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**ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE – 112.009**  
**INFECTIOUS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: May 24, 1988**  
**REVIEW DATE: Annual**  
**AFFECTS: All Personnel**

**REVISION DATE: April 11, 2017**

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Note: Employees should also refer to City of Plano Policies and Procedures, Policy 121.000.

**I. PURPOSE**

There has been growing concern among police, fire, and medical personnel about the possibility of contracting an infectious disease through patient contact. Of primary concern to law enforcement personnel are the diseases AIDS and Hepatitis. The purpose of this order is to provide information regarding communicable diseases and precautionary measures that officers should take when coming in contact with persons who may be infected with a communicable disease.

**II. POLICY**

In any circumstance where a Plano Police Department employee is known or suspected to have been exposed to a communicable disease in the scope of their employment, the incident will be immediately reported to the employee's supervisor and to the Risk Management Department of the City within 24 hours of occurrence.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

- A. AIDS – a blood borne disease which attacks the body's immune system. When a person is sick with AIDS he/she is in the final stages of a series of health problems caused by a virus (germ) that can be passed from one person to another chiefly during sexual contact or through the sharing of intravenous drug needles and syringes. The AIDS virus attacks a person's immune system and damages the ability to fight other disease. Without a functioning immune system to ward off other germs the person now becomes vulnerable to becoming infected by bacteria and other viruses and malignancies which may cause life threatening illness such as pneumonia, meningitis, and cancer. There is presently no cure for AIDS or vaccine to prevent AIDS.
- B. Hepatitis B – an infectious disease of the liver. Moreover, the Hepatitis B virus occurs in the blood of infected people in much greater density than does the AIDS virus. Safety measures which inhibit the spread of Hepatitis B operate very efficiently to prevent infection with AIDS.
- C. Other Infectious Diseases – shall include all infectious diseases which pose a bona fide occupational risk of exposure. Includes but is not limited to: syphilis, gonorrhea, herpes, tuberculosis, measles, influenza, meningitis, and other transmittable diseases which are likely to cause injury or death.

**IV. PROCEDURES**

A. High Risk Groups

1. AIDS

The following groups of people can be considered high risks for contracting or having AIDS:

- a. Sexually active homosexual and bi-sexual men with multiple partners.
- b. Present or past abusers of intravenous drugs.
- c. Persons with hemophilia or coagulation disorders.
- d. Any combination of the above.

2. Hepatitis B

The population groups at high risk of infection with Hepatitis B are the same groups at high risk for AIDS.

B. Transmission

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1. AIDS

AIDS is spread by sexual contact, needle sharing, or less commonly, through blood or its components. The occurrence of the syndrome in hemophilia patients and persons receiving transfusions provides evidence for transmission through blood. It may be transmitted from infected mother to infant before, during, or shortly after birth. The AIDS virus dies within minutes of exposure to air.

2. Hepatitis B

The highest risk for contracting the disease is drug users who share needles, male homosexuals, and health care personnel who handle blood or blood contaminated secretions of patients. Hepatitis B is frequently more severe than Hepatitis A and general recovery takes longer. Hepatitis B virus can live in dried blood/body fluids up to 7 days.

C. Precautions for Preventing On-duty Infection

The precautions specified below should be adhered to routinely regardless of whether the persons involved are known to be AIDS or Hepatitis infected.

1. Good hygiene is the best protection against infection. Officers should habitually wash their hands with liquid or granular soap and warm water after coming into contact with any person's blood or body fluids. Personnel should operate under the assumption that any blood soaked crime or accident/crash scene is contagious.
2. Personnel must take care to prevent contact of open skin lesions (cuts, abrasions, dry skin, etc.) on their exposed extremities with blood or other body fluids from any person.
3. When the possibility of exposure to blood or contaminated body fluid exists the following precautions should followed:
  - a. Latex gloves should be worn when handling blood specimens, blood soiled items, body fluids, excretions and secretions, as well as surfaces, materials, and objects exposed to contamination from them. Gloves must be disposed of in a properly marked biohazard bag after one usage.
  - b. Leather gloves are not an effective barrier against viral contamination. If leather gloves are worn in a crime scene, latex gloves must be worn underneath.
  - c. Gowns, masks, and eye coverings are provided by the Department and should be worn when clothing may be soiled by body fluids or blood, or when procedures are being performed which may involve exposure to blood or body fluids.
  - d. Exposed skin must be washed immediately and thoroughly after removing gloves, gowns, and masks, and after leaving the presence of persons who have or who are suspected of having communicable diseases.
  - e. Personnel sometimes fail to realize that the clothing donned as a safety measure becomes contaminated. If latex gloves are worn after leaving the scene, they can contaminate the police vehicle and anything else the officer touches. Similarly, the protective clothing or the uniform worn at such a scene can spread contamination. Removing such clothing and disposing of, or cleaning it properly is mandatory.
  - f. Sharp items (needles, knives, glass, and other sharp items) must be handled with care to prevent infection from accidental cuts or punctures. Keep needles and other sharp items in puncture resistant properly labeled containers until disposed.

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Note: "Sharps Containers" for needles and specimen containers for other objects are provided in each vehicle for safe storage and disposal of these items. The containers are marked as bio-hazard materials. Non-evidentiary items must be taken to a fire station and placed in a bio-hazard container for disposal. The Property Section will not accept bio-hazard materials unless the items are evidence related to a major personal injury crime.

**D. Special Implications for Police Procedures**

1. Precautionary measures are always appropriate with individuals who are in, or appear to be in, high risk groups. Such precautions would include the full use of defensive and verbal control techniques to minimize physical involvement with such subjects.

**Mouth-to-Mouth Resuscitation**

- a. The risk of AIDS infection and Hepatitis B from this source appears to be very low. Because there is a possibility (even though a low level one) that communicable diseases can be transmitted during mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, manual CPR masks will be supplied to members of the Department.
- b. Resuscitation equipment known or suspected to be contaminated with blood or other body fluids should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after each use. Disposable CPR shields should be discarded after use.

2. Searches

Department personnel should exercise extreme care when conducting searches of persons believed to be in the high risk group or vehicles or premises in which they may be arrested. The main hazard to be prevented during the search procedure is accidental cut or puncture by syringe, needle, razor blade or other sharp instrument.

**E. On-Duty Injuries**

1. Any employee who has received a needle stick puncture wound, who has been bitten, or who has received any other injury which could cause exposure to an infectious disease should do the following:
  - a. Encourage the wound to bleed by applying pressure around the wound and "milking the wound."
  - b. Wash the area thoroughly with liquid or granular soap and hot water.
  - c. Seek medical attention immediately.
  - d. Notify his immediate supervisor
  - e. Complete an "Employee Injury Report". A copy of this report must be sent to Risk Management within 24 hours of the incident. If the exposed employee is unable to complete these reports, this responsibility must be assumed by the employee's supervisor.
2. It is important to obtain medical attention in the aftermath of any actual or potential exposure to AIDS or Hepatitis.
3. Within five days of knowledge of exposure to HIV or Hepatitis infection, the employee must undergo blood testing to establish a baseline result. The employee will be periodically retested at intervals in accordance with recommendations of the U. S. Surgeon General.

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4. With regard to protection from infection of Hepatitis-B virus, any department employee whose job duties may require working with persons in custody can request that the department provide either a Hepatitis-B vaccination or blood test for current immunity. If the employee requests the test for current immunity and the test shows no current immunity, the employee may then request the vaccination. Requests for the immunity test or vaccination should be routed through the employee's chain of command.

**F. Decontamination**

1. If contamination or potential contamination occurs, the department member will decontaminate his person, any equipment involved, and the area. This process involves at least two steps. Both steps must be performed to adequately protect all members and the public. These steps are:
  - a. Disinfect the affected area with a suitable disinfectant in order to kill any micro-organisms that may still inhabit the area.
  - b. Flush the contaminant and other material from the affected area.
2. In cases in which a member is potentially contaminated, the member shall at earliest possible time wash the area with liquid or granular soap and warm water, even if gloves were worn, scrubbing briskly for at least 15 seconds. Members shall then wash the area with a disinfectant, following the manufacturer's instructions, if hand washing facilities are not available.
3. Clothing which is contaminated will be removed as soon as possible.
  - a. Washable clothing should be washed separate of other items in warm water and a 1:10 part bleach/water solution. The action of washing the clothing twice in an ordinary washing machine in the bleach and water solution is sufficient to disinfect clothing. Clothing should then be dried in an automatic dryer or by hanging in the sun. The washing machine should be disinfected by running the washer one cycle with ONLY the bleach and water solution.
  - b. Optionally, suitable clothing may be dry cleaned. The dry cleaner must be notified of the possibility of contamination.
  - c. Water resistant clothing can be immediately washed with a disinfectant soap or disinfectant detergent and water to remove the contaminated material.

**4. Equipment**

Note: Latex gloves will be worn at all times when washing equipment.

- a. Washable equipment which is contaminated will be cleaned by washing with warm water and low sudsing detergent and subsequently washing in a solution of one part household bleach to ten parts water. The solution should be allowed to stand on any stain for 30 seconds. Pure bleach or extremely strong concentration should not be used due to the possible release of hazardous fumes.
- b. Equipment that cannot be washed with soap and water may be cleaned by wiping down with the item with a 1:10 bleach/water solution.
- c. Equipment that cannot be immediately cleaned may be sprayed with a special surface covering disinfectant until a more thorough cleaning can be accomplished.

**G. Training**

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The Department will provide its employees with periodic education and training concerning HIV, Hepatitis B, and other infectious diseases. The lieutenant in charge of training will ensure that training received is documented for each employee. At a minimum, the training will address:

1. Mode of HIV transmission;
2. Methods of prevention of HIV transmission;
3. Behaviors that are potential risk for HIV infection;
4. Potential HIV-transmission behaviors that are in violation of Texas criminal laws;
5. Information related to the use of infection control supplies provided by the Department for such purpose; and
6. Departmental policy regarding the confidentiality of medical information.

H. Infection Control Supplies

The Department provides proper infection control supplies to include first-aid kits and clean-up kits. These kits will contain all items required by state law and are placed in areas of potential need. First-aid and clean-up kits will be readily accessible by being clearly identified, within easy reach of personnel and stored in containers that are easily opened. Kits will be assessed periodically by appropriate personnel, to determine replacement need based on use, expiration date or other factors. Employees are also responsible for ensuring that first-aid and clean-up kits within their work area or work vehicle are adequately stocked with usable and appropriate items.

I. Confidentiality of Medical Information

All Police Department employees will comply with the confidentiality requirements regarding medical information of any person, including employees, volunteers to the Department, crime victims and arrestees, as required by City of Plano Policies and Procedures, Policy 121.000. Department personnel who receive information regarding the medical status of detainees shall keep the information confidential. Failure to adhere to policy regarding confidentiality of this information could result in both civil and criminal liabilities. Release of any medical information will be in compliance with the following City procedures.

1. The City of Plano will strictly enforce the privacy of health records and will exercise the necessary and customary precautions so that unauthorized dissemination of information about an employee's or client's status regarding AIDS or HIV infection shall not occur except to those staff who have a legal need to know.
2. Disclosure of any information except as required by law must not be made unless the express written consent of the individual is obtained. (The Texas Health and Safety Code requires that written consent specify certain individuals or certain classes of persons to receive the information.)
3. The City of Plano will comply with all laws, rules, or regulations promulgated by the Texas Department of Health regarding reporting of AIDS and other infectious disease cases.
4. Members of the jail staff request all persons to complete a screening form at the time of book-in to assist in determining potential health risks. The information provided by the arrestee may or may not be reliable regarding their health status. Any information obtained through the form is strictly confidential and may only be released to another person or agency upon approval of the detainee, upon order of an appropriate court, or as directed by state law.

J. Mandatory Medical Testing of Certain Persons

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1. In certain circumstances mandatory testing of persons suspected of exposing a peace officer or jailer to a reportable disease, including HIV infection, can be ordered. A request for mandatory testing of suspected persons can be made by an employee under the following circumstances:
    - a. The exposure was experienced in the course of the officer's or jailer's employment;
    - b. The officer, or jailer, believes that the exposure placed him/her at risk of a reportable disease, including HIV infection; and
    - c. The officer, or jailer, presents to the Department or health authority a notarized sworn affidavit that details the reasons for the request as soon as possible after the incident.
    - d. The notarized affidavit shall be faxed to the Collin County Health Care Services Communicable Disease Control (CCHCS). The original form will then be mailed to the same.
    - e. Personnel must use the 'Communicable Disease Forms' found in the PPD Forms Library. All necessary forms and instructions are included there.
    - f. If the source individual is taken to a medical facility because of injuries or illness, the officer or jailer must submit the 'Notification to Request Testing' form to that medical facility. The medical facility will report results of any testing done on the source individual to Collin County Health Care Services Communicable Disease Control.
  2. Prior to mandatory testing being ordered, Collin County Health Care Services Communicable Disease Control, or its designee, must determine that the exposure occurred in a manner determined capable of transmitting a reportable disease, including HIV.
  3. If probable exposure is determined, Collin County Health Care Services Communicable Disease Control, or designee, shall follow specific procedures developed by the Texas Department of Health. The suspected source person will receive confidential written notice of the order to be tested, the factual basis for ordering the test and the right to refuse to be tested. If the source refuses to be tested the person is also advised that such refusal may result in a court determination of the necessity for testing. The court may order the source person to be tested. After testing is completed Collin County Health Care Services Communicable Disease Control, or designee, will inform the claimant (officer or jailer) and the source person of the test results and possible need for medical follow-up and counseling services. The officer/jailer will be notified of the testing results within 48 hours.
- K. Workers' Compensation Provisions
1. City procedure requires normal reporting procedure within 24 hours for Workers' Compensation claims of any incident that could result in exposure to HIV/AIDS. In addition, state law requires that a sworn affidavit of the date and circumstances of the exposure be provided by the employee within 72 hours of the incident if the employee desires Workers' Compensation benefits.
  2. Questions about Workers' Compensation provisions should be directed to the Support Services Division Commander or Risk Management.
- L. On-scene Clean-up of Blood and Body Fluids
1. It shall be the responsibility of the Plano Fire Department to remove or disperse blood, body fluids, or other bodily material from the scene of an emergency where they were called to respond for service.

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2. Automotive vehicles and other surfaces contaminated with blood or body fluids that are incapable of being decontaminated shall be posted with a red placard which reads, "Danger: Bio-Hazard." It shall be the responsibility of the Fire Department to warn police officers and employees of towing services of the danger of blood contamination of the vehicle or area around the vehicle.
3. Blood/body fluid contaminated clothing and other personal effects removed from a patient in the process of patient care shall be carefully placed in a red bio-hazard bag and transported to the hospital (1) either with the patient in the MICU or (2) by a fire or police vehicle, after clearing the scene.
4. Removal of Blood from the Ground or Paved Surface
  - a. Blood on outside **public** property, i.e., the ground, pavement, parking lots, roadways, sidewalks, parks, etc., shall be removed by the Fire Department.
  - b. If the contaminated public property involves a police investigation or crime scene, fire department shall not begin any clean-up efforts until directed to do so by the police officer in charge. If the police investigation will be lengthy and the scene has been secured by the police, Fire Department units may clear the call and return later for clean-up at the request and direction of the Police Department.
5. Removal of Blood from Inside a Public or Private Building

Clean-up of blood inside a public or private building or blood that otherwise soils surfaces and articles that are porous and will require professional cleaning, shall not be the responsibility of the Fire Department. If the general safety of the public is at risk by the blood contamination, Fire Department personnel shall notify the Plano Health Department and remain on the scene until relieved by a representative of that department. Before clearing the scene, Fire Department personnel shall offer, if circumstances are appropriate, the property owner or resident, counseling regarding personal safety around a blood contaminated area.
6. Blood Contamination at a Food Vendor

If a blood contamination is located in an occupancy that serves the public as a food vendor, i.e., restaurant, school cafeteria, etc., the Fire personnel shall notify the Plano Health Department and remain on the scene until a representative of the Health Department arrives and relieves them. Release of the incident scene back to the occupant shall then become the responsibility of the Health Department, provided the scene is not being controlled by the Police Department.