




# Clayton County Police Department PROCEDURES

Subject <b>COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION</b>		Procedure # <b>D46</b>	
Authorizing Signature 	Effective <b>03-02-2023</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Amended <input type="checkbox"/> Rescinds	Total Pages <b>5</b>

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for employees in limiting their exposure to and preventing the contraction of communicable diseases.

## II. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Clayton County Police Department to continuously provide employees with communicable disease information and safety procedures to assist in minimizing potential exposure, while increasing their understanding of the nature and potential risks of communicable diseases.

## III. DEFINITIONS

**Bodily Fluids:** Any liquid secretions of the body such as blood, semen, vaginal fluids, saliva or mucus, urine, diarrhea, vomit, and sweat.

**Communicable Disease:** A human disease caused by microorganisms that are present in and transmissible through human blood, bodily fluid, tissue, or by breathing or coughing.

**Contaminated:** Presence or reasonably anticipated presence of potentially infectious materials on an item or surface.

**Decontamination:** The process of removing or neutralizing a hazard from the environment, property, or life form.

**Exposure:** Subjection to an infectious disease. Exposure incident: A specific eye, mouth, or other mucous membrane, non-intact skin, or piercing through the skin (through events such as needle sticks, human bites, cuts, or abrasions) contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Items recommended using on your person to help reduce the risk of spreading disease: gloves, goggles, face shields, facemasks, coveralls and respiratory protection (when appropriate).

Social Distancing: Measures to increase the space between people and decrease the frequency of contact among people. Recommendation is a distance of six (6) feet or more.

Symptoms: The combination of bodily expressions that indicate the existence of a disorder or disease.

## **IV. PROCEDURES**

### **A. Communicable Disease Prevention**

1. In order to minimize potential exposure to communicable diseases, employees shall assume that all persons could be potential carriers, even if no symptoms are visibly present.
2. Employees shall engage in social distancing whenever possible.
3. When appropriate, personal protective equipment items shall be used by employees to help reduce the risk of spreading disease.
4. The most effective way to prevent possible infection is to avoid contact with blood and other bodily fluids. However, recognizing this is not always possible, employees shall follow these guidelines:
  - a. Use CPR breathing barriers, such as resuscitation masks, when giving ventilations (rescue breaths).
  - b. Wear disposable gloves whenever providing care, especially when an employee may come into contact with blood or bodily fluids. Also wear protective coverings, such as a mask, eyewear and coveralls, if blood or other bodily fluids can splash.

Note: In the case of transmission via droplets or airborne diseases, putting masks on prior to engagement with a contaminated person or area is advised.
  - c. Cover any cuts, scrapes or sores and remove jewelry, if possible, before wearing disposable gloves.
  - d. Change gloves before providing care to a different victim.
  - e. Remove disposable gloves without contacting the soiled part of the gloves and dispose of them in a proper container.
  - f. Thoroughly wash hands and other areas immediately after providing care. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer where hand-washing facilities are not available, if hands are not visibly soiled. When practical, wash hands before providing care.
5. Officers are to exercise extreme caution while conducting searches of all persons suspected of having communicable diseases. Prior to conducting the search, officers may ask the suspect if they have any communicable diseases or other medical conditions that may affect the search. Officers shall be aware of proper hygiene procedures when conducting any search, to include the use of personal protective equipment such as

gloves, mask and in more extreme cases, protective coveralls to prevent biologic contamination.

For information regarding more intrusive searches refer to standard operating procedure *D20: Strip & Body Cavity Searches*.

6. Care should be taken to prevent the accidental skin puncture by needles or sharp objects which may be carried in pockets or purses. All sharp objects shall be handled with care, and shall be considered potentially infectious.
  - a. Employees shall not immediately place their hands in areas where sharp instruments are suspected of being hidden. An initial visual search of the suspected area shall be conducted, using a flashlight if necessary. Suspects shall be asked to remove any sharp objects from their person, and only when an officer deems it safe to do so.
  - b. Needles shall not be recapped, bent, broken, removed from a disposable syringe, or otherwise manipulated by hand.
  - c. Needles shall be placed in a puncture-resistant container when being collected for evidence or disposal purposes.
7. For protection, employees should always wear rubber gloves when processing and handling any evidence contaminated with bodily fluids and any such item will be marked with a red biohazard sticker.

#### B. Transport and Custody

1. In cases of suspected airborne diseases or diseases transmitted via droplets, suspect movement should be restricted. The number of officers in contact with the suspect should also be limited whenever possible.
2. Officers shall not put their fingers in or near any person's mouth.
3. Individuals that are potentially infected or have bodily fluids on their persons shall be transported in separate vehicles from other individuals after appropriate medical evaluation or treatment by paramedics or other qualified medical personnel.
4. Officers shall notify relevant support personnel during a transfer of custody when the suspect has bodily fluids present on their person, or has stated that they have a communicable disease.
5. Officers shall document on the appropriate report when a suspect taken into custody has bodily fluids on their person, or has stated that they have a communicable disease.

#### C. Disinfection

1. Any unprotected skin surfaces that come into contact with bodily fluids shall be immediately and thoroughly washed with soap and warm water. Alcohol-based hand cleaning solutions or antiseptic wipes shall be used where soap and water are unavailable.
  - a. Hand lotion may be applied after disinfection to prevent chapping and to seal cracks and cuts on the skin.
  - b. All open cuts and abrasions shall be covered with waterproof bandages before the employee reports for duty.

2. Employees should remove clothing that has been contaminated with bodily fluids as soon as practical. Any contacted skin area that has come into contact with this clothing shall then be cleansed in the prescribed fashion.
3. Disinfection procedures shall be initiated when bodily fluids are spilled, or individuals with bodily fluids on their person are transported in a Department vehicle.
  - a. Any excess of bodily fluids should be first wiped up with approved disposable absorbent materials.
  - b. A fungicidal/antibacterial disinfectant, or a freshly prepared disinfectant solution of approximately one-and-a-half (1½) cups of liquid chlorine bleach to one (1) gallon of water, i.e., one (1) part bleach per nine (9) parts water, or about ten (10) percent solution, and allow it to stand for at least ten (10) minutes.
4. All disposable equipment and cleaning materials contaminated with bodily fluids shall be bagged and disposed of in compliance with State law provisions for disposal of biologically hazardous waste material.

#### D. Supplies

1. Supervisors are responsible for continuously maintaining and storing in a convenient location an adequate amount of communicable disease control supplies for their unit. Protective gloves, disinfecting materials, and other first-aid supplies shall be made readily available at all times.
2. Supervisors are responsible for the dissemination of supplies for infectious disease control.
3. All Department vehicles shall be continuously stocked with the following communicable-disease control supplies:
  - a. Disposable gloves;
  - b. Barrier resuscitation equipment such as goggles and masks; and
  - c. Hand sanitizer.
4. Employees using supplies stored in Department vehicles are responsible for their replacement as soon as possible after use.

#### E. Line of Duty Exposure to Communicable Disease

1. Any employee who has been bitten by a person, stuck by a needle, or who has had physical contact with bodily fluids of another person, while in the line of duty, shall be considered to have been exposed to a communicable disease.
2. If exposed, employees shall take the following steps immediately:
  - a. Wash needle stick injuries, bite-wounds, cuts and exposed skin thoroughly with soap and water, as soon as practicable.
    - 1) In the event of an needle stick injury, the employee shall make the wound bleed, if possible; clean with copious amounts of soap and running water; apply an occlusive dressing (i.e., a bandage or dressing that closes the wound and keeps

it from the air); attempt to identify the type of needle; and attempt to obtain sufficient information about the suspect in possession of the needle.

2) Human bites are very serious. Because of the bacteria in the human mouth, there is a high risk of infection. Injuries obtained from teeth on the hand or fist are equivalent to human bites and can be potentially serious. The most important thing is to wash the wound with soap and water and seek medical evaluation.

- b. If splashed with blood or potentially infectious material around the mouth or nose, flush the area with water.
- c. If splashed in or around the eyes, irrigate with clean water, saline or sterile irrigation solution for twenty (20) minutes.
- d. Report the incident to their supervisor as soon as practicable. Additionally, report the incident to emergency medical services (EMS) personnel for medical treatment.
- e. Record the incident by writing down what happened. Include the date, time and circumstances of the exposure; any actions taken after the exposure; and any other information required for such report.
- f. Seek immediate follow-up care to ensure adherence to current public health guidelines, Department policies and procedures, and also to ensure compliance with all relevant laws or regulations related to communicable diseases.

#### F. Supervisor Responsibilities

- 1. The supervisor shall respond to the incident location and/or the involved officer's location.
- 2. Once investigation from the scene has concluded, the supervisor should go to the hospital where the officer is located and remind the officer who has been exposed on the proper follow-up procedures.
- 3. The supervisor shall complete all on-duty injury forms and worker's compensation procedures shall be followed in accordance with Department policy.

#### G. Additional Resources

Additional resources (e.g., documents, instructional videos, government reports, fact sheets and brochures), regarding communicable diseases, are posted on the Department's Intranet Site.