



RUSSELLVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT
POLICY MANUAL

Policy Number:
Section:
Original Date:
Revised Date:

PURPOSE

This Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Policy has been established to ensure a safe working environment and act as a performance standard for all employees. This program applies to all occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials.

POLICY

All RFD Personnel shall adhere to this policy

This department recognizes that communicable disease exposure is an occupational health hazard. Communicable disease transmission is possible during any aspect of emergency response, including in-station operations. The health and welfare of each member is a joint concern of the member, the chain of command, and this department. While each member is ultimately responsible for his or her own health, the department recognizes a responsibility to provide as safe a workplace as possible. The goal of this program is to provide all members with the best available protection from occupationally acquired communicable disease.

It is the policy of this department:

- To provide fire, rescue, and emergency medical services to the public without regard to known or suspected diagnoses of communicable disease in any patient.
- To regard all patient contacts as potentially infectious. Universal Precautions will be observed at all times and will be expanded to include all body fluids and other potentially infectious material (body substance isolation).
- To provide all members with the necessary training, immunizations, and personal protective equipment (PPE) needed for protection from communicable diseases.
- To recognize the need for work restrictions based on infection control concerns.
- To encourage participation in member assistance and CISD programs.
- To prohibit discrimination of any member for health reasons, including infection and/or seroconversion with HIV or HBV virus.
- To regard all medical information as strictly confidential. No member health information will be released without the signed written consent of the member.

Exposure Control Plan

To identify those tasks and corresponding job classifications for which it can be reasonably anticipated that an exposure to blood, other body fluids, or other potentially infectious materials may occur; to establish a schedule for implementation of the department's infection control plan; and to identify the procedure for the evaluation of circumstances surrounding exposure incidents.

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1. Exposure Determination

Notification and documentation of all exposures shall occur as soon as possible per the Bloodborne Pathogens/Infectious Control Program. All service areas provided by the Russellville Fire Department involve potential exposure to blood, body fluids, or other potentially infectious materials.

These service areas include, but are not limited to:

Emergency Medical Care, Extrication, Structure Fires, Rescue, Hazardous Materials, Body recovery/removal

2. Implementation

It is the responsibility of all members of the Russellville Fire Department to be familiar with, and follow this policy.

The Bloodborne Pathogens/Infectious Control Program consists of a policy that identifies roles and responsibilities, training, and record keeping along with guidelines for all aspects of response and station environments where disease transmission can be reasonably anticipated. Training, administrative aspects of the program, documentation and post-exposure evaluation/investigation are also addressed.

Complete copies of the Bloodborne Pathogens/Infectious Control Program are maintained at each station and in the senior staff member offices.

Annual training shall be provided to all employees.

3. Evaluation of Exposure Incidents

The procedure for the evaluation/investigation of circumstances surrounding incidents of exposure to blood, other body fluids, or other potentially infectious materials is detailed in the Russellville Fire Department Bloodborne Pathogens/Infectious Control Program. If there is an incident where exposure to bloodborne pathogens occurred we immediately focus our efforts on investigating the circumstances surrounding the exposure incident and making sure that our employees receive medical consultation and immediate treatment. The Russellville Fire Department Infectious Control Officer investigates every reported exposure incident and a written summary of the incident and its causes is prepared and recommendations are made for avoiding similar incidents in the future.

Once these procedures have been completed, an appointment is arranged for the exposed employee with a qualified healthcare professional to discuss the employee's medical status. This includes an evaluation of any reported illnesses, as well as any recommended treatment.

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Accurate medical records for each employee with occupational exposure must be maintained for at least the duration of employment plus 30 years and shall include at least the following:

- Employee's name, Social Security number and employee number.
- Employee's Hepatitis B vaccination status, including vaccination dates.
- All results from examinations, medical testing and follow-up procedures, including all health care
- Professional's written opinions.
- Information provided to the health care professional.
- Any Hepatitis B Vaccine Declinations.

Information provided to our employees includes:

- The Bloodborne Pathogens/Infectious Control Program itself.
- The epidemiology and symptoms of bloodborne diseases.
- The modes of transmission of bloodborne pathogens.
- Our Department's Exposure Control Procedure (and where employees can obtain a copy).
- Appropriate methods for recognizing tasks and other activities that may involve exposure.
- A review of the use and limitations of methods that will prevent or reduce exposure.
- Selection and use of personal protective equipment.
- Visual warnings of biohazards within our facility including labels, signs and "color-coded" containers.
- Information on the Hepatitis B Vaccine.
- Actions to take and persons to contact in an emergency involving potentially infectious material.
- The procedure to follow if an exposure incident occurs, including incident reporting.
- Information on the post-exposure evaluation and follow-up, including medical consultation.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Chief of Department

The task of managing the department Occupational Health and safety and Infection Control Programs are delegated to the Training Division and / or designee. The ultimate responsibility for the health and welfare of all members remains that of the Chief of Department.

Training Division

In addition to existing duties, the Training Division and/or designee are responsible for the development and delivery of a comprehensive infection control educational program, which complies with OSHA Regulation 29 CFR part 1910-1030. The Department Infection Control Officer will be appointed by the Training Division. This person must have five or more years of recent fire/EMS experience and possess current EMT-P (Paramedic) certification.

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Department Infection Control Officer

- Serve as the department “designated officer” as required by the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Act of 1990 (PL 101-381).
- Develop criteria for the purchase of infection control personal protective equipment and determine adequate stocking levels for each station and response vehicle.
- Evaluate possible member exposures to communicable diseases and coordinate communications between the department, area hospitals, and Arkansas Occupational Health Clinic.
- Conduct spot inspections of on-scene and station operations to ensure compliance with department infection control policy.
- Coordinate the immunization program with the Pope County Health Department and maintain immunization records.
- Maintain a confidential database of exposures and treatment given, in conjunction with the Arkansas Occupational Health Clinic.
- Provide technical expertise to the Training Division for development of the infection control curriculum.

Chief Officers and Company Officers

- Support and enforce compliance with the Infection Control Program.
- Correct any unsafe acts, and refer members for remedial infection control training if required.
- Mandate safe operating practices on-scene and in-station.
- Refer for medical evaluation any member possibly unfit for work for infection control or other reasons.
- Company officers will not allow new members to assume emergency response duties until initial medical evaluation, immunizations, and infection control training have been completed.

Members

- Assume ultimate responsibility for personal health and safety.
- Always use appropriate PPE as the situation dictates.
- Report any suspected occupational exposure to communicable disease to their company officer.
- Report any diagnosis of communicable disease (occupational or non-occupational) to the department Infection Control Officer.

Approved

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