

THE GFA HIV/AIDS POLICY

GFA Consulting Group GmbH recognizes the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and its impact on the workplace. Therefore, GFA supports national efforts to reduce the spread of infection and minimize the impact of the disease. The purpose of the HIV/AIDS Workplace Program is to ensure a consistent and equitable approach to the prevention of HIV/AIDS among employees and their families, and to the management of the consequences of HIV/AIDS. This policy complies with existing laws on discrimination, working conditions, health and safety, and with the ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work.

► General principles

GFA Consulting Group does not discriminate or tolerate discrimination against employees or job applicants on any grounds, including HIV status. While GFA Consulting Group recognizes that there are circumstances unique to HIV infection, this program rests on the principle that HIV infection and AIDS should be treated like any other serious condition or illness that may affect employees. It takes into account the fact that employees with HIV may live full and active lives for a number of years. The company's commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy work environment for all employees is based on the recognition that HIV is not transmitted by casual contact.

► Specific provisions – Stigma, discrimination and rights

Rights of employees who are HIV-positive

HIV-positive employees will be protected against discrimination, victimization or harassment. Standard company disciplinary and grievance procedures will apply equally to all employees, as will the provision of information and education about HIV and AIDS.

Employment opportunities and termination of employment

No employee should suffer adverse consequences, whether dismissal or denial of appropriate alternative employment opportunities, merely on the basis of HIV infection.

Testing

GFA rejects HIV testing as a prerequisite for recruitment, access to training or promotion. However, the company promotes and facilitates access to voluntary confidential testing with counseling (VCT) for all employees, and provides the employees with relevant information, such as the addresses of centers for testing and counseling.

Confidentiality

GFA recognizes the sensitive issues that surround HIV/AIDS and undertakes to treat matters in a discreet and private manner. Should an employee with HIV reveal his or her status to his or her superior, GFA will keep the identity of this person confidential.

► Specific provisions – Awareness raising and education

GFA provides its employees with access to appropriate awareness raising and education material on HIV/AIDS, enabling staff members to protect themselves and others against infection by HIV.

GFA keeps appropriate information, education and communication (IEC) material on hand for employees and their families. The IEC material contains basic information on HIV/AIDS, ways of transmission, prevention and non-stigmatization.

GFA gives employees reasonable time off to participate in trainings on HIV/AIDS awareness raising and education.

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► Care and Support for employees and their families

The promotion of employees' well-being

GFA will treat employees who are infected or otherwise affected by HIV/AIDS with empathy and care. The company will provide all reasonable assistance, including counseling, sick leave, family responsibility leave, and information regarding the virus and its effects.

Work performance and reasonable accommodation

It is the policy of GFA to respond to the changing health status of employees by making reasonable accommodation in the workplace for those infected with HIV. Employees may continue to work as long as they are able to perform their duties safely and in accordance with accepted performance standards. If an employee with AIDS is unable to perform his or her tasks adequately, the superior resolves the problem in accordance with the company's standard procedure on poor performance or ill health.

Benefits

Employees living with HIV/AIDS will not be put at a disadvantage in comparison to staff members affected by another serious illness or condition as far as statutory and company benefits, workplace compensation, where appropriate, as well as other available services are concerned.

Healthcare

All staff of GFA in Germany is insured in accordance with national labor laws. GFA also helps employees living with HIV/AIDS find appropriate medical and counseling services, professional support and self-help groups if required. Reasonable time off will be given for counseling and treatment.

GFA management and employees pledge full support to this policy.

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