



INFECTIOUS DISEASES

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I. DEFINITIONS

A. Biohazard

A material of biological composition, especially if infective in nature, that constitutes a threat to man/woman or his/her environment.

B. Blood

Human blood; all human blood products and components of human blood.

C. Body Fluids

In the law enforcement environment exposures tend to occur in uncontrollable circumstances; therefore, no distinction will be made between the different body fluids, and all body fluids will be treated as though they have the potential to transmit bloodborne diseases.

D. Bloodborne/Airborne Pathogens

Micro-organisms which are present in blood and body fluids and in the air, and which can cause disease in humans. Such diseases include, but are not limited to Hepatitis, HIV, Tuberculosis, and MRSA.

E. OSHA

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration is the federal agency responsible for regulating workplace safety. OSHA has established standards for infectious disease control which are contained in this section.

F. Source or Source Individual

Any human or animal, living or dead, whose blood, exhaled air, or potentially infectious materials may be a source of occupational exposure. The ability to have a source individual tested for the presence of HIV is governed by Maryland law.

G. Standard Precautions

Procedures established by the Centers for Disease Control that emphasize precautions based on the assumption that all blood and body fluids are potentially infectious with the AIDS (HIV) and hepatitis B (HBV) viruses or with some other bloodborne pathogens.

II. EXPOSURE DEFINED

A. Under OSHA definitions, an exposure to infectious diseases occurs in the following circumstances:

1. The employee's eye, mouth, or other mucous membrane comes into contact with blood or body fluids;
2. The employee has non-intact skin where blood or other body fluid contact occurs; or,
3. The employee is subjected to a needle stick, human or animal bite, or has cuts and abrasions where contact with blood or other body fluid occurs.
4. The employee has a prolonged exposure to the exhaled air of an individual with active Tuberculosis Disease (TB), or an individual believed to have active TB.

B. Any of the above situations constitutes an exposure. An employee who experiences any of these situations must report such exposure immediately. For initial reporting purposes, there cannot be a presumption that the source of the blood, body fluids, or exhaled air is not positive for an infectious disease.

C. In law enforcement, it is possible that employees will encounter situations other than those described above. If an employee has doubts as to whether an occupational exposure occurred, the required forms should be completed so appropriate assessment can be made.

III. EMPLOYEES AT RISK

A. Category I employees are those employees who routinely perform job tasks which have the potential for an occupational exposure, and include:

1. Patrol officers
2. Special Operations Section police officers
3. Traffic Safety Section police officers
4. Criminal Investigation Division police officers
5. Evidence technicians
6. Custodial workers
7. Animal Control employees

B. Category II employees are those employees who occasionally perform job tasks which have the potential for an occupational exposure, and include:

1. All sworn police officers not in Category I
2. Chemists
3. Certain reserve officers
4. ***Cadets***

C. A review of the regulations concerning infectious diseases reveals that other classes of employees in the Anne Arundel County Police Department do not perform tasks which pose a risk of an occupational exposure.

IV. MANAGING AN EXPOSURE

A. Types of Human Exposures

There are six (6) basic infectious disease exposures that may be encountered:

1. Bloodborne Pathogens (Exposure to blood/body fluids containing blood):

a. HIV

Spread by exposure to blood or by stick of a contaminated needle or instrument.

b. Hepatitis B

Spread by exposure to blood or by stick of a contaminated needle or instrument. The infection may be severe and result in prolonged illness and the destruction of liver cells.

c. Hepatitis C

Spread by exposure to blood. It is serious for some persons, but not for others. Many people do not feel sick.

d. Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)

Spread via skin-to-skin contact. It can infect open cuts, sores or wounds in the skin. Symptoms of infections from MRSA may include boils, festering sores or irritation of the infected area.

2. Other Exposures:

a. Hepatitis A

Spread by direct contact or through contaminated food or water. With rest, proper diet, and medication, there usually is a complete recovery.

b. Tuberculosis (TB)

Spread by prolonged exposure to the exhaled air of an individual with active Tuberculosis Disease.

B. Type of Animal Exposure

1. Rabies

Exposure to rabies may occur by an animal breaking the skin, scratching, or licking an open wound or mucous membrane.

C. Immediate Treatment Required

When an exposure occurs, or you and your supervisor cannot determine if you experienced a true exposure, treatment should be sought within two (2) hours. If you surpass the two hour limit, medical attention should still be sought. Whenever in doubt, consult our medical authority (Concentra Medical Center).

All infectious disease exposure claims are coordinated through Concentra Medical Center. An employee does have the option of consulting his/her personal physician, but should follow Concentra Medical Center's direction. The County will pay the costs of the medical examination and treatment.

Concentra Medical Center's locations and hours are identified on informational documents that accompany each exposure packet.

If an employee goes to the emergency room for initial treatment for a possible infectious disease exposure, the employee should report to Concentra Medical Center the next business day for follow-up care.

D. Steps to Take When You Have an Exposure to an Infectious Disease

1. Notify a supervisor immediately. If your supervisor is not readily available, contact any supervisor on duty.
2. The supervisor will call Concentra Medical Center and then send the employee to the appropriate location with the "Report of Exposure Incident and Authorization for Medical Treatment" form within two (2) hours of the exposure, or as soon as possible.
3. The supervisor will complete the remaining forms in an "Exposure Packet." The "First Report of Injury" form should be faxed to Risk Management immediately. The original form should be marked "FAXED" before sending it to Police Personnel. The entire completed "Exposure Packet" must be forwarded to Police Personnel within 24 hours.
4. All follow-up visits should be kept to ensure the well-being of the employee.
5. If an employee goes to the emergency room for initial treatment, he/she should report to Concentra Medical Center the next business day for follow-up care.

E. Infectious Disease Exposure Packet

All required forms can be found on CountyConnect.

1. After discussion with the employee:

- a. If it is determined that an exposure DID NOT occur, then no further action is required.

- b. If it is determined that an exposure DID NOT occur, but the employee requests medical counseling, it WILL be provided. Continue to Instruction #2.
 - c. If it is determined that an exposure DID occur, then continue to Instruction #2.
2. Workers' Compensation Incident Report Form (STARS) is completed by the employee and supervisor, entered into the STARS system by the supervisor, then faxed to Risk Management immediately (410-222-7640). Mark the original form "FAXED" before sending to Police Personnel.
3. Workers' Compensation Exposure Incident Medical Authorization Form is completed and signed by the supervisor. The employee is sent to Concentra Medical Center, or if the incident occurs outside of Concentra's operating hours, to the Baltimore Washington Medical Center or the Anne Arundel Medical Center. The employee is given this form.
4. The employee will ensure that the Workers' Compensation Exposure Incident Medical Authorization Form is completed by the medical facility and upon his/her return to duty are forwarded to the Police Personnel Section.
5. Animal exposures will be reported to the Communications Section so that an Animal Bite/Exposure Report is completed. Animal Control will take the necessary steps to conduct the bite investigation and report the findings to the Health Officer. Maryland law requires that our department be notified of a possible exposure. But the law does not require that an HIV or Hepatitis C test be administered to a possible carrier just to determine if an officer has been exposed. An individual is not tested for HIV or Hepatitis C by a medical facility unless it occurs in the normal course of medical treatment. If an individual tests positive for HIV or Hepatitis C during the normal course of medical treatment, the department is notified. If a test was not administered or was negative the department is not notified. Officers must ensure that their full name and agency is given to the individuals responsible for transporting the possible carrier or if the officer does the transporting, that the medical facility receives the information.

Maryland Criminal Procedure 11-110 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, provides procedures for officers exposed to HIV or Hepatitis C to obtain testing of possible carriers who committed a crime or delinquent act that may have caused or resulted in an exposure. In such cases, the affected officer should contact the State's Attorney's Office in writing advising that he/she suffered an exposure while acting in the performance of duty, and is requesting that the individual be tested. The correspondence must include the detailed circumstances of the incident so that probable cause may be established. The following basic identifying information must also be included: name and address of the officer and offender; date and location of possible exposure. A copy of the incident report must accompany the correspondence.

VI. PREVENTION TECHNIQUES

A. Training

- 1. Employees in Category I or Category II will receive training in reducing the risk of occupational exposure through appropriate work practices and the use of protective equipment.
- 2. The Commander of the Training Division is responsible for ensuring that all Category I & II employees receive:
 - a. Appropriate training upon initial entry to the department;
 - b. Training on personal protective equipment that is appropriate for the job duties of each employee or class of employees; and
 - c. Updated training on an annual basis.
- 3. The Training Division Commander will ensure that training records are maintained a minimum of three (3) years and contain:
 - a. The dates of the training sessions;
 - b. The contents or a summary of the training sessions;
 - c. The names and qualifications of persons conducting the training; and,
 - d. The names and job titles of all persons attending the training sessions.

B. Vaccination

1. All Police Department employees determined to be Category I or Category II workers will be offered Hepatitis B vaccination.
2. The cost of such vaccination will be borne by the County and provided at a reasonable time and place.
3. All newly hired Category I and Category II employees will be informed within ten (10) days from the date of hire of the vaccination program.
4. If an employee declines the vaccination then he/she must complete a vaccination declination form. Such form will inform the employee of the right to a future vaccination should the employee later wish to participate in the program
5. Employees of Anne Arundel County are eligible to receive a free Tetanus vaccination if they have not received one in the past ten years. This is not limited to Category I and II employees, but is available to all employees. Employees of the police department can contact Police Personnel for the procedures on how to obtain this vaccination.

C. Personal Protective Equipment

1. Personal protective equipment is issued and must be used to reduce the risk of occupational exposures. All employees are to take the time necessary to use the personal protective equipment whenever it is appropriate.
2. Each officer is issued an Infection Disease Control Kit. Additional kits are available at district stations for use by custodial workers. Kits must also be carried in each evidence collection vehicle, animal control vehicle, and in each reserve officer vehicle.
3. The infectious disease control kit contains the following items:
 - a. 1 package of clean paper towels
 - b. 1 pair of goggles
 - c. 1 pair of heavy rubber gloves
 - d. 1 can of alcohol hand-cleaning solution
 - e. 1 pocket face mask
 - f. 2 pairs of disposable, surgical gloves (hypoallergenic gloves are available to employees who are allergic to regular gloves)
 - g. 1 disposable face mask
 - h. 2 BIOHAZARD labels for bags, or red biohazard bags
 - i. 1 disposable syringe container
 - j. 1 disposable apron

D. Disposal of Contaminated Wastes

All biohazards, from needles to soiled disposable gloves, must be handled, transported, stored, and eventually destroyed in a manner that protects employees, the public, and the environment from the biohazard. Employees will use the appropriate personal protective equipment (disposable gloves, apron, face mask, goggles, etc.) when handling any object that is or may be contaminated with blood or body fluids. The containers used to ensure that biohazards do not pose an infection problem upon disposal are:

1. Disposable syringe containers;
2. Red plastic biohazard bags or green/black plastic bags to which "Biohazard" labels must be affixed whenever used for biohazardous materials;
3. Sharps containers for items such as razors and glass fragments; and,
4. Biohazard collection boxes, located at each district station and in Property Management, for large, biohazardous items and for any of the above biohazard containers when they are ready for disposal.

Needles and other sharps pose a particularly high risk as means of occupational exposure. Accordingly, the following procedures must be followed to reduce this potential risk:

1. Needles or sharps will not be bent, recapped, sheared, or broken.
2. Needles will not be removed from a syringe without the use of an authorized appropriate mechanical device.

3. Needles recovered during the course of duty will be sealed in the disposable syringe container issued for that specific purpose.
4. Once placed in the disposable syringe container, the needle will be taken to the district station, where the entire container will be placed in the biohazard collection box (unless it is needed as evidence - see #5 below).
5. Needles needed as evidence will be sealed in the disposable syringe container and processed in accordance with Index Code 1201 (Evidence & Recovered Property - Reports & Packaging.)
6. Other sharps, such as razors and fragments of glass, must be handled with extreme care and placed in a sharps container at the earliest opportunity.

E. Workplace Conduct

1. Employees are prohibited from eating, drinking, applying cosmetics or lip balm, and handling contact lenses in work areas where there is a reasonable likelihood of exposure to biohazards.
2. Employees are prohibited from keeping food and drink in refrigerators, freezers, shelves, cabinets or on counter tops where blood or other potentially infectious materials are present.
3. Hand washing is an important part of enhancing occupational safety. Employees must wash their hands, whether protective equipment was used or not, immediately after performing tasks where there is a chance that they may have come into contact with infectious materials. When hand washing facilities are not available, employees will use the issued alcohol-based hand cleaner and hand wipes immediately and then wash with soap and water as soon as possible.
4. Items contaminated with blood or body fluids will be placed in the appropriate biohazard container at the earliest possible time. Contaminated items may not be transported from the Police Department for disposal, decontamination, or repair unless they are labeled as biohazards and packaged appropriately.

F. Sanitation Procedures

All work sites will be maintained in a clean and sanitary manner at all times. Commanders, or their designees, will conduct periodic inspections to ensure these conditions are maintained.

G. Contamination Management

All equipment and surfaces must be cleaned and decontaminated immediately after contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. Contaminated surfaces will first be cleaned with hot water and soap to enhance the decontamination process. Decontamination will then be accomplished through the use of biohazard disinfectant solutions distributed by Property Management. Employee clothing that becomes contaminated with blood or body fluids will be handled in one of the following manners:

1. If clothing is contaminated with a relatively small amount of blood or body fluid, the employee should change clothes prior to leaving the district station. The contaminated area must be treated with alcohol, peroxide, or some other product issued for that purpose. The item can then be cleaned in the normal manner.
2. If the amount of blood or body fluid on clothing is large, the employee will change clothes at the district station, and place the contaminated clothing in a plastic bag with a biohazard label affixed. The bag will then be placed in a biohazard collection box. Contaminated uniforms should be taken to Property Management for disposal and exchange.

H. Decontamination of Vehicles

If a department vehicle becomes contaminated with blood or body fluids then one of the following methods will be used to decontaminate it:

1. Each Police Department work location will have a cleaning product which will decontaminate without harm to vehicle upholstery. Employees will use the decontamination product on relatively small amounts of blood or body fluids.
2. If the vehicle is contaminated with a large quantity of blood or body fluid, decontamination will be arranged by Management & Planning. The vehicle may not be occupied until it is decontaminated. The Fleet Coordinator will inform the vendor of the substance involved in the contamination.

VII. EMPLOYEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

A. All employees are responsible for compliance with the requirements of this policy. Supervisors are accountable for the conduct of their subordinates.

Each employee is responsible for properly cleaning and decontaminating issued property and equipment after contact with blood or fluids which may contain blood or other potentially infectious materials.

Special attention must be given to:

1. Any property or equipment that is used repeatedly, or comes into contact with multiple individuals; and
2. Property or equipment that comes into contact with swollen or broken skin.

Examples include handcuffs, leg irons, and other similar prisoner restraints.

B. The manager of the Crime Laboratory will ensure that in addition to following the guidelines of this exposure control plan, lab employees adhere to the safety standards established for laboratories; and, that biohazard labels and warning signs are posted or affixed to areas where blood, blood products, or body fluids are being analyzed or stored.

C. The manager of the Evidence Collection/ID Unit will ensure that the Standard Operating Procedures include specific procedures for the handling, transporting, processing, and storing of any evidence which contains blood or body fluids.

D. The Commander of the Property Section will ensure that personal protective equipment is maintained for issue as required; that decontaminators are available for issue as needed; that procedures are in place to ensure that heavily contaminated uniform items are identified and treated as biohazards with respect to storage, cleaning, or disposal; and, that contaminated wastes are picked up from police facilities by a company licensed to perform such services.

E. District commanders, or their designees, will ensure that their facilities meet appropriate standards of cleanliness; that personnel under their command have appropriate materials for cleaning and decontaminating; and, that timely notification is made to Property Management for the collection of contaminated wastes.

VIII. PROPONENT UNIT: Police Personnel Section.

IX. CANCELLATION: This directive cancels Index Code 703, dated **06-15-20**.