

State of Iowa Department of Corrections Policy and Procedures

Policy Number: HSP-904

Applicability: DOC, CBC

Policy Code: Public Access

Iowa Code Reference: N/A

Chapter 6: Health Services

Sub Chapter: Infection Control

Related DOC Policies: HSP-907, HSP-104

Administrative Code Reference: N/A

Subject: Universal/Bioterrorism Precautions

ACA Standards: N/A

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1. PURPOSE

To identify those categories of job-related tasks for the Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC) personnel who have potential exposure to blood, body fluids, body tissues, or a bioterrorism event. To describe universal precautions and their application to prevention of contamination and spread of infectious diseases to employees, patients, and visitors.

2. POLICY

It is the policy of the (IDOC) to ensure universal precautions are followed to prevent the contamination/spread of an infectious disease.

3. DEFINITIONS

- A. Bloodborne Pathogens - pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, hepatitis C virus (HCV), hepatitis B virus (HBV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
- B. 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 HIV, HCV, HBV, and other bloodborne pathogens.

- C. Contaminated - the presence or the reasonably anticipated presence of blood or other potentially infectious materials on an item or surface.
- D. Decontamination - the use of physical or chemical means to remove, inactivate, or destroy bloodborne pathogens on a surface or item to the point where they are no longer capable of transmitting infectious particles and the surface or item is rendered safe for handling, use, or disposal.
- E. Exposure Incident - a specific eye, mouth, other 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.
- F. Bioterrorism terrorism - terrorism involving the use of biological weapons.
- G. See IDOC Policy **AD-GA-16** for additional Definitions.

4. PROCEDURE

All IDOC staff are required to complete annual E-Learning on Bloodborne Pathogens where Universal Precautions are emphasized.

Categories of Exposure

- A. The Department of Labor has identified three categories of work tasks which indicate an individual's degree of risk for exposure to blood, body fluids, or tissues. IOSHA personnel have determined that all DOC staff are at risk for possible exposure to bloodborne pathogen diseases. All employees are therefore considered at Category I risk.
 - 1. Category I - Job-related tasks that involve a potential for mucous membrane or skin contact with blood, body fluids, or tissues, or a potential for splashes or spills of them.
 - 2. Category II - Tasks that involve no exposure to blood, body fluids, or tissues, but employment may require performing unplanned Category I tasks.

3. Category III - Tasks that involve no exposure to blood, body fluids, or tissues, and Category I tasks are not a condition of employment.
- B. Universal precautions should be used in the care of all patients and during routine handling of suspicious packages or envelopes to prevent the potential transmission of infectious diseases via blood, body fluids, tissues, or exposure to biological and chemical agents.
- C. Appropriate barriers should be utilized with universal precautions:
1. Transport personnel are to be informed of appropriate barriers to use when transporting a patient who is infected or colonized with any infectious disease in which Universal Precautions does not provide sufficient protection. (See IDOC Policy **HSP-907**, *General Control Measures*) Personnel in the area the patient is to be taken should be notified of the appropriate barriers to be utilized. Patients should be informed as to how they can assist in maintaining a barrier against transmission of their infection to others.
 2. Autopsy personnel should be notified about the patient's disease condition so the appropriate barrier precautions may be maintained during and after autopsy.
 3. Handling of suspicious packages or envelopes in the event of a bioterrorism threat:
 - a. Do not shake or empty contents of suspicious materials.
 - b. Do not carry package or envelope, show it to others, or allow others to examine it.
 - c. Put the package on a stable surface; do not sniff, touch, taste, or look closely at it.
 - d. Alert others in the area about the suspicious package, leave the area, and take necessary actions to prevent

others from entering the area. If possible, shut off the ventilation system.

- e. Properly wash hands thoroughly after handling any suspicious item and dispose used towels, etc. in a biohazard bag. Place this biohazard bag alone with the suspected items.
- f. Notify supervisor or law enforcement officials as per institutional policy.