economic cost of the epidemic will equal between 1 to 4 per cent of the GDP of the United States
- Also by the year 2000, estimates indicate that the impact on Asian economies will amount to US$ 38-52 billion
- In countries with very high HIV-infection rates, the World Bank predicts reductions in economic growth of 15 to 25% GDP
- Prevention efforts have shown to work when information, skills training for protected sex, and services have been made available. Countries who have vigorously implemented such a package have succeeded to stabilise or even reduce infection rates
- 27 countries, on the other hand, experienced a more than 100% increase in new HIV infections between 1995 and 1997.

We have a scenario that is a personal tragedy to many people. It is also a scenario that affects businesses, both large and small, because of:

- Reduced productivity due to increasing loss of experienced staff
- Growing costs of employee welfare packages, including medical services, pension funds
- Loss of morale in the workforce when companies are unable to respond to the challenge of HIV/AIDS in their workplaces.

As the impact of HIV/AIDS on the workplace becomes more evident, increasing numbers of businesses, including those in the hospitality industry, are providing on-the-job employee training and education programmes on how to avoid becoming infected by HIV. Businesses are forming coalitions comprised of public, private, and non-profit sector organisations to provide HIV-prevention education in cost-effective ways. Employers are making efforts to keep HIV-infected employees working for as long as medically advisable and reasonable to do — to the mutual benefit of businesses and individual employees.
Additionally, businesses are recognising that, due to lack of knowledge and understanding about HIV and AIDS, some of their employees may potentially have negative attitudes about working with a person who has HIV. In response to this problem, employers are taking active steps to promote a positive workplace environment so that those who are living with HIV will be able to continue working as valued employees, for as long as they are medically fit to perform the jobs available to them.

Through proactive HIV policies and prevention education programmes, employers are protecting their workforces, which in turn protects their businesses. Furthermore, they are making important contributions to national and international efforts to slow down, and eventually contain, the HIV epidemic.

IH&RA fully supports these efforts and is producing this Guide in co-operation with UNAIDS to help the millions of businesses in the global hospitality industry take leading roles in providing their employees with HIV-prevention workplace policies and education programmes.

**HOW THIS GUIDE WILL HELP YOU MEET THE CHALLENGE**

The IH&RA and UNAIDS have published this Guide so that members of the Association can take practical steps to help protect their employees and their businesses in the face of the HIV epidemic. The hospitality industry takes pride in being a “high-touch, people-intensive” service sector. The many well-trained and motivated personnel provide services to millions of guests each year. The hospitality industry is built on dedication to quality service and customer satisfaction.

_Safeguarding the workforce, therefore, must be a top priority of every hotel and restaurant because it makes good business sense to do so._

The objective of this Guide is to assist hotels and restaurants in protecting their workforces, and in so doing, protect the viability of their business. To achieve this objective, the Guide gives suggestions for steps that you can take in three areas of action. These are contained in Part III. With these suggestions, you will be able to:

**ACTION 1**
CREATE A POLICY on HIV-related issues that is appropriate for your workplace

**ACTION 2**
PROVIDE HIV-PREVENTION EDUCATION AND TRAINING for your employees on how to avoid HIV infections, whether on- or off-the-job

**ACTION 3**
TREAT WITH FAIRNESS all your employees, especially those who are living with HIV or AIDS
TO PROVIDE FURTHER ASSISTANCE, THE GUIDE ALSO PRESENTS:

- Basic facts about HIV and AIDS needed to design policies about fitness-to-work with respect to employees who are living with HIV infections (in Part I)
- An overview of how the HIV epidemic affects the bottom-line, in relation to productivity, costs, and morale (in Part II)
- Suggestions on how to make an assessment of where your business currently stands in meeting the challenge of HIV, and how to prepare a plan of action (in Part III)
- A number of practical tools including samples of successful workplace policies on HIV that are being used by hotels (in Appendix 1) and a Question and Answer sheet suitable for photocopying (in Appendix 2)
- Suggestions for actions of benefit to your business that can take your company beyond the workplace (in Part IV)
- Information about organisations to contact for further assistance in creating or implementing a plan of action (in Part V).

ENDORSEMENT AT THE HIGHEST MANAGEMENT LEVEL

This Guide will be the framework for conducting an assessment of how your business currently is responding to the threat of the HIV epidemic and for preparing a plan of action. It is best to involve a member of senior management in the planning. Having someone supporting your final plan when endorsement from the most senior level of your business is sought will increase its chances for success.

Any actions that you take will be investments in safeguarding the workforce and need to be treated as important business decisions. Most actions require modest out-of-pocket outlays, while actual costs for any particular business will depend on a number of factors. Few if any of the steps that employers take in meeting the challenge of HIV will be short-term measures. The HIV virus will be at epidemic levels for at least the next decade, and a plan of action for your hotel or restaurant should be designed for long-term utility and effectiveness.

THE PLAN OF ACTION SHOULD BE YOUR PLAN

Your plan of action must be suitable to your unique business situation. While IH&RA strongly believes that every hotel and restaurant can — and should — be taking steps in all three action areas, we realise that there is no single plan that is suitable for all business establishments. The specific steps that your hotel or restaurant will be taking — your order of priorities, the pace at which you proceed, the time, energy and resources that you invest, and how your policies and programmes will evolve over time — will be business decisions based on many considerations.

This Guide is written as a general framework for making an assessment and action planning. It will give you a handle on the process. But because of the great diversity within the global hospitality industry, there are factors unique to your situation you will need to consider. This diversity includes differences in countries in HIV-infection rates, in costs of doing business, in labour relations laws and business practices, and in cultures.
Cultural differences play a special role in HIV prevention policies and programmes. Here is one example. In Asia and Africa, the primary way that HIV is transmitted is through “unprotected” sexual intercourse. It is essential that HIV-prevention education discusses this topic. Discussing sexual matters in public settings receives different levels of acceptance among various cultures. Each country, however, has health promotion specialists trained to teach HIV-prevention in effective, culturally appropriate ways who can be called upon to assist businesses in the design and implementation of HIV-prevention policies and education programmes.

While our industry has great diversity, IH&RA believes that no differences, including cultural ones, should be great enough to raise barriers to taking steps in the three action areas. Instead, differences are inherent considerations in the design of specific, local plans of action.

All suggestions offered in the Guide are based on experiences of businesses from around the world, only some of them in the hospitality industry. In one sense, then, there is nothing “new” being presented here because everything that is suggested has been proven to make good business sense.

What is new is the growing awareness within the business community world-wide – and in the hospitality industry — that all employers must take at least some actions in light of the growing threat that HIV poses to their workforce, and to the profitability of the business environment.
Basic Facts About HIV and AIDS

- What is HIV, and what is AIDS?
- How is HIV transmitted?
- How is HIV not transmitted?
- Living and working with HIV in the hospitality industry.

WHAT IS HIV, AND WHAT IS AIDS?

The difference between HIV and AIDS is easily confused. HIV is a virus which produces a disease, the last stage of which is called AIDS.

HIV stands for the “human immune (or immunological) deficiency virus”. The virus attacks the body's immune system which leaves the body unprotected from other infections. It is these other illnesses, called “opportunistic” infections, that will eventually lead to death. A person can look and feel healthy and unknowingly transmit the virus to another.

The final stage of the HIV disease is known as AIDS, short for the “Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.” A person who “has AIDS” — or is “living with AIDS” — will have severely weakened immune defences and that will make him or her vulnerable to a life-threatening disease. The time it takes from infection with HIV to the development of the AIDS phase can vary anywhere from 2 up to 15 years. Many persons with HIV continue to be productive until the final stage of the disease.

An HIV infection will eventually lead to the individual’s death. At present, there is no vaccine against the virus, and no cure. There are drugs that can delay the progression of the infection in many patients, extending their life expectancy by a number of years. The scientific community is striving to improve these drugs, to make them less expensive, and to develop a vaccine.

The harsh reality of HIV at this time is that it is ultimately a fatal disease, and a cure or a vaccine is not on the horizon. For this reason, all sectors of civil society — government, public health authorities, scientists, educators, community workers, non-government organisations — throughout the world are putting great emphasis on the prevention of HIV infections.
HOW IS HIV TRANSMITTED?

Scientific research over the past 15 years has established how HIV is transmitted between people — and how it is not.

A person can become infected with HIV in the following ways:

- **Through “unprotected” sexual intercourse with someone who has HIV** — by far the most common cause of the spread of HIV infection worldwide

- **From a mother to child** — during pregnancy, childbirth, or through breast feeding

- **Through blood or “blood products”, or tissues or cells which contain the virus** - this transmission mode involves transfusions of contaminated blood or blood products, the use of HIV-contaminated needles or syringes, and transplants of infected tissues and organs.

- With respect to the hospitality industry, there is the possibility that hypodermic needles may be left in hotel rooms or on other parts of the premises. The probability of becoming infected with HIV through a needle stick while handling discarded syringes is statistically quite small; however, there are, in fact, other additional health risks involved such as infection with hepatitis B (another life-threatening virus), tetanus (a life-threatening bacteria), or other germs; therefore, all hotel and restaurant personnel must be trained and supervised to avoid accidents while housecleaning or while disposing of used hypodermic needles.

- **Handling blood-soiled linen cuts from objects, or blood spillage** should follow Universal Precautions (see Appendix 4). Because the skin is a protective barrier, viruses — including HIV and hepatitis — are only able to enter through an open cut or wound, or possibly through a mucous membrane. This mode of entry poses an insignificantly small risk.

HOW IS HIV NOT TRANSMITTED?

HIV is not transmitted by:

- **Common-place physical contact** — such as shaking hands with, hugging, or socially kissing someone who is infected with HIV

- **Touching public objects** — such as telephones, toilet seats, door knobs, or using drinking fountains and swimming pools

- **Coughing and sneezing**

- **Bites** — of mosquitoes and other insects

- **Using eating utensils or consuming food or beverages** — handled by someone who has HIV.

This point is of significance to the hospitality industry. It is important for an employee HIV-prevention programme to make clear that even if HIV-infected blood were to be introduced to eating utensils or into food that is consumed by another employee or a guest, there would still be no danger of infection. HIV is a fragile virus which is killed by the digestive acids.
LIVING AND WORKING WITH HIV IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

The basic facts about HIV and AIDS have two important implications for personnel policies in hotels and restaurants:

- **Negligible possibilities of HIV infection** — The possibility that employees who have HIV might infect a co-worker or a guest in the course of their work is negligible. The mere fact that an employee or job applicant has an HIV infection, even if it has progressed to the AIDS stage, is not in itself valid grounds for taking a reactionary management position regarding the types of work that can be reasonably and appropriately performed by this person in the hospitality industry.

- **Fitness to work** — A person who is living with HIV, even if the infection has reached the stage of AIDS, may still be “fit for work”. Simply knowing that a particular individual “has HIV” or “has AIDS” is insufficient information by itself for making a decision about that person. What is required is an individualised decision, one which takes into consideration the actual medical status of the person, and then relates the medical status to the specific duties of the job.

Appendix 2 lists some commonly asked questions and answers on HIV/AIDS.

Basketball star, **Magic Johnson**, is a well-known example of a person with HIV who can still be active. Even after discovering his HIV status, he continued to play the sport. It was according to his own evaluation of whether or not his physical health could meet the demands of his sport.
Figure 1 Adults and children estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS as of end 1998 (source: UNAIDS/WHO)

### Table 1: Regional HIV/AIDS Statistics and Features

(source: Aids epidemic update - December 1998)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Epidemic started</th>
<th>Adults &amp; children living with HIV/AIDS</th>
<th>Adults &amp; children newly infected with HIV</th>
<th>Adult prevalence rate$^2$</th>
<th>Percent of HIV-positive adults who are women</th>
<th>Main mode(s) of transmission$^3$ for adults living with HIV/AIDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>late ’70s</td>
<td>22.5 million</td>
<td>4.0 million</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Hetero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Africa &amp; Middle East</td>
<td>early ’80s</td>
<td>210,000</td>
<td>19,000</td>
<td>0.13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>IDU, Hetero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South &amp; South-East Asia</td>
<td>late ’80s</td>
<td>6.7 million</td>
<td>1.2 million</td>
<td>0.69%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Hetero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia &amp; Pacific</td>
<td>late ’80s</td>
<td>560,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>0.068%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>IDU, Hetero, MSM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>late ’70s</td>
<td>1.4 million</td>
<td>160,000</td>
<td>0.57%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>MSM, IDU, Hetero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>early ’80s</td>
<td>330,000</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>1.96%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Hetero, MSM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe &amp; Central Asia</td>
<td>early ’90s</td>
<td>270,000</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>0.14%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>IDU, MSM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>late ’70s</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>MSM, IDU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>early ’80s</td>
<td>890,000</td>
<td>44,000</td>
<td>0.56%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>MSM, IDU, Hetero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia &amp; New Zealand</td>
<td>late ’70s</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>MSM, IDU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>33.4 million</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.8 million</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.1%</strong></td>
<td><strong>43%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^1$ The proportion of adults (15 to 49 years of age) living with HIV/AIDS in 1998, using 1997 population numbers.

$^2$ MSM (sexual transmission among men who have sex with men), IDU (transmission through injecting drug use), Hetero (heterosexual transmission).
Protecting Your Workforce Will Protect Your Business

HIV can affect a business in three direct ways — productivity, employee benefits, and morale.

Regardless of the HIV infection rate in your country, there is a need to take action to protect your workforce.

THREE DIRECT IMPACTS OF HIV ON A BUSINESS – PRODUCTIVITY, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS, AND MORALE.

PRODUCTIVITY

The productivity of your company can be affected by:

- Increased absenteeism due to sick leave or caring for a family member with HIV/AIDS
- Increased staff turnover due to premature loss of services of experienced staff, and
- Lower productivity of new employees who will need to be trained.

Several cost-impact analyses have been done for companies in various parts of the world, although none specifically for the hospitality industry. A study, for example in Kenya reported HIV/AIDS costs a company US$ 25 per employee annually and will increase to US$ 56 in several years if the HIV infection rate is left unchecked. There is clear evidence that prevention education will gain you significant long-term savings.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

HIV/AIDS increases the costs of employee benefits due to:

- Growing demand for medical care from workplace health services
- Early retirement
- Premature payments from pension funds due to early deaths
- Increased costs of insurance premiums.

Early management action to ensure its package of employee benefits remains economically viable is needed. Preparing your company to manage employee welfare before it is affected by HIV/AIDS will ultimately result in cost-effective operations.

MORALE

While virtually everyone has heard of AIDS, much misunderstanding and many false beliefs persist about HIV infection. If employees lack knowledge about HIV and AIDS, the smooth conduct of business can be affected by:
Unfounded fears of becoming infected, which may lead to refusals to work with an employee who is known, or is rumoured to have, HIV or AIDS

■ False beliefs and stigmatisation, which can be devastating to the employee being mistreated, and

■ Discrimination in the making of personnel decisions, for example, resulting in an unjustified discharge of an employee who has an HIV infection.

**TAKING ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR WORKFORCE**

Regardless of the HIV infection rate in your country, there is a need to take action to protect your workforce

There are major differences in HIV infection rates from country to country. However, as you assess how your business is meeting the HIV challenge, the overall rate of HIV infections in your country is only one consideration, and it should be placed in context. A number of other factors should be taken into consideration:

1. **A “low” level of HIV prevalence in your company’s country of operation should not be misunderstood to mean that your workforce is safe from the virus.**

   For instance, in the United States, which has a relatively low level of cases, HIV infections were the leading cause of death in 1994 for men between the ages of 25 and 44. HIV was the third leading cause of death for women in the same age group. Thus, a low or lower rate of infection by no means eliminates the threat of HIV as a major public health problem and a cause of potentially severe economic loss to employers.

   A person in a **low** HIV-level country who engages in risky behaviour – for example, having multiple sex partners without using a condom – is at greater risk of contracting the virus than a person in a **high** HIV-level country who has only one partner.

2. **As the HIV epidemic is constantly spreading, it is important to consider the trends that are defining its growth and distribution in your country(ies) of operations.**

   Between 1995 and 1996, for example, 27 countries world-wide saw their infection rates more than double with several countries experiencing a deadly six-fold jump.

3. **The hospitality industry has greater opportunities for direct contact between customer and staff than most other industries.**

   This unique character of our industry is a driving force to provide our workforces with the necessary information and skills to help them make responsible decisions.

4. **There are occupational risks distinct to our industry that have caused some fears or misconceptions about HIV/AIDS.**

   Your staff must be properly educated on safety measures, such as handling blood-soiled linen and garments, disposing of syringes and razors, handling knife cuts, even if these accidents are known to pose no transmission risk of HIV/AIDS.

5. **Consider the benefits of each of the three suggested areas of action — a written policy covering HIV-related issues, HIV-prevention education, and fair personnel policies.**

   Taking proactive action sends two messages to your workforce: firstly, you are determined to save your company the costs that HIV/AIDS will cause; secondly, you want to protect your employees. The experience of hotels and restaurants that have done so shows that such action is repaid in greater personnel productivity and loyalty. It also creates a positive company image in the community that could ultimately gain greater customer patronage.
PART III

Creating a Responsive Workplace

Now that you are familiar with some of the most important facts about HIV and AIDS, you can develop an effective HIV programme that will help to protect your employees and your business.

In Part III, you are introduced to the three essential components of an HIV programme in the workplace:

- Creating an HIV policy for your business
- Providing HIV prevention education in the workplace
- Having fair employment practices

Part III of the guide is divided into two sections. Section A briefly explains what these components are and the concepts they contain.

Section B suggests how to develop each of these components in your place of business.

Reading Section A first before attempting the steps in Section B is important as concepts are explained in Section A which will help you in developing your programme.

SECTION A: WHAT IS?

1. WHAT IS AN HIV POLICY?

The purpose of an HIV policy is to:

- Establish consistency within your company and compliance with local and national laws
- Set standards of expected behaviour for all employees, and
- Guide all employees on how to address HIV and where to go for assistance.

An HIV policy is not just a document. It is a set of guidelines that states a company’s position and practices for preventing the transmission of HIV and for handling cases of HIV infection among employees. Your policy must be designed to be sensitive to the character of your business (such as its service, location, and size) while providing clear and appropriate guidance on what is already known about HIV and its relation to workers (The policy of the Regent Bangkok is at the end of this section; other sample policies of hotels are in Appendix 1).

Your HIV policy can be many pages long or as short as a few paragraphs, depending on whether it provides detailed instructions and procedures on how the policy is to be enacted or simply outlines broad policy guidelines. Most employers find that developing an HIV policy takes less time than expected, is a valuable experience, and that employee response is surprisingly favourable. Remember: top management must be involved in the drafting of the policy.
2. WHAT IS HIV-PREVENTION EDUCATION?

A workplace HIV-prevention education programme will:

- Help keep employees from becoming infected with HIV
- Make staff more likely to accept an HIV-infected co-worker
- Give managers and employees opportunities to talk and learn about HIV and AIDS, and
- Translate into increased loyalty and morale among workers protecting your business from disruption.

Whatever the format or source, the best prevention education programme is one that accurately answers your employees’ questions. The content of all HIV educational programmes in the workplace, whether formal or informal, should consider the cultural diversity of your employees and factors that might increase their vulnerability to HIV infection. Your workplace programme should cover not only factual information about AIDS, HIV transmission, and safe sex practices but also topics such as alcohol and drug abuse (including drug injecting), and sexuality, which are important related issues to HIV/AIDS.

No business is too large or too small to have an HIV-prevention education programme. The programme does not have to take valuable time away from other pressing business concerns, nor does it have to be costly. You may have already dedicated company time and resources to training your employees for particular skills vital to their job performance. Including HIV prevention education will help them remain healthy and productive.

Your HIV-prevention education programme should do the following:

**Provide basic information about HIV and AIDS**

Your programme should give accurate, up-to-date information on HIV/AIDS, on fair treatment of people living with HIV or AIDS, and on your company's HIV policy. Many excellent materials have already been developed for educational purposes and may be available from your national or local HIV/AIDS or public health programme (see Part V).

**Discuss and promote prevention methods**

Since regular and correct condom use is essential for the prevention of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), your HIV programme should emphasise this and other prevention methods.

Unless you are certain that condoms are readily available, reliable, and affordable in the surrounding community, your company could also consider providing employees (free or at low cost) with condoms. This can be done through dispensing machines, company stores, and clinics.

**Promote safety consciousness**

Your education programme should be designed to provide clear answers to your staff’s concerns about working with and serving people with HIV/AIDS. A sound education programme will prepare them for performing their jobs with accurate judgement about the minimal risks involved in their work (see the “Common Questions and Answers” section in Appendix 2, which includes information especially relevant to the hospitality industry).

Your educational programme should also discuss specific occupational risks with groups of workers who might experience them in your workplace. For example, for restaurant workers, education about safety relating to cuts from knives and kitchen accidents will be important. If
workers are regularly exposed to human blood or blood products — such as the on-site medical staff or the housekeeping staff — ongoing education, training, and the necessary equipment for “basic first aid” should be provided (see Appendix 4).

3. WHAT ARE FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES?

There are several principles to “fair employment” practices with respect to HIV/AIDS (see Appendix 3). Adhering to these principles will ensure that your workplace will provide an environment that is non-discriminatory and reasonable for all employees, as well as supportive of those with HIV.

Some of these principles are discussed below.

Comply with existing laws
A number of countries have laws that regulate business practices in relation to persons who are living with HIV. These laws might be specifically about HIV, or they may be more general laws which are also applicable to HIV, such as employment laws that pertain to disabled persons. It is essential for employers to know what the applicable regulations are and to comply with them. For example, many countries now do not allow HIV testing for recruitment or for continuity in employment.

Consider fitness-to-work on an individual basis
Decisions must be on a case-by-case basis. Questions that should be addressed include:

- What medical problems does the patient/employee have?
- How are the problems responding to treatment?
- What is the prognosis?
- How are the medical problems affecting the person’s life — including the ability to work?

These are, or course, the same questions that must be asked about any illness or injury and not just about HIV/AIDS. They can only be answered by means of a medical evaluation of the individual.

Make “reasonable accommodations” for employees with HIV
The concept of “reasonable accommodation” is increasingly important in the business world, and it is applied to disabilities, HIV/AIDS, and certain other personal difficulties.

Here are some examples of accommodations that a business can make for an employee who is living with HIV:

- Accept a less than ideal level of performance, as long as minimum standards are met
- Modify the employee’s job description
- Reassign the employee to a different job
- Allow more time off for health appointments (with or without pay)
- Allow more sick leave or absenteeism (with or without pay)
- Arrange a more flexible work schedule
Provide for the employee to switch to part time work

Let the employee work from home.

In each of these examples, an employer is making modest “sacrifices” in terms of costs of labour or efficiency in order to enable the employee to remain working. What is reasonable for your business must be based on consideration of all the factors, including the needs of the employer, of the employee, of the social and economic environment in which the business operates, and of existing laws and business standards.

In other words, “reasonable accommodation” is balanced against your goal to protect the bottom line, the economic and personal needs of the employee who has an HIV infection, and society's need to protect the business environment as well as people who have become ill or who are disabled.

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**Treat an HIV infection in a manner similar to other disabilities or life-threatening diseases**

In many areas in life, one of the ways that we decide questions of fairness is to look at how we treat people who are in similar situations. This same principle is applicable to HIV/AIDS issues.

For example, when your health benefit package provides a certain level of care for major illnesses, then an employee with HIV/AIDS should receive a similar level of benefits. There is no justifiable reason why HIV should be singled out for less favourable treatment.

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**Respect confidentiality of medical information**

Employers must always keep an employee's medical information confidential. Unfortunately, confidential information is sometimes “leaked,” with the resulting gossip and rumours causing serious harm. Employers should anticipate these problems and ensure that privacy is maintained.

Protecting the confidentiality of an employee's medical records is vital because there is still a great deal of stigma attached to HIV and discrimination against people who are living with the virus. Furthermore, if employees cannot trust that their privacy will be respected, they may not seek the health care they may need. For example, those employees who want to have their blood confidentially tested for HIV may not do so out of fear that the results will not be kept confidential.

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**Do not make HIV screening compulsory**

One of the most important lessons learned during the past 15 years of fighting the HIV epidemic is that it is a mistake for employers to demand that their employees, or job applicants, be tested for HIV. This is not a practical solution to the problem of HIV. Such a requirement or policy creates new problems, such as increased discrimination against people who have HIV.

There is now a strong consensus against mandatory HIV testing. The leading organisation in the world-wide efforts to contain the epidemic, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), continues to support only voluntary and confidential HIV/AIDS testing.

Employers should not require HIV screening as part of general workplace physical examinations or when recruiting new staff. HIV screening cannot guarantee a workplace free of HIV/AIDS. Because of the “window period” during which someone can be infected but not yet have developed antibodies to HIV, a negative HIV test does not ensure that an organisation will be recruiting an HIV-negative employee. Testing does not prevent later infection.
A number of companies that previously tested for HIV have halted the practice because the cost of testing and of lowered morale outweighed the benefits.

The IH&RA supports this position. It is appropriate, however, for an HIV/AIDS prevention education programme to inform employees of the advantages of taking a voluntary and confidential HIV test. Furthermore, employers may consider whether including coverage for voluntary, confidential HIV-testing within their health benefit plan is appropriate and beneficial.

HIV/AIDS POLICY OF THE REGENT BANGKOK HOTEL

OUR BELIEFS

The Regent supports the continued employment of staff who have a life-threatening illness, so long as their condition does not interfere with their ability to perform their work.

Recognising that HIV/AIDS is one of those life-threatening illnesses, the Regent supports and encourages staff at all levels to be well informed and sensitive to the issues of AIDS in the Workplace.

OUR STRATEGIES

We believe that a continuous educational programme should be made available to all staff. All department managers will follow the minimum required activities outlined for their staff and provide any additional information through the Human Resources Department.

We do not believe in pre- or post-testing for the HIV virus whether for recruitment, transfer or promotion. For any staff member who wishes to be tested the hotel will, if requested, arrange for pre- and post-counselling and the test results will remain confidential to the employee only.

Should the work performance of an employee having a life-threatening illness fall below the established standards, that employee will be provided with the same rights, benefits and opportunities as laid down in the employee handbook which comply with existing national laws.

Management takes the responsibility in planning, executing and following up on the hotel's policy for HIV/AIDS.

OUR PRACTICE

1. To include at least 30 minutes HIV/AIDS training for every new employee orientation
2. To have available in the Human Resources Division audio and video tapes, flyers, leaflets, brochures, etc., to provide AIDS education to staff
3. To organise an AIDS training programme for all staff at least once a year
4. To promote AIDS awareness through the use of employee notice boards or pay packages at least four times per year
5. To organise activities on “World AIDS Day”.

We recognise that the workplace has the best opportunity to educate people on the issue of HIV/AIDS and that through knowledge and understanding all our employees can respond in a positive and caring manner.
SECTION B: HOW TO?

1. HOW TO CREATE AN HIV POLICY FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Assign responsibility for developing an HIV workplace policy

Developing a workplace policy on HIV requires co-operation and support from everyone in an organisation, from line employees to senior management. Someone who is respected by both management and staff should lead this process. For smaller businesses, one person can direct this process. For larger businesses, establishment of a team composed of management, staff, and a representative from the labour union, if appropriate, is generally more effective.

Assess your company’s situation and what others have done

Learn about the thinking and trends within your company. For example, employees' and management views about HIV/AIDS; changing trends in absenteeism and use of medical services; your existing policies on recruitment and employment. These will be important inputs into your HIV/AIDS policy.

Gather information on actions outside your company

Know what others are doing, e.g. what HIV/AIDS programmes are going on and the actions taken by other hotels and restaurants. Be sure you also learn more about HIV/AIDS, if needed. Find out what the national and local regulations are with respect to HIV/AIDS. Information on local or national organisations and resources that could assist in conducting your future education activities should also be collected, because you may want to use them.

Draft a plan of action

With this background, draft a proposed plan for formulating your company policy. This plan will be your guide on the steps you need to take to come up with the policy. Include estimates on costs and time required.

If you are a chain or a large hotel, it would be good at this point to discuss your plan of action with someone from higher management. This step will ensure you have someone already supporting you when the time comes for senior management to approve the draft policy.

Draft the policy

The policy states your company's position on HIV/AIDS. It can be a free-standing policy or an addendum to an existing policy. It should include a general statement of your business' policy and position in relation to HIV plus specific guidelines and procedures regarding how issues are to be addressed. It is best to involve representatives of both management and staff in drafting the policy. The draft should be carefully reviewed and approved by senior executives and, if applicable, the labour union.

Your workplace policy on HIV should address essential issues, including:

- Compliance with the laws and culture of the country
- Prevention of discrimination against people with HIV or AIDS
- Expected behaviour of staff towards an HIV positive co-worker
- Services, such as education or medical, that you will make available
- Ensuring confidentiality and privacy
- Benefits that can be expected by an employee (health benefits, sick leave, etc.)
- Accommodation of employees with HIV and acceptable work performance standards
- First aid practices and “universal precautions”
- Conformity with other current policies and practices within the organisation
- Balancing the needs of the business, management, co-workers and the individual
- List of resources, both within and outside the company, for information and services and HIV-prevention education in the workplace.

Some national and international hotels and restaurants have already developed HIV workplace policies that can serve as models (see sample policies in Appendix 2).

Obtain senior level endorsement
In some cases, the appropriate level for approval may be the CEO and/or the Board of Directors. Having an HIV expert from a government or non-profit organisation speak during the meeting in which the plan is presented can lend authority and credibility to an HIV policy and prevention education initiative. If Board members or senior management are not already familiar with the challenges of HIV in the workplace, such a combined presentation could build strong backing for the business plan.

Disseminate the policy
Disseminate information about the policy to your employees both through your regular staff communications and as you implement your HIV/AIDS prevention education programme. To be successfully implemented, management, employees, and labour leaders must fully understand your policy as well as the importance and content of the education programme. If all employees understand the issues, you will maximise the ability to administer your policy with confidence and effectiveness.

Participation of management and staff in policy formulation is a key factor for success in its implementation.

2. HOW TO PROVIDE HIV-PREVENTION EDUCATION IN THE WORKPLACE

Assign responsibility
Your education programme can be conducted in many different ways ranging from formal presentations by outside experts to distributing brochures. It should be led by a person who is willing to champion the programme and make it work. Someone inside the company may have the required skills or could be trained to facilitate discussions and answer questions about HIV/AIDS. Alternatively, an opinion leader in the community could be invited to conduct small group meetings. An advantage to choosing a facilitator from outside your hotel or restaurant is that your employees may be more comfortable discussing sensitive AIDS related issues with a neutral party. In either situation, the person should be respected and persuasive.
Your workers will learn best from peer educators — people belonging to similar cultural groups, acceptable to and preferably selected by their co-workers, and properly trained. Allow for open discussion, and cover a wide range of issues. Whenever possible, include the suggestions of your employees in programme content.

**Use existing resources**

Gather information and materials that most closely match your company’s needs. Provide only informational materials to employees that guarantee accurate, up-to-date information on HIV/AIDS, on combating stigmatisation and rejection of people living with HIV, and on promoting safe sex behaviours. Most public health facilities and community non-governmental organisations are excellent resources for such information, as are national AIDS programmes (see Part V).

**Set the agenda**

The programme content should include:

- Basic facts about HIV/AIDS: the difference between HIV and AIDS; the ways HIV is and is not transmitted; the relation of STDs to HIV/AIDS
- Company policy: compliance with laws and culture of the country; benefits and services for employees, especially those with HIV/AIDS; confidentiality of medical condition; where to go for confidential information
- Prevention methods: condom use; other safer sex methods
- Relating to people with HIV/AIDS: at work, at home, in the community
- Other important issues: the risks of drugs and alcohol use; human sexuality.

**Include ways to obtain feedback on the programme**

Since the programme deals with sensitive issues, it is helpful to know how your staff is reacting. You could build an evaluation form into the activities that will tell you how things are working and if adjustments need to be made.

**Suggestions for training process**

For a programme to succeed, it is strongly recommended that it:

- Be implemented in company time
- Be offered in small group meetings
- Include the participation of top-level management
- Be mandatory for all staff
- Allow time for discussion and questions
- Be reinforced periodically by regular follow-up meetings, and
- Monitor employee knowledge through pre- and post-test surveys.
Suggestions for training methods
Consider the following ways in delivering your educational messages:

- Use members of your staff as peer educators or training facilitators
- Explain your company’s guidelines to all your employees
- Distribute a brochure or pamphlet about HIV and AIDS to all employees
- Show a videotape, and discuss through questions and answers
- Invite a person with HIV or AIDS, or an expert from your local health department or HIV organisation, to give a presentation to your employees
- Encourage employees to learn more about HIV and AIDS on their own
- Invite other companies to share their experiences; and
- Provide opportunities for employees to ask questions.

Openness to concerns of and suggestions from your staff will make your education programme more relevant.

3. HOW TO HAVE FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

Assign responsibilities
Depending on the size and resources of your business, fair employment practice issues relating to HIV can be addressed by your current staff person in charge of personnel issues with the assistance of outside “experts.” As with any personnel policy issues, that person will need to work with top management.

Review your existing policies
HIV policies need to be integrated into existing company practices and services. Do you have other workplace policies or guidelines in place? Look at these policies and see how you can include concerns on HIV/AIDS. These would cover guidelines on disability, absenteeism, sick leave, and other benefit schemes. Building your policy around established practices leads to consistency, understanding, and acceptance.

Gather additional information
You may already have completed this step when you were drafting your overall company policy (Section B.1.). If possible, ask other hotels and restaurants that have adjusted their personnel policies what their own experiences have been. Ask your local HIV organisation whether they have any materials specific to personnel concerns (see Part V).

Identify issues, compare policies, determine gaps
Examine existing company policies as they compare to other policies you have gathered. Identify whether and where there may be gaps in your company’s policies. Are there strengths in other companies’ policies that can be incorporated into yours? If your company has a labour union, you may consider involving them in this process. You are now ready to draft your proposed revisions.
**Obtain endorsement of senior management**

When your policy recommendations on HIV/AIDS are ready, discuss these with your superiors as you would any similar policy guidelines. Should your top management request more information about any of your recommendations, you might share helpful resources you have used throughout this process.

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**Communicate personnel policies to all employees**

When company policies have been completed or programmes initiated, your employees should be informed about these changes as part of your HIV-prevention education programme. This can be achieved through the usual methods you use to communicate internal information to your employees.

> A work environment that provides for fair personnel policies creates mutual trust between management and employees.
Beyond the Workplace: Community Involvement

This part of the guide suggests actions your business can take that go beyond the workplace, such as:

- Providing services and/or information to your guests and customers
- Educating employee families about HIV and AIDS
- Community action to slow the spread of HIV
- Providing resources to efforts in your community or country.

Up to this point, this guide has focused primarily on practical suggestions that will help you to take immediate steps to protect your employees and business. Your hospitality business might also consider the long-term effect HIV/AIDS is likely to have on your community. This issue becomes especially critical if the community is your source for recruiting your workforce.

In this light, your business might also consider how it could contribute to slowing the spread of HIV by supporting programmes in the community. Participation in the local community beyond the workplace can improve your business image as a company that is co-operative, cares about citizenship, and is willing to make a social investment.

In addition, businesses that take visible leads in HIV and AIDS education in the community can contribute to the effort to prevent the spread of HIV by setting an example for other businesses and community institutions (including religious groups, schools, and government institutions). Increasing numbers of hospitality-related businesses have taken the lead not only in creating internal HIV-prevention education programmes but also in contributing to external community HIV-prevention education efforts — and receiving praise for community leadership in doing so.

**FOLLOWING ARE SOME WAYS TO BE ACTIVE IN YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY:**

**Providing services and/or information to your guests and customers**

Once your restaurant or hotel staff members have learned about HIV and AIDS, they can better serve your customers and guests who may have been adversely affected by this epidemic. In the same way you provide HIV and AIDS information to your own employees, you may wish to provide similar information to your business customers. If you decide to extend services to your hotel or restaurant guests, such as HIV/AIDS information materials, co-ordinate this effort among senior management, your own medical staff, and other HIV/AIDS professionals outside your company.
**Educating your employees’ families about HIV and AIDS**

When you educate your workers about HIV, you are also contributing to their family’s knowledge about this important issue. If possible, your company education programme can include specific information that can be taken home to family members. Companies can also help employees and family members learn about HIV/AIDS prevention by supporting and encouraging attendance at programmes of an outside organisation. Obviously, the particular qualities of your business and its resources must be considered in designing and undertaking such a project.

**COMMUNITY ACTION TO SLOW THE SPREAD OF HIV**

A company can be involved in its community through a variety of ways:

**Sharing resources** — Many hotels and restaurants have donated cash, equipment, and other resources to organisations engaged in HIV/AIDS. Some have given in-kind assistance, such as free use of their facilities or equipment.

**Working with public or private health services** — Linking workplace programmes with public or private health services and other organisations in the community has resulted in effective programmes as well as benefits for the companies concerned. Such links are also useful when companies do not possess adequate resources. In this circumstance, joining with a non-governmental organisation or public health service can contribute to the development of an effective programme.

**Building a collective response through partnerships with the wider community** — Some of the most successful HIV/AIDS prevention programmes have been those that have joint activities with outside organisations. These collaborations keep the programme exciting and develop enormous good will with the community. Since hotels and restaurants are in the service business, partnerships with suppliers and other organisations will give you higher visibility in the community and project a more positive company image.

In a growing number of countries, companies have formed business coalitions to pool resources and help each other better respond to crises in the workplace and communities. For example in 1995, the Youth Career Development Programme was launched in Thailand as a collaboration between the Pan Pacific Hotel Bangkok and the Office of UNICEF Thailand’s Programme for Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances, and is endorsed by the IH&RA. The training programme was designed as a preventive measure against commercial sexual exploitation of young girls. Through a variety of empowering activities, it focuses on providing career skills in hotel hospitality for at-risk adolescent girls from Thailand’s North and Northeast regions.

**Alliances with your business partners** — A business can use all of its relationships to benefit the local community. One company with facilities world-wide established a partnership with two of its suppliers in Nepal and India to provide HIV-prevention education to their workplaces and to the surrounding communities. Further alliances have been established with the public sector to reach police, bus drivers, school children, and others. Through these relationships it has been possible to create a diverse and energetic prevention campaign.
Providing resources to efforts in your community or country

As a business leader, your company also can provide resources to help your community respond to the challenges of HIV/AIDS. You can establish volunteer outreach services and encourage senior management to participate as an example to your line staff. Possibilities include:

■ Helping to plan your community’s response to HIV/AIDS, working with local coalitions, planning committees, town meetings, or civic and social clubs

■ Providing local organisations with services; for example, you may provide temporary assistance or offer stationary, printing services, clerical services, office equipment, access to copying machines, and use of your facilities for meetings

■ Participating in or supporting education programmes offered by local schools and other community organisations

■ Volunteering for local HIV and AIDS-related programmes and activities; you or your employees may donate time to help implement programmes or provide direct assistance to people with HIV or AIDS

■ Ear-marking some of your business’ charitable funds to HIV and AIDS-related community programmes, and

■ Sponsoring or participating in AIDS-related community activities.
Conclusion

Because HIV/AIDS will seriously impact on economic growth, the business sector becomes a major stakeholder. Your action, or lack of it, to address the ways this disease affects your hotel or restaurant, will make a difference to your company's immediate and long-term viability.

This Guide is a tool for you to pursue a “win-win” situation. Its principles are based on achieving mutual benefits for you and for your employees that will ultimately lead to a sustainable, harmonious, and productive relationship. Your involvement in HIV/AIDS most certainly fits into this framework.

You only need to get started.
PART V

Who Can Help?

This part of the Guide suggests people and organisations who are available and willing to help businesses address HIV.

Because this guide has been designed as a general resource intended for managers in hospitality establishments all over the world, the exact contact information of these resources are not given. Generally speaking, however, there are several kinds of organisations which can help you:

NATIONAL AND LOCAL AIDS AND PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANISATIONS

Including:

- Your country’s “National AIDS Programme” (most countries now have one)
- Your local Ministry of Public Health or other government health office
- Local HIV and AIDS service organisations, some of whom can provide basic HIV education programmes as well as advice, and
- Local Red Cross and Red Crescent offices; many provide a wide variety of HIV education materials and professionally trained staff.

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT OR LABOUR ORGANISATIONS

- Your Ministry of Labour, particularly the unit of occupational safety and health.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, BUSINESS COALITIONS, OR OTHER BUSINESSES THAT HAVE ALREADY DEVELOPED HIV/AIDS PROGRAMMES

Some countries have existing organisations with experience in working with the private sector on HIV/AIDS. Or, there may be other businesses in your community which have addressed HIV/AIDS and can share their own workplace policies and programmes with you.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS ADDRESSING HEALTH OR LABOUR ISSUES

Including:

- Your national UNAIDS office (Joint United National Programme on HIV/AIDS) or its Intercountry Team located in your region
- The ILO field office in your country.

INTERNET SITES

The Internet contains HIV-related information as well as material specific to HIV and the workplace. Country-specific materials may be adapted for business and community use.
subject: AIDS information and employee responsibility

policy

1. To deal appropriately and humanely with persons infected with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) that causes Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

2. To prevent or minimise exposure to HIV infection through educational programmes.

procedures

1. HIV/AIDS testing will not be part of the pre/post employment screening procedure, nor will it be included in the annual physical examinations.

2. An employee infected with AIDS will be treated like any other individual with disability in regards to job applications, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions or privileges of employment.

3. An employee who is HIV infected is not required to inform the hotel; however, if they chose to do so, the hotel will treat each case with strictest confidence and privacy.

4. Employees are encouraged to seek assistance from established community support groups for medical treatment and counselling services. Information about these resources can be requested confidentially through the Training or Personnel Departments.

5. An HIV infected employee will be allowed to continue working provided that they can meet the hotel's acceptable work performance standards, and medical authorities indicate that their condition and presence at work pose no threats to themselves or other employees.

6. Reasonable accommodations will be made for employees with HIV/AIDS unless it would impose an undue hardship on the business.

7. The hotel will provide ongoing educational and training programmes on the subject of HIV/AIDS for the benefit of all employees. Being educated will help prevent the spread of AIDS, pacify employee fears and concerns resulting from being misinformed and encourage appropriate health practices.

8. Attendance at all HIV/AIDS related educational programmes is mandatory for all employees at all levels whenever possible.
POLICY

This document explains the approach and procedure to be used when dealing with someone affected with “Human Immunodeficiency Virus” (HIV) that causes “Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome” (AIDS). These guidelines emphasise the fact that AIDS is not transmitted in the workplace through casual contact such as shaking hands, breathing the same air, sneezing, coughing, sharing eating utensils or using the same restroom facilities.

CONSIDERATIONS

In order to assist and to protect human rights and give moral support to the employees. The Mansion Kempinski Bangkok will not permit any employee with a life-threatening illness to be discriminated against based solely on their illness or disability.

PROCEDURE

1. HIV/AIDS testing will not be part of the pre-employment testing, but it will be included in the annual physical examinations on a voluntary, confidential basis.

2. An employee infected with HIV will be treated like any other individual in regards to job application, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other conditions and privileges of employment.

3. An employee who is infected is not required to inform the hotel. However, if they chose to do so, the hotel will treat each case confidentially. Employees are also eligible to take 30 days sick leave per year, if validated by doctor’s certificate (as per labour law regulation).

4. Employees who are infected may seek help or information through the Human Resources Department or directly with Thailand Business Coalition on AIDS regarding clear understanding of their illness or recommendation of an organisation that offers supportive services.
INTRODUCTION
Recent events, involving accidents with hypodermic needles, have shown a need for a Guidance Note to Management on HIV infection, Hepatitis B and to some extent Body Spillages.

Injuries from needle punctures are occurring in the following situations:
- Cleaning soft furnishings
- Emptying waste bins
- Cleaning behind pipes
- Cleaning up discarded needles, e.g., in light wells
- During threats of violence
- Maintaining WC cisterns

This Guidance Note has been drafted with assistance from the Public Health Laboratory Service, Health and Safety Executive and the Microbiology Department at the London Clinic. Paisner & Co (Group Lawyers) have advised.

Risk of Infection
Staff must be trained that the risk of contracting HIV infection and/or Hepatitis B from body fluids or a needle stick injury, needs to be controlled by following the sensible precautions within this Guidance Note.

It must be understood that these organisms survive for only a few hours away from the human body. The risk of infection is small, but cannot be ignored.

Action to be taken
- If possible, discretely identify the person from where the needle or fluid originated. Pass that information on to your supervisor. With medical assistance, that person must be interviewed and steps taken for that person to provide a specimen which will exclude or confirm the carriage of blood borne viruses.
- Whenever a discarded syringe or needle is found, the articles should not be touched but telephone contact must be made with the Head Housekeeper / Supervisor / Security Manager for safe disposal.
- If the items are not easily accessible, for instance in WC cisterns or behind waste drainpipes, metal or plastic tongs should be utilised.
- In all cases, protective rubber gloves must be worn.
- Specialised “Sharp” containers are in each hotel for the storage of such items. These “Sharp” containers should be kept in a safe place and disposed of through your local authority as detailed later.
If the skin does become punctured, pressure must be immediately applied to encourage bleeding, the wound washed copiously with warm tap water and a dressing applied (on no account should the wound be sucked). The patient **MUST** seek medical advice without delay. The needle or other sharp object should be kept in a container, as it may need to be examined later.

When dealing with waste body fluids, such as blood, vomit, faeces and urine, it is necessary to use “Body Spillage Packs”. These are obtainable from your first aid supplier. Such body spillage packs are an excellent system for the covering, protection and safe disposal of waste body fluids. They include an apron, gloves, absorbent deodorising powder, a disinfectant and spatula.

House keeping staff must be trained to empty rubbish bins by lifting out the inner plastic bag or emptying the contents into a larger, stronger bag. Broken glass must always be double wrapped.

Neither HIV or Hepatitis B virus can be transmitted through food by infected food handlers.

First Aiders must always ensure that a protective mask / face shield is used when giving resuscitation. This prevents contact with the casualty’s blood / vomit. Ensure that your face mask incorporates an anti-vomit valve.

**Follow up Action**

Any incident involving a needle sticky injury must be reported to the Supervisor of Manager and recorded in the Accident Book. The incident must also be reported to nominated insurers on the injured person’s report form. Staff who are injured in this way should be encouraged to immediately consult their own GP for advice and counselling on this subject.

The clearance of body waste must be reported to the Senior Manager. At an early date, discuss with your Local Authority how they wish you to dispose of waste material and “Sharp” containers. Local Authorities vary in their waste disposal systems. The colour of specialised waste bags varies between the Authorities. Spare bags must be retained at the hotel for such disposal.

Information is always readily available from the Public Health Laboratory Service telephone number 0181 200 4400.

**AIDS**

AIDS is the illness associated with long-standing human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

HIV infection may be transmitted through intimate sexual contact with an infected person or by drug abusers sharing needles and getting infected blood into their bloodstream. There is no risk of contracting the infection through normal, working association with other employees or customers.

Should a member of your staff be receiving treatment for HIV infection, they may need assistance or further advice. In which case you should ask them to be interviewed by your Personnel Officer.

**This guidance note is to enhance a greater level of protection. However, each incident must be treated on its own merits, using advice as noted above.**

**This is confidential matter and should not be discussed with others.**
COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT HIV/AIDS

Introduction

Sometimes employees may wish to know more, but do not feel comfortable approaching their employer with private issues. Even if such questions are not asked explicitly by your employees, the following questions and answers may help to address issues of concern. Remember, if you cannot answer a question, the best advice is to say “I don’t know, but I will assist you in finding the answer”. Don’t make up an answer - faking it does more harm than good. Treat a tough question as a chance to show the questioner how to get information about HIV infection and AIDS independently. Since HIV/AIDS is a relatively new infection, things are still being learned about it.

Q. What is AIDS?
A. AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, a condition in which the body’s immune system breaks down. When the system fails, a person with AIDS can develop a variety of life-threatening illnesses and infections.

Q. What is HIV?
A. HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus, the virus which causes AIDS.

Q. Will you get AIDS if you are infected with HIV?
A. The time between infection with HIV and the onset of AIDS can vary greatly. About half of the people with HIV develop AIDS within 10 years. The other half continue to live and work for an indefinite period of time. When AIDS does develop, the severity of the HIV-related illness(es) will differ from person to person.

Q. How can you become infected with HIV?
A. You can become infected with HIV in the following ways:

- By unprotected penetrative sexual intercourse, whether heterosexual or homosexual
- From an HIV-infected mother to woman to her foetus or infant before, during, or shortly after birth through breastfeeding
- Through HIV-infected blood, blood products, or transplanted organs or tissues, for example by direct blood transfusion
- Through the use of improperly sterilised needles and syringes that have been in contact with infected blood.

Specific blood tests can show evidence of HIV infection. You can be infected with HIV and have no symptoms at all but you can pass the virus to anyone with whom you have unprotected sex or share needles or syringes.

Q. What is the risk of getting HIV from sexual intercourse?
A. HIV is transmitted through unprotected penetrative sexual intercourse. The more sexual partners you have, the greater your chances of becoming infected. Many infected people have no symptoms and have not been tested - they can pass the virus on to anyone with whom they have sex. Condoms have been shown to help prevent HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases. They should be used every time you have sex - vaginal, anal or oral.
Q. What is the risk of a baby getting infected with HIV?
A. A woman infected with HIV can pass the virus on to her baby during pregnancy, while giving birth, or, rarely, when breast-feeding. If a woman is infected before or during pregnancy, her child has about one chance in four of being born with HIV. If you plan to have a baby and are concerned about HIV, you should first seek counselling and testing to determine your HIV status before you decide to go ahead.

Q. What is the risk of getting HIV from sharing needles?
A. Shared needles, including those used to inject steroids, for tattooing or ear-piercing, may transmit HIV and other germs. Go to a qualified person who uses brand new or sterile equipment. Don’t be shy about asking questions – responsible technicians will explain their safety measures.

Q. Can you get HIV from blood transfusions?
A. Yes, you can. Donated blood is now tested for evidence of HIV but in the past some people became infected with HIV from blood transfusions. In many countries this risk has practically been eliminated through careful screening of blood units and blood products. Unfortunately, not all countries have established effective national blood screening programmes. You should seek the advice of local health authorities in your area to determine the level of blood safety and if necessary, discuss ways to help ensure a safer blood supply. You cannot be infected by giving blood at a blood bank.

Q. Is HIV difficult to get?
A. You can’t “catch” it like a cold or flu. You cannot get it from:
- Everyday contact with infected people at school, work, home
- Clothes, phones, toilet seats, office equipment
- Cutlery and crockery that someone who is infected with the virus has used
- Mosquito bites, bedbugs, lice, flies, or other insects
- Coughs or sneezes, sweat or tears
- Eating in restaurants (even if a restaurant worker has AIDS or carries the AIDS virus).

Q. What do I do if I think I am infected with HIV?
A. You need to talk to someone about getting an HIV test. That person might be a parent, doctor, or other health care provider, or someone who works at an HIV or STD testing centre. Find out where you can go in your area to get counselling about an HIV test.

Q. What is an HIV test?
A. The only way to tell if you have been infected with HIV is by taking an HIV-antibody blood test. The test determines antibodies – substances on cells produced by the body’s immune system in response to infection. It is effective about 6-12 weeks after a person is exposed to HIV. It should be done through a testing site, doctor’s office, or relevant clinic. It is important that you discuss what the test may mean with a qualified health professional both before and after it is done.

Q. Is the test foolproof?
A. Not totally. Sometimes “false” negatives occur during the 6-12 week window after exposure during which a person infected with HIV has levels of antibodies which are not detectable. The test determines the antibody status of the individual on the day and the time of the test. A negative result does not mean a person is immune to HIV, especially if they expose themselves to infection at a later date.
Q. Can HIV be cured?
A. Today there are promising new medical treatments that can postpone many of the illnesses associated with AIDS. Scientists are becoming optimistic that HIV infection will someday be controllable. In the meantime, people who get medical care to monitor and treat their HIV infection can carry on with their lives, including their jobs, for longer than ever before.

Q. Can I catch AIDS from a fellow worker?
A. AIDS is caused by a virus that does not survive well outside the body. You won’t get AIDS by working closely with a co-worker who has the disease. Nor will you get it by having coffee, lunch, or sharing toilet facilities with that person. People put themselves at risk in what they do in their personal life, not what they do at work.

Q. Can I get AIDS through guest contact - a handshake, coughing, sneezing?
A. You cannot get AIDS from casual contact such as shaking hands, coughing and sneezing. Casual social contact should not be confused with casual sexual contact, which is a major cause of the spread of the AIDS virus.

Q. Can cooks, caterers, servers, waiters, or bartenders transmit AIDS through food and beverages?
A. Because the AIDS virus is not transmitted in food, people who work with food should not be restricted from work because they have HIV or AIDS, unless they have open sores or skin lesions or illnesses (for which any other food handler would also be restricted). All food service workers, including those with AIDS, should observe good personal hygiene and sanitary food-handling procedures. They should take particular care to avoid injury to their hands while preparing food. Sanitation guidelines require that any food that becomes contaminated with blood from a cut be thrown away.

Q. Can AIDS be spread by washing the dishes of someone with AIDS?
A. AIDS has not been contracted from sharing or washing dishes or any other eating utensils.

Q. Can any of my ordinary housekeeping duties put me at risk of getting AIDS?
A. The Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, USA states that no changes in currently recommended sterilisation, or housekeeping strategies are required. Ordinary methods of cleaning and disinfecting for urine, stool and vomit which are used for non-infected people are adequate for people who have AIDS or are carrying the AIDS virus. However, when cleaning blood or other body fluid spills, disposable gloves should be worn and hands washed after removing them.

Q. How should I handle blood or other body fluid spills?
A. Spills of blood or other body fluids should be cleaned with soap and water or a household detergent. Individuals cleaning up such spills should wear disposable gloves. A disinfectant or bleach solution (diluted one in ten with water) should be used to wipe to area after cleaning. NOTE: It is not necessary to use bleach for everything, only when there is a substantial visible spill of blood or body fluid.

Q. Can AIDS be transmitted through bed linen?
A. The risk of disease transmission through soiled linen is negligible. Individuals cleaning up any body fluid spills should wear disposable gloves and wash their hands after removing them. Laundry cycles commonly used in hotels are adequate to de-contaminate linens.
Appendix 3

TEN PRINCIPLES FOR MANAGING THE CHALLENGES OF HIV/AIDS IN THE WORKPLACE

1. People with HIV/AIDS are entitled to the same rights, benefits, and opportunities as people with other serious or life-threatening illnesses.

2. Employment practices must, at a minimum, comply with existing national laws and policy regulations.

3. Employment practices should be based on the scientific and epidemiological evidence that people with HIV/AIDS do not pose a risk of transmitting the virus to co-workers through ordinary workplace contact.

4. The highest levels of management should unequivocally endorse non-discriminatory employment practices and information and education programmes about HIV/AIDS.

5. All business owners and managers should communicate their HIV/AIDS policies and practices to workers in simple, clear, and unambiguous terms.

6. All business owners and managers should provide employees with neutral, accurate, and up-to-date information about risk-reduction in their personal lives.

7. All business owners, managers, and co-workers must protect the confidentiality of employee medical and insurance information.

8. To prevent work disruption and rejection by co-workers of an employee with HIV/AIDS, all business owners and managers should establish and publicise an HIV policy and provide a long-term HIV-prevention education programme for their employees.

9. Business owners and managers should not require HIV/AIDS screening as part of pre-employment recruitment or general workplace physical examinations.

10. In special occupational settings where there exists a potential risk of exposure to HIV (i.e., in certain health care settings), all owners and managers should provide: (a) specific, ongoing HIV-prevention education and training; (b) the equipment required to conduct legally required infection control procedures, and (c) an HIV policy designed to ensure compliance with rules and regulations.
Appendix 4

BASIC FIRST AID AND HIV/AIDS - UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS
(Developed by the World Health Organization)

1. Wherever there is a risk of contact with body fluids, rubber/PVC gloves should be used for treatment of patients.

2. If blood or body fluids get on to the skin, it should be thoroughly washed with soap and water. Bleach should not be used on the skin.

3. Where heavy contamination is likely to be encountered, additional protection can be provided by the use of a PVC apron. Eye protection should also be worn.

4. Where mouth-to-mouth resuscitation is required, plastic airways (Laedal) may be worn to reduce the risks of contamination from direct oral contact.

5. Cuts or grazes you may have should be covered with a waterproof dressing until scab forms.

6. Spilt blood should be cleaned up, preferably by the person it came from, with strong household bleach diluted 1 in 10 with water. For absolute safety, other body fluids should be treated in the same way.

7. Tissues, dressings and other contaminated materials should be tied up in heavy plastic bags/bin liners for disposal by incineration.

8. Soiled sheets and clothing should be washed separately at a high temperature setting. Rubber/PVC gloves should be worn when handling soiled articles.

9. Non-disposable instruments or receptacles used for treatment should be sterilised before re-use. Crockery and cutlery should be washed in hot water with detergent.

10. Disposable needles and other “sharps” should be placed in appropriate containers which should be safely disposed of. Razors should not be reused.
THE JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) was established in January 1996. UNAIDS brings together the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the World Bank. It is the first programme of its kind in the UN system: a small initiative with a large outreach capacity and the potential to leverage significant resources and action through the creation of strategic partnerships.

The co-sponsors of UNAIDS provide complementary mandates and multsectoral expertise, ranging from education and socio-economic development to women's reproductive health. They are committed to joint planning and action, giving UNAIDS a "co-operative advantage" that translates into greater synergy and efficiency. Benefits include more effective advocacy, more efficient use of UN system resources through the sharing of costs, and greater coherence in UN support for national and transnational AIDS programmes.

The UNAIDS mission states: “As the main advocate for global action on HIV/AIDS, UNAIDS will lead, strengthen and support an expanded response aimed at preventing the transmission of HIV, providing care and support, reducing the vulnerability of individuals and communities to HIV/AIDS, and alleviating the impact of the epidemic.”

To achieve its mission, UNAIDS supports the principles of:

- **A long-term response.** HIV/AIDS requires a long-term sustainable response, including providing a coping capacity on the part of individuals and communities. UNAIDS helps to strengthen national capacity for action, ranging from prevention and care to impact alleviation.

- **Participation and partnership.** A multisectional response to HIV/AIDS can best be achieved through partnership that includes the private sector, and civil society organisations.

- **Complementarity.** Rather than undertaking what can be or is already being done by others, UNAIDS attempts to facilitate those efforts and to fill gaps in action and research.

In the context of these principles, promoting the involvement of private companies in fighting the spread of HIV/AIDS is a major priority for UNAIDS. Companies and business organisations at all levels have their own interests in confronting the epidemic. They have unique resources and talents to be deployed in partnership with the public and non-profit sectors. Their contribution will greatly strengthen the global response to HIV/AIDS.

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THE INTERNATIONAL HOTEL & RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1947 as a club for prominent hoteliers, the International Hotel & Restaurant Association (IH&RA) is today the only organisation exclusively devoted to promoting and defending the interests of the hotel and restaurant industry world-wide. The Association forms a global network of independent and chain operators, national associations, hospitality suppliers and educational centres in the hotel and restaurant industry. It represents over 300,000 hotels and some 500,000 restaurants in more than 150 countries.

The mission of the IH&RA is to be the voice of the world hotel and restaurant industry, with a global role in representing, protecting, promoting and informing the industry to enable its members to achieve their business objectives.

The three strategic objectives of the Association are:

- **Representation** of the industry at all relevant bodies
- **Visioning the future** of the industry through high level meetings and think-tanks
- **Dissemination of information** to members on key issues, trends and events impacting the industry.

Through its “Visioning the Future” programme, the IH&RA plays a leadership role in helping hotel and restaurant professionals identify trends and strategic issues that will shape the future of the hospitality industry.

The IH&RA also actively encourages best practice and self-regulation on issues as diverse as the environment, training, marketing and accommodation of smoking and non-smoking guests. It runs a series of programmes aimed at building social responsibility within the hospitality business - including its campaign against the commercial sexual exploitation of children - in recognition of the industry’s potential in driving these issues forward.

The IH&RA endeavours to be entirely collaborative and delivers its programmes through partnership with a number of international and regional organisations including the International Hotels Environment Initiative (IHEI), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) the World Health Organisation (WHO), the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). Its latest partnership with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has led to the publication of this Guide.

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The global spread of HIV/AIDS world-wide has led to it being designated a global epidemic. Infection with HIV is having an increasingly serious impact on personal lives, society and the economy. All business communities therefore need to respond to the many challenges of AIDS.

The importance of health issues, such as HIV/AIDS, and their potential impact on the hospitality industry has been underlined in IH&RA research and high level Think-Tanks on human resources and safety and security.

By confronting HIV/AIDS directly and responsibly, hoteliers and restaurateurs join the many businesses around the world already leading the fight against HIV/AIDS by developing effective workplace policies and supportive environments. Good business decisions depend on accurate and adequate information. “The Challenge of HIV/AIDS in the Workplace: A Guide for the Hospitality Industry” has been prepared as a reference tool for hospitality businesses of all sizes to aid them in making such decisions.