I. INTRODUCTION (Purpose and Intent)

The University of South Florida System (USF System) supports an inclusive learning environment that promotes the health and safety of all members of the University community.

A Medical Amnesty (Amnesty) Policy is valuable to the entire University community as it encourages all USF System students (Students) to make responsible decisions in seeking medical attention in serious or life-threatening situations that result from alcohol and/or other drug use or misuse. Students may be hesitant to seek help in such emergencies because of fear of potential conduct and disciplinary consequences for themselves, the person in need of medical attention, or the organization hosting the event where the situation occurs. It is vitally important, however, that Students seek immediate medical attention for themselves or others when someone's health and/or safety is at risk as defined below. This Amnesty Policy encourages individual Students to act responsibly and report those emergencies without fear of University-imposed disciplinary consequence.

II. STATEMENT OF POLICY

Alcohol and/or other drug consumption (including but not limited to excessive consumption or consumption of a dangerous and/or illegal substance) can lead to alcohol poisoning or drug overdose, resulting in serious harm or even a life-threatening situation (Event). The purpose of this Amnesty Policy is to encourage Students to seek emergency medical assistance when faced with an alcohol and/or other drug related emergency and in any situation where medical treatment is reasonably believed to be appropriate. This Amnesty Policy seeks to diminish fear of University-imposed disciplinary and/or conduct sanctions in emergency situations due to alcohol and/or other drug use or misuse.

Any Student who qualifies for amnesty under this Policy will not be charged with violations of any of the University System Student Codes of Conduct as those Codes relate to consumption and/or use of alcohol and/or drugs. Under this Policy, Students who seek or receive emergency medical assistance for themselves or Students who seek assistance for another Student experiencing an emergency related to the consumption of alcohol and/or
other drug use or misuse may qualify for amnesty. Although Students who qualify for amnesty may be exempt from the Student Conduct process, they may be required to complete educational measures and pay for any incurred cost associated with those requirements.

III. INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

A. Application

The role of the Student in an Event will determine the number of times a Student may invoke amnesty. Students who receive medical attention may use the amnesty option once. Students who help others seek medical assistance are not limited to one amnesty exemption. If the Student is involved in any subsequent (i.e., repeat) alcohol and/or drug abuse incidents, the situation will be evaluated by the Assistant Vice President & Dean for Students Office or the appropriate Student Affairs administrator at the system member institutions or designee to determine if the student qualifies for an amnesty exemption.

1. Amnesty may be available to Students of the USF System who initiate and seek medical assistance and/or treatment on behalf of themselves, another Student, or a friend.

2. This Amnesty Policy applies only to a Student’s use of alcohol and/or other drug use or misuse in a situation where medical treatment is reasonably believed to be appropriate. It does not apply to other prohibited behavior such as, but not limited to, illegal distribution of illicit substances, property damage, harassment, or assault.

3. This Policy applies to the USF Systems Student Code of Conduct and Housing & Residence Life policies and procedures and all other adopted Student Codes of Conduct applying to USF System Students to the extent those Codes address consumption of alcohol and/or illegal drugs by Students. This Policy does not affect law enforcement agencies authority to enforce federal and state laws.

4. If a representative of a USF System student organization hosting an event calls for medical assistance, this responsible act will be considered with respect to any potential Student Code of Conduct consequences that could arise against the Student Organization and the fact that an organization sought help will be favorably considered in any potential sanction of the Organization for university policy violations. USF System Student Organizations involved in an Event as defined by this Policy must agree to take University recommended steps to address future concerns. For instance, an Organization could be required to participate in an educational program or educational activities in addition to, or in lieu of, disciplinary consequences.
5. The Amnesty Policy applies to USF System Students who are determined to be victims of sexual assault during underage alcohol consumption or drug use.

6. If a Student requires emergency medical treatment and is transported to a medical facility for excessive alcohol consumption or drug use, the Student’s parents and/or guardians may be notified as authorized by applicable law.

B. Procedures

1. Upon an initial Event report, the Assistant Vice President & Dean for Students or the appropriate Student Affairs administrator at the system member institutions or, designee will review the Event report(s) to determine applicability of this Policy and if applicable, the Student will be referred to the Students of Concern Assistance Team (SOCAT).

2. If the Assistant Vice President & Dean for Students or the appropriate Student Affairs administrator at the system member institutions or, as appropriate, the USF Health Vice Dean for Educational Affairs, determines the Policy is not applicable, the Student will be referred to the Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities [or whatever USF Health Committee would be appropriate] for its action.

Authorized and signed by:

Thomas E. Miller, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs
Judy Genshaft, President