

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL STATUTES

§ 130A-148. Laboratory tests for AIDS virus infection

(a) For the protection of the public health, the Commission shall adopt rules establishing standards for the certification of laboratories to perform tests for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) virus infection. The rules shall address, but not be limited to, proficiency testing, record maintenance, adequate staffing and confirmatory testing. Tests for AIDS virus infection shall be performed only by laboratories certified pursuant to this subsection and only on specimens submitted by a physician licensed to practice medicine. This subsection shall not apply to testing performed solely for research purposes under the approval of an institutional review board.

(b) Prior to obtaining consent for donation of blood, semen, tissue or organs, a facility or institution seeking to obtain blood, tissue, semen or organs for transfusion, implantation, transplantation or administration shall provide the potential donor with information about AIDS virus transmission, and information about who should not donate.

(c) No blood or semen may be transfused or administered when blood from the donor has not been tested or has tested positive for AIDS virus infection by a standard laboratory test.

(d) No tissue or organs may be transplanted or implanted when blood from the donor has not been tested or has tested positive for AIDS virus infection by a standard laboratory test unless consent is obtained from the recipient, or from the recipient's guardian or a responsible adult relative of the recipient if the recipient is not competent to give such consent.

(e) Any facility or institution that obtains or transfuses, implants, transplants, or administers blood, tissue, semen, or organs shall be immune from civil or criminal liability that otherwise might be incurred or imposed for transmission of AIDS virus infection if the provisions specified in subsections (b), (c), and (d) of this section have been complied with.

(f) Specimens may be tested for AIDS virus infection for research or epidemiologic purposes without consent of the person from whom the specimen is obtained if all personal identifying information is removed from the specimen prior to testing.

(g) Persons tested for AIDS virus infection shall be notified of test results and counseled appropriately. This subsection shall not apply to tests performed by or for entities governed by Article 39 of Chapter 58 of the General Statutes, the Insurance Information and Privacy Protection Act, provided that said entities comply with the notice requirements thereof.

(h) The Commission may authorize or require laboratory tests for AIDS virus infection when necessary to protect the public health.

A test for AIDS virus infection may also be performed upon any person solely by order of a physician licensed to practice medicine in North Carolina who is rendering medical services to that person when, in the reasonable medical judgment of the physician, the test is necessary for the appropriate treatment of the person; however, the person shall be informed that a test for AIDS virus infection is to be conducted, and shall be given clear opportunity to refuse to submit to the test prior to it being conducted, and further if informed consent is not obtained, the test may not be performed. A physician may order a test for AIDS virus infection without the informed consent of the person tested if the person is incapable of providing or incompetent to provide such consent, others authorized to give consent for the person are not available, and testing is necessary for appropriate diagnosis or care of the person.

An unemancipated minor may be tested for AIDS virus infection without the consent of the parent or legal guardian of the minor when the parent or guardian has refused to consent to such testing and there is reasonable suspicion that the minor has AIDS virus or HIV infection or that the child has been sexually abused.

(i) Except as provided in this section, no test for AIDS virus infection shall be required, performed or used to determine suitability for continued employment, housing or public services, or for the use of places of public accommodation as defined in G.S. 168A-3(8), or public transportation.

Further it shall be unlawful to discriminate against any person having AIDS virus or HIV infection on account of that infection in determining suitability for continued employment, housing, or public services, or for the use of places of public accommodation, as defined in G.S. 168A-3(8), or public transportation.

Any person aggrieved by an act or discriminatory practice prohibited by this subsection relating to housing shall be entitled to institute a civil action pursuant to G.S. 41A-7 of the State Fair Housing Act. Any person aggrieved by an act or discriminatory practice prohibited by this subsection other than one relating to housing may bring a civil action to enforce rights granted or protected by this subsection.

The action shall be commenced in superior court in the county where the alleged discriminatory practice or prohibited conduct occurred or where the plaintiff or defendant resides. Such action shall be tried to the court without a jury. Any relief granted by the court shall be limited to declaratory and injunctive relief, including orders to hire or reinstate an aggrieved person or admit such person to a labor organization.

In a civil action brought to enforce provisions of this subsection relating to employment, the court may award back pay. Any such back pay liability shall not accrue from a date more than two years prior to the filing of an action under this subsection. Interim earnings or amounts earnable with reasonable diligence by the aggrieved person shall operate to reduce the back pay otherwise allowable. In any civil action brought under this subsection, the court, in its discretion, may award reasonable attorney's fees to the substantially prevailing party as a part of costs.

A civil action brought pursuant to this subsection shall be commenced within 180 days after the date on which the aggrieved person became aware or, with reasonable diligence, should have become aware of the alleged discriminatory practice or prohibited conduct.

Nothing in this section shall be construed so as to prohibit an employer from:

(1) Requiring a test for AIDS virus infection for job applicants in preemployment medical examinations required by the employer;

(2) Denying employment to a job applicant based solely on a confirmed positive test for AIDS virus infection;

(3) Including a test for AIDS virus infection performed in the course of an annual medical examination routinely required of all employees by the employer; or

(4) Taking the appropriate employment action, including reassignment or termination of employment, if the continuation by the employee who has AIDS virus or HIV infection of his work tasks would pose a significant risk to the health of the employee, coworkers, or the public, or if the employee is unable to perform the normally assigned duties of the job.

(j) It shall not be unlawful for a licensed health care provider or facility to:

(1) Treat a person who has AIDS virus or HIV infection differently from persons who do not have that infection when such treatment is appropriate to protect the health care provider or employees of the provider or employees of the facility while providing appropriate care for the person who has the AIDS virus or HIV infection; or

(2) Refer a person who has AIDS virus or HIV infection to another licensed health care provider or facility when such referral is for the purpose of providing more appropriate treatment for the person with AIDS virus or HIV infection.