



## Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens

### .01 Policy

The purpose of this directive is to eliminate or minimize occupational exposure to Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV),

It is the policy of the Bladensburg Police Department to provide reasonable protection to all members having occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials. This Order incorporates rules and procedures to prevent exposure at accident and crime scenes, to provide for the safe handling and storage of evidence, and to provide for appropriate training to affected personnel.

### .02 Terms

**Bio-hazardous Waste:** Liquid or semi-liquid blood or other potentially infectious materials; contaminated items that could release blood or other potentially infectious materials in a liquid or semi-liquid state if compressed; items that are caked with dried blood or other potentially infectious materials and that are capable of releasing these materials during handling; and contaminated sharps.

**Blood:** Human blood, human blood components, and products made from human blood.

**Bloodborne Pathogens:** Pathogenic micro-organisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B virus (HBV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

**Contaminated:** The presence or the reasonably anticipated presence of blood or other potentially infectious materials on an item or surface.

**Exposure Incident:** A specific eye, mouth, mucous membrane, non-intact skin, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that results from the performance of an employee's duties.

**Hepatitis:** A liver disease, initially resulting in inflammation of the liver, and frequently leading to more serious conditions, including cirrhosis and liver cancer. A vaccine exists that prevents infection.

**Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV):** The virus that causes AIDS. In most cases, infection with HIV ultimately leads to the development of Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). This results in a breakdown of the immune system so that the body does not have the ability to fight off other diseases. Currently, no known vaccination exists to prevent infection with HIV, and there is no known cure.

**Occupational Exposure:** Reasonably anticipated skin, eye, mucous membrane, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that results from the performance of an employee's duties.

**Other Potentially Infectious Materials:** Semen, vaginal secretions, any body fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood, all body fluids in situations where it is difficult or impossible to differentiate between body fluids, and any unfixed (other than intact) human tissue or organ.

**Parenteral:** Piercing mucous membranes or the skin barrier through such events as needle sticks, human bites, cuts, or abrasions.

**Personal Protective Equipment:** Specialized clothing or equipment worn by an employee for protection against bloodborne pathogens.

**SHARPS** - objects with physical characteristics capable of puncturing, lacerating, or otherwise penetrating the skin. These devices include, but are not limited to, needles, knives, broken glass, etc.

**Universal Precautions:** An approach to infection control. According to the concept of Universal Precautions, all human blood and certain human body fluids are treated as if known to be infectious for HBV, HIV, and other bloodborne diseases.

### .03 Governing Legislation and Reference

**Governing Legislation:**

29 Code of Federal Regulations §1910.1030.

**Forms:**

Infectious Control Exposure Report (Form 606).

First Report of Injury (Form 6710).

**Reference:**

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General Order 227, Employee Injury and Illness.

## .04 Procedure

### A. Scope and Exposure Determination

This directive applies to all occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials.

The following Bladensburg Police Department job classifications have occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials: Property and Evidence Custodian/Clerk, Police Officer, Police Sergeant, Police Lieutenant.

The tasks and procedures performed by the employees in the job classifications in which occupational exposure occurs include, but are not limited to, evidence handling, crime scene work, accident investigation, the searching of individuals, physical confrontations, emergency first-aid, and clean-up of equipment and facilities.

### B. Universal Precautions

When dealing with people, members need to always be alert and take precautions to minimize occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials. The following is a list of procedures that employees shall follow where there is a likelihood of exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials:

- Members shall wear disposable surgical gloves when contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials, or a member of a high-risk group, is likely.
- Members shall wash hands thoroughly as soon as possible after contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials or a member of a high risk group. Members shall wash hands even if gloves were worn during the contact.
- When appropriate hand-washing facilities are not available, an antiseptic hand cleanser shall be used until hand-washing facilities are available. Hand sanitizers do not kill all germs and are supplemental to proper hand washing. Employees using an antiseptic hand cleanser shall allow their hands to air dry before engaging in other activities as some hand sanitizers are flammable. Germicidal hand lotion will be issued to all field units to be kept in their vehicles and used when needed.

- Members shall carefully bandage open wounds and cuts on their hands and lower arms to avoid contact with contaminated objects. Bandages shall be sealed on four sides and shall be changed if they become wet or soiled.
- Supervisors shall be observant for open wounds and cuts on their subordinates and ensure that proper precautions are taken.
- Members are cautioned to be aware that, in the event contaminated substances transfer to their hands or clothing, any object they touch or come into contact with may also become contaminated.
- Gloves shall be removed after contact with injured persons or members of a high-risk group, between tasks, and when departing an accident or crime scene. Contaminated clothing must be removed immediately or as soon thereafter as possible.
- All departmental property and equipment shall be cleaned and decontaminated with an appropriate disinfectant after contact with blood or other potentially infected materials. Any uniform or article of clothing that is contaminated with bio-hazardous material will be appropriately cleaned.
- Members shall not eat, drink, smoke, handle contact lenses, or apply cosmetics or lip balm in situations where there is a likelihood of exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials.
- Members shall wear personal protective equipment as appropriate, given the nature of the specific hazard.
- Contaminated personal protective equipment and other contaminated materials shall be properly disposed of in a bio-hazard bag or container.

### C. Conducting Searches of Persons, Places, and Things

Members shall use extraordinary care when conducting searches of persons, places, and things.

Members shall never blindly place their hands into areas where there may be sharp objects that could puncture the skin.

Vehicles, pockets, purses, luggage, backpacks, bedding and other objects shall be searched slowly and methodically.

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Members shall never attempt to break, bend, shear, recap or otherwise manipulate needles or syringes by hand.

### D. Handling Injured Persons and Persons Identified as Being in High Risk Groups

Members shall use extreme caution when handling persons contaminated with blood or other body fluids. Appropriate protective gloves, face masks and other appropriate protective equipment shall be worn.

Human bites shall be cleaned immediately and treated by a physician as soon as possible.

Members who are spat upon or who come in contact with body fluids, such as vomit or urine, shall wash thoroughly with soap and water. Mucous membranes directly exposed to such fluids shall be flushed with water as soon as possible after contact.

Members shall use Mouth-to-Mask (MTM) ventilator in the event it is necessary to perform cardio-pulmonary resuscitation upon any person.

### E. Entering and Remaining in Crime Scenes

Members responding to crime scenes contaminated with blood or body fluids shall exercise extreme care to avoid contact with contaminated substances, whether those substances are wet or dry.

Once the situation is assessed, personal protective equipment shall be worn, as necessary, to safely process or remain at the scene.

Eye protection, feet protection (booties), and face masks shall be worn whenever collecting blood or body fluids as evidence.

Members shall wear eye protection in situations where blood or body fluids splash is likely.

Members shall not smoke, eat, or drink at a crime scene. Members shall be aware that they will contaminate all objects they touch if they themselves are contaminated.

In keeping with good investigative practices, unauthorized persons shall not be permitted to enter crime scenes until investigative activities and decontamination have been completed.

If, in the member's professional judgment, the use of personal protective equipment would prevent them from performing a needed medical or emergency procedure or would pose an increased hazard to their safety, the

wearing of personal protective equipment may be waived. Great care and sound judgment must be exercised in the event personal protective equipment is not utilized.

Contaminated personal protective equipment shall be removed immediately upon exiting the crime scene and placed in an appropriate bio-hazard container.

### F. Handling Evidence/property

Extraordinary care must be taken when handling evidence or property contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious materials. Gloves and other appropriate personal protective equipment shall be worn, as necessary.

Contaminated sharps shall be picked up using mechanical means, such as pliers, tweezers, tongs or other devices, or with appropriate hand protection.

All contaminated evidence/property shall be placed in appropriate containers, according to the condition of the item.

- Liquids shall be placed in bottles or left in their original container, if possible.
- Syringes and other sharps shall be placed into leak-proof, puncture resistant containers that shall always remain upright and never be allowed to overfill.
- Wet items shall be air-dried prior to packaging, when possible.
- Items that are dry shall be properly sealed (double bagged) before submitting.

Refrigerators, freezers and all packaging used to ship or store contaminated evidence or property shall be labeled with bio-hazardous warning labels and the agency's name, address, and date collected. Labeling shall be accomplished in a way that will prevent loss or unintentional removal of the labels.

No food or drink shall be stored in a refrigerator, freezer or other container together with contaminated evidence or property, unless such food or drink is also contaminated and has been properly packaged and labeled.

Personnel assigned to the Property and Evidence shall follow a precise regimen when handling and storing contaminated evidence or property. Protective gloves shall be furnished to all persons permitted to examine contaminated evidence or property held by the agency.

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Contaminated property scheduled for destruction shall be segregated from all other waste and placed into a bio-hazardous waste receptacle for proper disposal.

### G. Personal Protective Equipment

If an employee has or develops an allergy to any personal protective equipment or device (such as latex gloves), they shall advise their supervisor. The supervisor shall arrange for alternative types of equipment, such as hypo-allergenic gloves, glove liners, etc., to be supplied to the employee.

Gloves shall be worn by all employees whenever hand contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials is anticipated.

Disposable, single-use gloves must be replaced as soon as possible if they are contaminated, torn, punctured or otherwise lose their ability to function as a barrier.

Disposable gloves shall not be washed or decontaminated for re-use.

Utility gloves, such as those made of vinyl, leather or other heavy material can be decontaminated for re-use if their integrity has not been compromised. Utility gloves must be discarded if they exhibit signs of deterioration or otherwise lose their ability to function as a barrier.

Eye protection devices, such as goggles, glasses with side shields, face shields, etc., shall be worn whenever splashes, spray, splatter, or dropping of blood or other infectious materials may occur.

Protective body clothing, such as gowns or aprons, shall be worn when body exposure to blood or other infectious materials is anticipated. If a garment is penetrated by blood or other potentially infectious materials, it shall be removed immediately or as soon thereafter as possible. The skin under the saturated area(s) shall be washed immediately after clothing removal.

Contaminated personal protective equipment shall be removed prior to leaving the work area or scene, if feasible. The removed Personal Protective Equipment shall be placed in an appropriate bio-hazardous waste container for disposal.

### H. Cleaning Contaminated Items/Areas Waste Management

Equipment contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious materials shall be decontaminated before being stored or returned to service. If decontamination procedures cannot be affected immediately, the equipment will be taken out of service and secured to avoid accidental contact. A "bio-hazardous warning" label must be attached until cleaning is accomplished.

*Under no circumstances will disposable equipment be cleaned and re-used.*

Non-disposable equipment that cannot be decontaminated shall be discarded in the proper manner in a bio-hazard waste container. Discarding contaminated non-disposable equipment must be reported via memorandum to the Chief of Police through the chain of command in order to obtain replacement. The memorandum must describe the circumstances surrounding the contamination and the related report number.

Contaminated equipment and surfaces shall be cleaned with hot soapy water and a disinfectant approved by the Center for Disease Control such as Maxima HBV or Heptigon HBV or a solution containing one (1) part bleach to ten (10) parts water. It shall be noted that, once the bleach solution is mixed, it becomes ineffective after approximately 24 hours.

Contaminated areas, such as rooms, vehicle interiors, and holding cells shall be disinfected prior to being reoccupied. A "bio-hazardous warning" notice shall be posted on all contaminated areas until decontamination procedures are completed.

Bio-hazardous waste and cleaning materials shall be placed into appropriately labeled waste bags which have been constructed to prevent leakage. All waste bags must be tied or taped shut. Torn bags or those contaminated from the outside shall be placed into a second bag. All contaminated disposable equipment shall be sealed in a container, bag and properly labeled with a Bio-Hazardous Material tag. Contaminated equipment or materials destined for disposal shall never be placed into ordinary trash receptacles.

If a uniform or other article of clothing is soiled with blood or other potentially infectious materials, it shall be changed as soon as possible. Any uniform or article of clothing that

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is contaminated with bio-hazardous material will be cleaned.

In the event that there is an environmental hazard (i.e. petroleum product or human fluids) requiring immediate action to safe guard life, property or to return a public area or roadway to normal service and the hazard is determined to be approximately 8-ounces or less; then an on-scene first responder from the police department shall be responsible for taking action and mitigating the hazard.

If the environmental hazard is determined to be more than 8-ounces, one of the outside contractors that have an emergency response capability may be contacted by a supervisor. This protocol shall apply throughout the corporate limits of the Town of Bladensburg or wherever our emergency responders are called to respond to an emergency.

### I. Bio-Hazard Waste Management

All contaminated "sharps" shall be discarded directly into leak-proof, puncture resistant containers that have been designed for the containment of sharps. Sharps containers are located in the following areas:

- Property/Evidence;
- Booking/Holding Area; and,
- Crime Scene/Laboratory Services.

All non-sharp Bio-hazard Waste shall be discarded directly into impermeable bags. Bio-hazard Waste shall not be stored for a period greater than thirty (30) days from the time each container is used for the first time.

Bio-hazard Waste shall always be placed into appropriately colored and labeled Biohazard Waste containers. All containers containing Biohazard Waste must be closed prior to handling, shipping or storage.

### J. Labeling

Because treatment and disposal of Biohazard Waste occurs offsite, all packages/bags/boxes containing Biohazard Waste shall be labeled and identified as coming from the Department. The packaging containing the Biohazard Waste shall be labeled with the international biohazard symbol and one of the following phrases: "biohazard waste", "bio-medical waste", "biohazard", "infectious waste", or "infectious substance".

This labeling requirement pertains to all red bags, all sharps containers, and all transport cartons.

Each bag containing BioHazard Waste shall be labeled prior to being placed in any storage or transport container. The date on the label shall be the date on which the bag was first placed into use.

Outer containers and sharps containers shall be labeled prior to offsite transport.

All labels shall be written in indelible ink in a clearly legible, easily readable manner. All labels shall be securely attached to or permanently printed on the Bio-hazard Waste package.

### K. On-site Storage and Transportation

All on site storage of Bio-hazard Waste (other than at the point of origin) shall be in the Property and Evidence facility, away from general traffic flow patterns and accessible only to authorized personnel. Storage of Bio-hazard Waste shall not be for a period greater than thirty days. The thirty day period shall commence when the red bag is placed into use or when the sharps container becomes full.

Bio-hazard Waste shall be removed from the point of origin and taken to the Property and Evidence according to the following schedule:

- Sharps Containers – within the same week the container becomes half or more full.
- Red Bags -- by the end of the third week of each month or if they are sealed prior to this date.

The onsite transport will be the responsibility of the Support Services Commander.

Personal protective equipment, including rubber gloves rated P-2 or greater, will be worn while performing this onsite transportation.

All personnel responsible for handling Biohazard Waste and contaminated laundry must wear appropriate gloves and any other personal protective equipment that is needed while engaged in such activities.

Personnel handling Biohazard Waste shall employ Universal Precautions, i.e., personnel shall treat all Bio-Hazardous Waste as if it were contaminated with a known pathogen.

### L. Documentation of Exposure

Documentation of every exposure incident is essential. All exposure incidents will be treated

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as if the source individual is infectious. There are three forms which must be completed following an exposure incident:

- Infectious Control Exposure Report;
- First Report of Injury or Illness; and,
- Case Report, explaining circumstances of exposure.

After thoroughly cleaning the affected area with soap and water, the affected member must report the exposure incident to their immediate supervisor as soon as possible and then complete the required forms.

The affected member shall then report to a local hospital Emergency Room or Urgent Care Facility.

The affected member's supervisor will assist in the completion of all necessary documentation and decontamination efforts, if needed.

### M. Record keeping

All Biohazard Waste management records, including any documentation provided by the transporter, shall be maintained for a minimum of three years.

The Department recognizes that much of the information contained in a post-exposure investigation and medical report is confidential and will do everything possible to protect the privacy of the employee involved. The exposed employee will be provided with as much information as possible in a timely fashion. Medical records, test results, and all other findings and diagnoses will remain confidential.

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HISTORY: Adopted July 1, 2014

This General Order supersedes all other orders and memoranda in conflict therewith.

Authority:



Charles L. Owens  
Chief of Police