
Communicable Diseases

912.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides general guidelines to assist in minimizing the risk of department employees contracting and/or spreading communicable diseases.

912.2 APPLICABILITY

This policy shall be applicable to all Department employees.

912.3 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Communicable disease - A human disease caused by microorganisms that are present in and transmissible through human blood, bodily fluid, tissue, or by breathing or coughing. These diseases commonly include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B virus (HBV), HIV and tuberculosis.

Exposure - When an eye, mouth, mucous membrane or non-intact skin comes into contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials, or when these substances are injected or infused under the skin; when an individual is exposed to a person who has a disease that can be passed through the air by talking, sneezing or coughing (e.g., tuberculosis), or the individual is in an area that was occupied by such a person. Exposure only includes those instances that occur due to an employee's position at the San Diego County Probation Department. (See the exposure control plan for further details to assist in identifying whether an exposure has occurred.)

912.4 POLICY

The San Diego County Probation Department is committed to providing a safe work environment for its employees. Employees should be aware that they are ultimately responsible for their own health and safety.

912.5 PROCEDURES FOR EXPOSURE TO BLOOD, BODILY FLUIDS OR AEROSOL TRANSMISSIBLE DISEASES

All department personnel who are exposed to another person's blood, bodily fluids or an aerosol transmissible disease (ATD) (e.g., during an altercation or while attending to any injured person) shall follow these procedures and guidelines.

Exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials includes, but is not limited to, the contact of such substances with the eye, mouth, other mucous membranes, non-intact skin, needle sticks, human bites, cuts or abrasions or any exposure that otherwise qualifies under Health and Safety Code § 121060.1 or 8 CCR § 5193.

Exposure to an aerosol transmissible disease is any event in which all of the following have occurred (8 CCR 5199):

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- (a) An employee has been exposed to an individual who is a case or a suspected case of a reportable aerosol transmissible disease, or to a work area or to equipment that is reasonably expected to contain aerosol transmissible pathogens associated with a reportable aerosol transmissible disease.
- (b) The exposure occurred without the benefit of applicable exposure controls required by this policy.
- (c) It reasonably appears from the circumstances of the exposure that transmission of disease is sufficiently likely to require medical evaluation.

912.5.1 EXPOSURE CONTROL

Officer related incidents for exposure to bloodborne pathogens or bodily fluid exchange will be coordinated through the San Diego County's Workers' Compensation Program or through a Workers' Compensation Pre-Designated Physician.

Department supervisors are responsible for exposure control in their respective areas. They shall work directly with the affected employees to ensure that the proper exposure control procedures are followed.

912.5.2 UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

All human blood and body excretions such as saliva, urine, semen, and vaginal secretions are to be treated as if they are known to be infectious. Where it is not possible to distinguish between body fluid types, all body fluids are to be assumed potentially infectious.

912.5.3 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Personal protective equipment is the last line of defense against communicable disease. Therefore, the following equipment is provided for all personnel to assist in the protection against such exposures:

- Not less than two pair disposable gloves.
- Safety glasses or goggles
- Rescue mask with a one-way valve
- Alcohol (or similar substance) to flush skin at emergency site. (Keeping several alcohol hand wipes in the car is recommended)
- The protective equipment is to be kept in each field bag; inspected at the start of each shift and replaced immediately upon returning to the work location if used or damaged during the shift, or as otherwise needed.

912.5.4 RESPIRATORS

Respirator use is voluntary. Officers are not required to wear respirators, if the following is adhered to:

- (a) When an officer becomes aware that a person they are in contact with may be ill with an ATD, they shall:

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1. Ask the ill individual to wear a surgical mask for the duration of the contact/interview.
 2. If the ill individual declines to wear a surgical mask, the officer shall end their contact/appointment immediately and schedule the appointment at a later date when the individual is no longer ill.
 3. If the ill individual is under arrest and cannot be released, the officer shall place a surgical mask on the arrestee. The mask shall be worn during transport to a jail/juvenile detention facility and shall only be removed at the direction of the custody facility's medical staff.
- (b) Depending on an officer's assignment and duties, respirator use may be mandatory or voluntary, as specified below:
1. **Work Project:** Respirator use is not required. If a public service worker exhibits signs of being ill with an ATD, they shall be sent home and their Work Project dates scheduled for a later time when they are no longer ill.
 2. **Operational Policies:** Employees in AFS, JFS and Institution Services shall follow operational policy for activities involving persons diagnosed with an ATD or suspected to be ill with an ATD, as specified in the policy manuals of their assignments.

912.5.5 TUBERCULOSIS SURVEILLANCE

The purpose of this Tuberculosis (TB) Surveillance Policy is designed to meet compliance standards for the following: CCR Title 8, section 5199, Aerosol Transmissible Diseases; Title 15, Minimum Standards for Juvenile Facilities, Section 1410; Probation Institutional Services Policy and Procedures Section 8: Health Services, 8.3, Management of Communicable Diseases; and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) Prevention and Control of TB in Correctional and Detention Facilities: Recommendation from CDC MMR report, July 7, 2006 I 55(RR09), 1-44.

The TB Surveillance Policy applies to sworn officers assigned to work with offenders that may have a reasonably anticipated risk exposure to an aerosol transmissible disease.

The County Department of Human Resources (DHR) requires "new hires" to have a TB/respiratory clearance from the County's Health Provider (U.S. HealthWorks) prior to employment.

Voluntary TB Testing: The Probation Department will offer voluntary TB Testing and the Seasonal Influenza vaccine annually at no cost to the employee who has been identified to have an increased occupational risk to aerosol transmissible diseases or pathogens.

- (a) TB Testing may be offered more frequently should an employee be involved in an exposure incident.
- (b) The employee will be issued a control number and directed to go to the County's health provider (U.S. HealthWorks) to obtain a TB test.

912.5.6 IMMUNIZATIONS

All department personnel who, in the line of duty, may be exposed to or have contact with a communicable disease shall be offered appropriate treatment immunization.

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912.5.7 WORK PRACTICES

All personnel shall use the appropriate barrier precautions to prevent skin and mucous membrane exposure whenever contact with blood or body fluid is anticipated.

Disposable gloves shall be worn on all medical emergency responses. Disposable gloves shall be worn before making physical contact with any patient and/or when handling items (e.g., evidence, transportation vehicle) soiled with blood or other body fluids. Should one's disposable gloves become contaminated with blood or other body fluids, the gloves shall be disposed of as contaminated waste. Care should be taken to avoid touching other items (e.g., pens, books, and personal items in general) while wearing the disposable gloves in a potentially contaminated environment.

All procedures involving blood or other potentially infectious materials shall be done in a way to minimize splashing, spraying, or otherwise generating droplets of those materials.

Eating, drinking, smoking, applying lip balm, and handling contact lenses shall be prohibited in areas where a potential for an exposure exists.

912.6 DISPOSAL AND DECONTAMINATION

912.6.1 DECONTAMINATION OF SKIN AND MUCOUS MEMBRANES

Personnel shall wash their hands immediately (on-scene if possible), or as soon as possible following the removal of potentially contaminated gloves. Antibacterial soap and warm water or an approved disinfectant shall be used to wash one's hands, paying particular attention to the fingernails.

If an employee's intact skin contacts someone else's blood or bodily fluids or other potentially infectious materials, the employee shall immediately wash the exposed part of his/her body with soap and warm water and/or an approved disinfectant, as soon as possible. If the skin becomes grossly contaminated, body washing shall be followed by an approved hospital strength disinfectant. If large areas of the employee's skin are contaminated, the employee shall shower as soon as possible, using warm water and soap and/or an approved disinfectant. Medical treatment should be obtained.

Contaminated non-intact skin (e.g., injured skin, open wound) shall be cleaned using an approved disinfectant and then dressed or bandaged as required. Medical treatment is required.

All hand, skin, and mucous membrane washing that takes place in the station shall be done in the designated cleaning or decontamination area. Cleaning shall not be done in the kitchen, bathrooms, or other locations not designated as the cleaning or decontamination area.

912.6.2 SHARPS AND ITEMS THAT CUT OR PUNCTURE

All personnel shall avoid using or holding sharps (needles) unless needed to do so while assisting a paramedic, or collecting them for evidence. Unless required for evidentiary reasons related to evidence preservation, employees are not to recap sharps. If recapping is necessary, a one-

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handed method shall be employed to avoid a finger prick. Disposal, when practicable, shall be into a puncture proof biohazard container.

All sharps and items that cut or puncture (e.g., broken glass, razors, and knives) shall be treated cautiously to avoid cutting, stabbing, or puncturing one's self or any other person. In addition, if a sharp object contains known or suspected blood or other bodily fluids, that item is to be treated as a contaminated item. If the item is not evidence, touching it with the hands shall be avoided. Rather, use a device such as tongs, or a broom and a dustpan to clean up debris. If the material must be hand held, protective gloves must be worn.

912.6.3 DISPOSABLE PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Contaminated disposable supplies (gloves, dressings, CPR mask) shall be transported with the patient or suspect in the ambulance or police/sheriff's vehicle. The waste material shall then be disposed of in a biohazard waste container at the hospital or police/sheriff's station. Disposable gloves are to be worn while placing the waste into the waste biohazard container, placing the gloves in with the waste when through.

912.6.4 DECONTAMINATION OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

After using any reusable personal protective equipment, it shall be washed or disinfected and stored appropriately. If the personal protective equipment is non-reusable (e.g., disposable gloves), it shall be discarded in a biohazard waste container.

Any personal protective equipment that becomes punctured, torn, or loses its integrity, shall be removed as soon as feasible. The employee shall wash up and replace the personal protective equipment if the job has not been terminated. If this situation resulted in a contaminated non-intact skin event medical treatment should be obtained.

Contaminated reusable personal protective equipment that must be transported prior to cleaning shall be placed into a biohazard waste bag and transported in the emergency or Probation Department vehicle. Gloves shall be worn while handling the biohazard waste bag and during placement into the biohazard waste container, and then included in with the waste.

912.6.5 DECONTAMINATION OF NON-DISPOSABLE EQUIPMENT

Contaminated non-disposable equipment (e.g., flashlight, gun, baton, clothing, portable radio) shall be decontaminated as soon as possible. If it is to be transported, it shall be done by first placing it into a biohazard waste bag.

Grossly contaminated non-disposable equipment items shall be transported to a hospital, fire station, or police/sheriff's station for proper cleaning and disinfecting. Porous surfaces such as nylon bags and straps shall be brushed and scrubbed with a detergent and hot water, laundered and allowed to dry. Non-porous surfaces (e.g., plastic or metal) shall be brushed and scrubbed with detergent and hot water, sprayed with a bleach solution, rinsed, and allowed to dry. Delicate equipment (e.g., radios) should be brushed and scrubbed very carefully using a minimal amount of a type of germicide that is approved by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) .

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While cleaning equipment, pay close attention to handles, controls, portable radios, and corners (tight spots). Equipment cleaning shall not be done in the kitchen, bathrooms, or other areas not designated as the cleaning/decontamination area.

Contaminated equipment should be cleaned using an approved EPA germicide or a 1:100 solution of chlorine bleach (one-quarter-cup of bleach per one gallon of water) while wearing disposable gloves and goggles. Large particles of contaminants such as, vomit, feces, blood clots, etc. should first be removed (using a disposable towel or other means to prevent direct contact) and properly disposed of.

912.6.6 DECONTAMINATION OF CLOTHING

Contaminated clothing such as uniforms and undergarments shall be removed as soon as feasible and rinsed in cold water to prevent the setting of bloodstains. If the clothing may be washed in soap and hot water, do so as soon as possible. If the clothing is soiled or destroyed refer to Administrative Code Policy 79.1 and County Counsel's Claim Division <http://insite.sdcountry.ca.gov/fg3/ccoi/Pages/Claim-Forms.aspx> for reimbursement of personal property.

Contaminated leather boots shall be brushed and scrubbed with detergent and hot water. If the contaminant soaked through the boot, the boot shall be discarded.

912.6.7 DECONTAMINATION OF VEHICLES

Contaminated vehicles and components such as the seats, radios, and doors shall be washed with soap and warm water and disinfected with an approved germicide as soon as feasible.

912.7 EXPOSURE PREVENTION AND MITIGATION

912.7.1 GENERAL PRECAUTIONS

All employees are expected to use good judgment and follow training and procedures related to mitigating the risks associated with communicable disease. This includes, but is not limited to (8 CCR 5193):

- (a) Stocking disposable gloves, antiseptic hand cleanser, CPR masks or other specialized equipment in the work area or department vehicles, as applicable.
- (b) Wearing department-approved disposable gloves when contact with blood, other potentially infectious materials, mucous membranes and non-intact skin can be reasonably anticipated.
- (c) Washing hands immediately or as soon as feasible after removal of gloves or other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- (d) Treating all human blood and bodily fluids/tissue as if it is known to be infectious for a communicable disease.
- (e) Using an appropriate barrier device when providing CPR.
- (f) Using a face mask or shield if it is reasonable to anticipate an exposure to an airborne transmissible disease.
- (g) Decontaminating non-disposable equipment (e.g., flashlight, control devices, clothing and portable radio) as soon as possible if the equipment is a potential source of exposure.

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1. Clothing that has been contaminated by blood or other potentially infectious materials shall be removed immediately or as soon as feasible and stored/decontaminated appropriately.
- (h) Handling all sharps and items that cut or puncture (e.g., needles, broken glass, razors, knives) cautiously and using puncture-resistant containers for their storage and/or transportation.
- (i) Avoiding eating, drinking, smoking, applying cosmetics or lip balm, or handling contact lenses where there is a reasonable likelihood of exposure.
- (j) Disposing of biohazardous waste appropriately or labeling biohazardous material properly when it is stored.

912.8 POST EXPOSURE

912.8.1 INITIAL POST-EXPOSURE STEPS

Employees who experience an exposure or suspected exposure shall:

- (a) Begin decontamination procedures immediately (e.g., wash hands and any other skin with soap and water, flush mucous membranes with water).
- (b) Obtain medical attention as appropriate.
- (c) Notify a supervisor as soon as practicable.

912.8.2 EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT EXPOSURE

To provide appropriate and timely treatment should exposure occur, all employees shall verbally report the exposure to their immediate supervisor and complete the Worker's Compensation documents as soon as possible following the exposure or suspected exposure. That report shall be submitted to the employee's immediate supervisor. Additionally, employees should document in the exposure report whether they would like the person who was the source of the exposure to be tested for communicable diseases.

912.8.3 SUPERVISOR REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The supervisor on-duty shall investigate every exposure or suspected exposure that occurs as soon as possible following the incident. The supervisor shall ensure the following information is documented (8 CCR 5193):

- (a) Name and Social Security number of the employee exposed
- (b) Date and time of the incident
- (c) Location of the incident
- (d) Potentially infectious materials involved and the source of exposure (e.g., identification of the person who may have been the source)
- (e) Work being done during exposure
- (f) How the incident occurred or was caused
- (g) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in use at the time of the incident

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- (h) Actions taken post-event (e.g., clean-up, notifications)

The supervisor shall advise the employee that disclosing the identity and/or infectious status of a source to the public or to anyone who is not involved in the follow-up process is prohibited. The supervisor should complete the incident documentation in conjunction with other reporting requirements that may apply (see the On Duty Injuries Policy).

912.8.4 MEDICAL CONSULTATION, EVALUATION AND TREATMENT

Department employees shall have the opportunity to have a confidential medical evaluation immediately after an exposure and follow-up evaluations as necessary (8 CCR 5193).

The County's Medical Standards Unit will provide medical information as requested containing only the following information:

- (a) Whether the employee has been informed of the results of the evaluation.
- (b) Whether the employee has been notified of any medical conditions resulting from exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials which require further evaluation or treatment.

All other findings or diagnosis shall remain confidential and are not to be included in the written report.

912.8.5 COUNSELING

The Department shall provide the employee, and his/her family if necessary, the opportunity for counseling and consultation regarding the exposure (8 CCR 5193).

912.9 SOURCE TESTING

Testing a person for communicable diseases when that person was the source of an exposure should be done when it is desired by the exposed employee or when it is otherwise appropriate (8 CCR 5193). Source testing is the responsibility of the exposed employee's supervisor to ensure testing is sought.

Source testing may be achieved by:

- (a) Obtaining consent from the individual.
- (b) Complying with the statutory scheme of Health and Safety Code § 121060. This includes seeking consent from the person who was the source of the exposure and seeking a court order if consent is not given.
- (c) Testing the exposed employee for evidence of a communicable disease and seeking consent from the source individual to either access existing blood samples for testing or for the source to submit to testing (Health and Safety Code § 120262).
- (d) Taking reasonable steps to immediately contact the County Health Officer and provide preliminary information regarding the circumstances of the exposure and the status of the involved individuals to determine whether the County Health Officer will order testing (Penal Code § 7510).

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- (e) Under certain circumstances, a court may issue a search warrant for the purpose of HIV testing a person when the exposed employee qualifies as a crime victim (Penal Code § 1524.1).

912.10 CONFIDENTIALITY OF REPORTS

Medical information shall remain in confidential files and shall not be disclosed to anyone without the employee's written consent (except as required by law). Test results from persons who may have been the source of an exposure are to be kept confidential as well.

912.11 TRAINING

All employees shall participate in training regarding communicable diseases commensurate with the requirements of their position. The training (8 CCR 5193):

- (a) Shall be provided at the time of initial assignment to tasks where an occupational exposure may take place and at least annually after the initial training.
- (b) Shall be provided whenever the employee is assigned new tasks or procedures affecting his/her potential exposure to communicable disease.
- (c) Should provide guidance on what constitutes an exposure, what steps can be taken to avoid an exposure and what steps should be taken if a suspected exposure occurs.