



## Infection Control Policy 4.03

Board Approval Date: 09-09-2008

Supersedes Policy Dated: 11-05-2003

### **Policy:**

This policy is intended to comply with OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard 29 CFR 1910.1030 and 29 CFR 1910.1020 for employees.

Pathogens are microorganisms present in human blood or other potentially infectious materials (including, but not limited, to such things as semen, vaginal secretions, saliva, and other bodily fluids) that can cause disease in humans. Two of the more well known and dangerous pathogens are the Hepatitis B virus (HBV) and the human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV) which causes AIDS.

Certain employees face occupational exposure whenever there is “reasonably anticipated skin, eye, mucous membrane or peritoneal contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that may result from the performance of an employee’s duties”.

### **Goal:**

The goal of this policy is to minimize employees’ risk of occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens by instituting certain preventive and precautionary measures.

### **Exposure Determination:**

Job classifications in which **all** employees have occupational exposure include:

- a. Public Health Nurses (PHN I & II’s);
- b. Public Health Nursing Director;
- c. Deputy Sheriff’s, Chief Deputy Sheriff, Detention Deputies and Transport Officers;
- d. Community Health Services Administrator (CHS) (if incumbent is a Registered Nurse).

Job classification in which **some** employees have occupational exposure include:

- a. Home Health Aide;
- b. Emergency Preparedness Specialist;
- c. Maintenance Staff;
- d. Emergency Management Coordinator;
- e. Environmental Services Director;
- f. Environmental Services Supervisor;
- g. Sanitarian/Registered Sanitarian;



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- h. Household Hazardous Waste Coordinator/Waste Management Specialist/Household Hazardous Waste Program Assistant;
- i. Recycling Coordinator/Waste Management Specialist;
- j. Health Educator;
- k. Clerical Support Staff.

Fluids recognized as directly linked to the transmission of HBV and/or HIV are: blood and blood products; semen; vaginal secretions; cerebrospinal fluid; synovial fluid; pleural fluid; peritoneal fluid; pericardial fluid; amniotic fluid; concentrated HBV and/or HIV virus solutions and saliva in dental settings.

Tasks and procedures in which occupational exposure may occur include:

- a. Administration of injections by subcutaneous, intramuscular or intradermal routes;
- b. Venipuncture for the purpose of fluid removal or infusion;
- c. Finger stick blood samples for various screening laboratory tests;
- d. Needlesticks or puncture wounds arising from management of trash;
- e. Wound care;
- f. Exudative lesions or weeping dermatitis;
- g. Contact with any body fluids that pierces mucous membranes or the skin barrier through such events as needlesticks, human bites, cuts and abrasions;
- h. Buccal swab;
- i. Other unknown blood or body fluids.

Any employee performing any procedure listed above will be considered at risk for exposure with or without regard to the use of personal protective equipment.

### **Exposure Control Plan Methods:**

- a. Universal Precautions refers to a method of infection control in which all human blood and other potentially infectious materials are treated as if known to be infectious for HIV and HBV regardless of the perceived "low risk" of the client population.
- b. Universal precautions shall be used by all employees in the handling of all potentially infectious materials.
- c. Household Hazardous Waste employees will follow procedures as outlined in the Standard Facility Operation Procedures for intake of sharps.



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### Engineering Controls:

- a. Hand washing facilities shall be readily accessible to employees. In the event these facilities are not available, antiseptic hand cleansers or towelettes shall be available for use;
- b. Contaminated needles and other sharps shall be placed intact in appropriate containers at the worksite to await proper disposal;
- c. Containers/bags used for disposal of needles and other sharps shall comply with the Winona County Community Health Services 1992 Generator's Infectious Waste Management Plan required by Minn. Stat. 116.79. Containers shall be puncture resistant, leak proof, and appropriately labeled or color-coded.

### Work Practice Controls:

Work Practice Controls are alterations in the manner in which a task is performed in an effort to reduce the likelihood of an employee's exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials.

- a. Employees shall wash hands immediately following removal of gloves or other protective equipment;
- b. Hands or other skin, which has come in contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials shall be washed with soap and water. Mucous membranes should be flushed with water as soon as feasible following contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials;
- c. All personal protective equipment should be removed immediately or as soon as possible upon leaving the work area;
- d. Used needles and other sharps shall not be sheared, bent, broken, recapped, or resheathed by hand due to potential for employee injury.

### Personal Protective Equipment:

Personal protective equipment is specialized clothing or equipment used by employees to protect themselves from direct exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials.

- a. Personal protective equipment shall be provided without charge to all employees with occupational exposure. Such equipment includes, but is not limited to, gloves, gowns, masks, eye protectors, and resuscitation bags. Equipment used shall protect the employee's clothing and person under normal conditions and duration of use;



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- b. All employees subject to occupational exposure shall carry gloves with them on the job for ready use when needed;
- c. Gloves shall be replaced when torn, punctured, or their integrity compromised. Used gloves shall be discarded;
- d. Utility gloves may be cleaned and disinfected for reuse if they show no evidence of deterioration.

### **Hepatitis B Vaccination:**

The vaccination for Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) shall be offered, at no charge, to all employees whose jobs involve the risk of directly contacting blood or other potentially infectious materials. A three-dose vaccination shall be given according to recommendations for standard medical practices. One to two months following administration of the third dose, the employee's antibody titer will be tested at a CLIA certified laboratory, if the employee desires. If the antibody shows no response, the employee will be offered a repeat series of three doses. One to two months after the third dose the antibody test will be repeated, if the employee desires. If still no response, the employee will be advised to seek a medical evaluation. An employee may decline HBV vaccination. If he/she does so, a Hepatitis B vaccination declination form must be signed. Vaccine will be made available at any future date if the employee so chooses. Records of employee HBV vaccination or declination shall be on file.

### **Post-Exposure Evaluation and Follow-Up:**

Immediately following an exposure, the employee shall:

- a. Wash all needlesticks and cuts with soap and water;
- b. Flush splashes to the nose, mouth, or skin with water;
- c. Irrigate eyes with clean water, saline, or sterile irrigants.

The employee shall report an exposure incident immediately to a department head or designee. The County shall make available to the employee confidential medical evaluation and follow-up, including determination of the antibody levels for HIV and HBV-preferably within one to two hours without charge. The employer shall document the route of exposure, circumstances under which exposure occurred and, if known, the source client's HBV and HIV status. If the source of the exposure is not known regarding HBV or HIV status, the employer shall attempt to obtain consent from the source of exposure for blood collection and testing to determine the presence of HBV and /or HIV infection.

The results of blood tests performed on the employee and the source will determine future action to protect the employee, as follows:



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- a. An employee may be started on prophylactic therapy to reduce the chance of HIV transmission. This is done at the discretion of the physician;
- b. Previously vaccinated employees with a high antibody level shall be considered protected regardless of the source status;
- c. Previously vaccinated employees with a low antibody level will be offered a booster dose of HBV vaccine plus immune globulin if the source is a carrier or the status is unknown;
- d. An unvaccinated exposed employee will be offered the HBV vaccination series and, additionally, if the source is positive, immune globulin.

The exposed employee shall be offered, at no charge, repeat HIV testing in 6 weeks, and on a periodic basis thereafter; 12 weeks, 6 months, and one year after exposure (pending physician recommendation). Any febrile illness occurring within 12 weeks of the exposure incident needs to be medically evaluated.

### **Infectious Waste Disposal:**

The infectious waste shall be disposed of pursuant to the Winona County Community Health Services 1992 Generator's Infectious Waste Management Plan incorporated herein. Copies of the plan are located in the PHN Director's office and CHS Administrator's office.

### **Tags, Labels and Bags:**

Warning labels including the "Biohazard" symbol shall be affixed to containers of regulated waste; refrigerators and freezers containing blood or other potentially infectious material; and other containers used to store, transport or ship blood or other potentially infectious materials.

Warning labels shall be fluorescent orange-red or predominantly so, with lettering or symbols in a contrasting color. Warning labels shall either be an integral part of the container or shall be affixed as close as feasible to the container by string, wire, adhesive or other method that prevents loss or unintentional removal. Red bags or red containers with the biohazard symbol may be substituted for labels.

### **Housekeeping and Laundry Practices:**

The employer shall ensure that employees wear appropriate protective equipment including general purpose utility or exam gloves during all decontamination of the worksite, laundry, or equipment in the presence of blood or other potentially infectious materials.



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Specific disease precautions for employees are as follows:

- a. Place soiled linen and clothing in a plastic bag and tie shut until washed. Launder these separately from other laundry.
  1. If soiled with blood or other infectious material, rinse with 1:10 bleach in hot water (1 part bleach to 9 parts water) then wash.
  2. If heavily soiled, presoak 10 minutes in bleach.
- b. Clean the following in 1:10 bleach solutions:
  1. Blood spilled on surfaces;
  2. Commodes, bedpans, bed tables, thermometers, stethoscopes, and BP cuffs; any tubes or equipment;
  3. Medical equipment;
  4. Reusable items.
- c. Dispose of the following in the toilet:
  1. Organic material on clothes or linen before laundering;
  2. Blood and body fluids;
  3. Soiled tissue or toilet paper;
  4. Cleansers or disinfectants used to clean contaminated articles;
  5. Solutions contaminated with blood or other infectious material.
- d. Infectious waste such as soiled dressings, needles, and syringes shall be bagged or containerized.

### **Employee Training:**

All employees with occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials shall participate in a training and education program upon initial employment and annually thereafter.

Infection Control educational material will be provided as requested from the Personnel Department or the Community Health Services Department.

The training program will include the following elements:

- a. Epidemiology and symptoms of HBV and HIV;
- b. Modes of transmission of HBV and HIV;
- c. An explanation of the Winona County infection control plan. Methods of control to minimize exposure; universal precautions; engineering controls; work practices including hand washing technique, use of protective equipment, disposal of materials and equipment, disinfecting of reusable equipment and environmental factors will be addressed. Opportunity for questions and answers will be given;
- d. Hepatitis B vaccine; its efficacy, safety and the benefits of vaccination;



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- e. County reporting procedures if the employee incurs an exposure incident and resultant medical follow-up undertaken to protect the health of the employee;
- f. Signs, labels, tags and/or color-coding used to denote biohazards;
- g. A copy of this policy is available in the Personnel Department.

### **Record Keeping:**

The County shall establish and maintain an accurate record for each employee with occupational exposure in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.1020. Medical follow-up for an exposure incident shall be confidential data and kept for the duration of employment plus 30 years. Disclosure cannot occur without the employee's written consent.

The medical record resulting from an exposure incident shall include:

- a. Employee's name and social security number.
- b. Employee's Hepatitis B vaccination status and dates of vaccination.
- c. Records of medical testing and the post-exposure evaluation.
- d. Employer's copy of health care professional's written opinion.
- e. Copy of exposure incident information provided to the health care professional.
- f. Documentation of the summarized information on the OSHA form 300.

Training records shall be kept by the Personnel Department for three years and shall include training dates, training program content, names and qualifications of trainers and the names and job titles of trainees.

Transfer of records shall occur in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.1020 in the event of cessation of department operation.

### **Discrimination Prohibited:**

The County recognizes that employees with AIDS, HIV infections, HBV, or any other bloodborne pathogen may wish to continue working. Therefore, subject to changes in medical information, employees with AIDS, HIV infections, HBV or any other bloodborne pathogen shall be allowed to work as long as the employee maintains acceptable work performance standards as determined by the employee's immediate supervisor and Department Head and if medical evidence indicates no health or safety threat to the employee and/or others. The Center for Disease Control guidelines and the employee's physician shall determine health or safety threats which would interfere with employment.

Co-workers of an employee as described in the above paragraph have no basis upon which to refuse to work or withhold their services for fear of contracting the disease by working with an



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affected person. Employees who engage in such refusal or withholding of services or who harass or discriminate against an AIDS, HIV, HBV or any bloodborne pathogen affected employee shall be subject to disciplinary action. No special consideration for transfer requests shall be made for employees who feel threatened by another employee's AIDS, HIV, HBV, or bloodborne pathogen condition.

Recognizing the need for employees to be accurately informed about AIDS/HIV infection, HBV and other bloodborne pathogens, the County shall have information available concerning these diseases, their methods of transmission and prevention methods. Employees who want this information may contact the Personnel Department or the following organizations:

- a. Public Health Services HOT LINE  
1-800-248-AIDS
- b. Winona County Community Health Services  
507-457-6400
- c. SEMCAC Family Planning Clinic  
507-452-4307

If deemed appropriate and/or necessary, departments may request additional training about AIDS/HIV infection, HBV, and other bloodborne pathogens through the Personnel Department.