I. INTRODUCTION (Purpose and Intent)

The University of South Florida-Tampa supports an inclusive learning environment that promotes the health and safety of all members of the university community.

A Medical Amnesty Policy is valuable to the entire campus community as it encourages 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. Students need to seek immediate medical attention for themselves or others when someone’s health and/or safety is at risk. This policy supports the efforts of individual students acting responsibly by providing a health and education focused response instead of avoiding a 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. The purpose of the Medical 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. The Medical Amnesty Policy seeks to
diminish fear of disciplinary and/or conduct sanctions in emergency situations due to alcohol and/or other drug use or misuse.

Any student who qualifies for Medical Amnesty will not be charged with violations of the University of South Florida’s Student Code of Conduct related to that 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 Medical Amnesty. Although students who qualify for Medical Amnesty may be exempt from the Student Conduct process, they may be required to complete educational measures and pay for any incurring cost associated with those requirements.

III. INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

A. Application

The role of the student in an incident will determine the number of times a student may invoke Medical Amnesty. Students who receive medical attention may use the Medical Amnesty option once. Students who help others seek medical assistance are not limited to one Medical 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 to determine if the student qualifies for a Medical Amnesty exemption.

1. Medical Amnesty may be available to students of the University of South Florida who initiate and seek medical assistance and/or treatment on behalf of themselves, another student, or a friend.

2. The Medical 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 illegal distribution of illicit substances, property damage, harassment, or assault.

3. The protocol applies only to the University of South Florida’s Student Code of Conduct and Housing & Residence Life policies and procedures. Law enforcement agencies may act within their jurisdictions in enforcing the laws enacted by the State of Florida and the Federal Government.

4. If a representative of a USF student organization hosting an event calls for medical assistance, this act of responsibility can mitigate potential Student Code of Conduct consequences that could arise against the organization, i.e., the fact that an organization sought help will be favorably considered in potential sanctioning for university policy violations. USF student organizations involved in an incident must agree to take recommended steps to address concerns. In appropriate situations as determined in the conduct process, mitigation could result in the requirement of participation in an educational program or educational activities rather than other disciplinary consequences.

5. The Medical Amnesty does apply to USF students who are victims of sexual assault and have also engaged in 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.
B. Procedures

1. The Assistant Vice President & Dean for Students will review the incident report(s) to determine if Medical Amnesty applies.

2. If the Assistant Vice President & Dean for Students determines Medical Amnesty is appropriate, the student will be referred to the Students of Concern Assistance Team (SOCAT).

3. If the Assistant Vice President & Dean for Students determines Medical Amnesty is not appropriate, the student will be referred to the Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities, where action may be taken.

Authorized and signed by:

Dr. Dee Siscoe, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs

Judy Genshaft, President