

Waltham Police Department

CHAPTER 92

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

General Order Number: GO-01

Effective Date: 01/2009, 02/2024, 06/2024

Accreditation Standard #: 46.1.2

POLICY:

Members of the department frequently respond to calls for service that involve the handling, transportation, and care of sick or injured persons. Associated with the care of the sick and injured is the possibility of exposure to infectious diseases.

It shall be the policy of the Waltham Police Department to follow the regulations promulgated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Public Health (105 Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulations 172.000) and the Federally mandated Ryan White Act, to provide and promote a safe and healthful work environment for our employees.

These regulations were developed to protect pre-hospital care providers by providing them with certain information vital to their self-protection, without compromising the right to privacy of patients, and to provide procedures to protect, advise, and treat those officers exposed.

DEFINITIONS:

1. **CARE PROVIDER:** Shall mean any person including, without limitation, a police officer, firefighter, emergency medical technician, corrections officer, ambulance operator, or attendant who, while acting in their professional capacity, attends, assists, or transports a person to a health care facility.
2. **INFECTIOUS DISEASE DANGEROUS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH:** For the purpose of these regulations, shall mean but is not limited to the following:
 - a. Diagnosis or laboratory evidence of hepatitis B virus infection.
 - b. Diagnosis or laboratory evidence of Human Immune deficiency Virus (HIV) infection.
 - c. Meningocele infections.
 - d. Invasive Hemophilus Influenza B (HIB) disease.

e. Tuberculosis.

3. **UNPROTECTED EXPOSURE**: Shall mean an exposure capable of transmitting an infectious disease dangerous to the public health and is limited to the following:

- a. Puncture wounds - including punctures resulting from: (a) used needles, (b) glass and other sharp objects contaminated with blood, or (c) human bites.
- b. Blood to blood contact through open wounds, which includes: open cuts, sores, rashes, abrasions, or conditions, which interrupt skin integrity.
- c. Mucous membrane contact - including such contact as would occur with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation or eye splashing with infected fluids. Such fluids would include: blood, sputum, oral, and nasal secretions.

4. **DESIGNATED INFECTION CONTROL OFFICER (ASSIGNMENTS OFFICER)**:

Mandated by the Ryan White Act, an officer appointed by the Chief of Police shall:

- a. Develop and coordinate procedures with the local hospital, fire department, and ambulance service regarding infectious disease control.
- b. Assist the training division with an on-going program of health maintenance, infection control training, station environment, personal protection equipment, scene operation, post-response, post-exposure, and compliance/quality monitoring and program evaluation.
- c. Coordinate the distribution and completion of the Unprotected Exposure Trip Forms with officers and medical facilities. Shall assure the confidentiality of those records and how they are maintained. Shall advise officers and/or refer officers to those who may provide answers to pertinent questions regarding possible exposures and risks.
- d. If an officer is getting medical care, follow injury guidelines.
- e. Be a liaison with the local medical facility and its Infection Control Practitioner and Specialist team. Through this liaison they shall develop training, garner new information, and negotiate the medical costs of treatments for the department.

PROCEDURES:

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has developed a Standardized Trip Form, which shall be submitted to and maintained by the health care facility to which the patient was transported. A

copy of this form will be obtained if/when departmental personnel assist in the direct handling of patients suspected of the particularized infectious diseases. In most cases, this Standardized Trip Form will be completed and submitted to the care facility by medical/ambulance personnel. A copy of this form will be obtained by the officer(s) assigned to the transport/incident, and such copy will be attached to the officer's incident report. A copy of the Standardized Trip Form can be obtained from the Designated Infection Officer and also at the Officer-In-Charge desk.

In those cases where a person is transported to the police station or elsewhere and officers subsequently discover that the individual has one of the aforementioned diseases, the transporting officers shall submit a Standardized Trip Form to the health care facility. Within 24 hours, a copy of this form shall be submitted to the Assignments Officer. If an officer seeks medical attention an "Injury Report" form 81-3 shall be submitted to the Assignments Officer in accordance with Chap. 39 (Sick and Injury procedures) of the Waltham Police Department Manual.

1. NOTICE TO OFFICERS WHO MAY HAVE SUSTAINED AN UNPROTECTED EXPOSURE:

- a.** Any health care facility which diagnosis a patient as having an infectious disease dangerous to the public health, as defined in these regulations, shall notify orally and in writing the care provider listed on the Standardized Trip Form who has sustained an unprotected exposure which, in the opinion of the health care facility, is capable of transmitting such disease.

Oral notification shall occur within forty-eight (48) hours of diagnosis. Written notice of such exposure shall occur within seventy-two (72) hours of diagnosis.

- b.** The notice shall include, but need not be limited to: the appropriate precautions and actions which should be taken by the care provider who has sustained the unprotected exposure, the identity of the disease to which the individual has been exposed, instructions to the care provider to contact their personal physician for medical follow-up, and information regarding immediate precautions necessary to prevent transmission of the disease to others. The notice shall clearly indicate that such unprotected exposure does not constitute a diagnosis of an infectious disease dangerous to the public health.
- c.** Notice to the officer(s) who has sustained an unprotected exposure shall be made in a manner so as to assure that such notice is conveyed only to the individual(s). Delivery of the written notice by common carrier such as first-class mail to the name and address listed on the Standardized Trip Form shall satisfy these terms.
- d.** The identity of the patient diagnosed as having an infectious disease dangerous to the public health as defined in these regulations shall not be

released either orally or in writing by the health care facility to the care provider who has sustained the unprotected exposure, and the patient's name shall be kept confidential in accordance with Mass. Gen. Law, Chap. 111, Sec. 70.

- e. The health care facility shall notify only those care providers as identified on a Standardized Trip Form for whom the facility has determined that an unprotected exposure capable of transmitting the disease has occurred.

- 2. **RECORD OF THE NOTICE:** The health care facility shall clearly document notice to care providers and patients as required by 105 Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulations 172.000 as defined under Mass. Gen. Law, Chap. 111, Sec. 51. The department and the Designated Infection Control Officer shall maintain a copy of the form.

- 3. **HUMAN CONTACT SITUATIONS INVOLVING SUSPECTED DISEASED ANIMALS:** (ALSO REFER TO WALTHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT MANUAL CHAP. 94 "INJURED DOMESTIC ANIMALS/WILDLIFE")

HUMAN CONTACT SITUATIONS: Defined as bites, scratches, including blood or saliva, on skin or mucous membranes, or if a pet is bitten by a wild animal, and a person has contact with an open wound.

- a. **CONTACT AREA:** Contact area should be washed immediately with soap and water, then flushed with clean water for several minutes. Apply disinfectant, if available, and seek medical attention in accordance with Waltham Police Department procedures.
- b. **HUMAN CONTACT:** All animal contact will require an injury report by the officer and follow-up procedures outlined in paragraph 2 of page 92-3, this chapter. The following information **MUST** be in the report:
 - 1. Names.
 - 2. Addresses.
 - 3. Telephone Numbers.
 - 4. Location of contact with animal.
 - 5. Types of animals involved.
 - 6. Name of doctor caring for individual.

Procedures for isolating suspected animal carriers are outlined in the Waltham Police Department Manual Chapter 94, "Injured Domestic Animals/Wildlife."