



PAWNEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
SHERIFF DARRIN VARNELL

Policy #  <b>Bloodborne Pathogens</b>	Related Policies:
<p><i>This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this agency for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.</i></p>	
Applicable Oklahoma Statutes:	
CALEA Standard:	

- I. **Purpose:** It is the intent The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office to minimize the risk of exposure to bloodborne pathogens and other infectious diseases through the establishment and maintenance of recognized protocols and safety procedures.
  
- II. **Policy:** The transfer of disease by exchange of bodily fluids is a serious occupational health risk to law enforcement Deputies and other emergency personnel. Deputies and employees The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office will follow recognized protocols and safety procedures in order to minimize this risk. When in doubt, Deputies and employees of the agency should seek professional assistance before knowingly exposing themselves to a known serious risk of infection.
  
- III. **Definitions:**
  - A. **Bodily Fluids** - Blood, semen and vaginal fluids or other secretions that might contain these fluids such as saliva, vomit, urine, or feces.
  
  - B. **Exposure Control Plan** - A written plan developed by this agency and available to all employees that details the steps taken to eliminate or minimize exposure and evaluate the circumstances surrounding exposure incidents.
  
  - C. **Personal Protective Equipment** - Specialized clothing or equipment worn or used by members for protection against the hazards of infection. This does not include standard issue uniforms and work clothes without special protective qualities.
  
  - D. **Universal Precautions** - Procedures promulgated by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) that emphasize precautions based on the assumption that all blood and bodily fluids are potentially infectious

- E. Bloodborne Pathogens-** Pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. The pathogens include but are not limited to hepatitis B virus (HBV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
  
- F. Tuberculosis [TB]** - A common and deadly infectious disease that is caused by mycobacteria, primarily *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. Tuberculosis most commonly affects the lungs (as pulmonary TB) but can also affect the central nervous system, the lymphatic system, the circulatory system, the genitourinary system, bones, joints, and even the skin. Other mycobacteria such as *Mycobacterium bovis*, *Mycobacterium africanum*, *Mycobacterium canetti*, and *Mycobacterium microti* can also cause tuberculosis, but these species do not usually infect healthy adults. Over one-third of the world's population now has the TB bacterium in their bodies and new infections are occurring at a rate of one per second.

#### **IV. Procedure:**

- A.** AIDS, HIV, hepatitis B (HBV), hepatitis C (HCV), and other serious diseases can be contracted through exposure to infected blood and several types of bodily secretions. Employees The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office are continuously provided with information and education on prevention of these diseases, provided up-to-date safety equipment and procedures that minimize their risks of exposure and to institute post-exposure reporting evaluation and treatment for all members exposed to these diseases.
  
- B.** Tuberculosis (TB) is again becoming more prevalent in our society and the newer strains are more drug resistant making them more difficult to treat. TB is spread through the air from one person to another. The bacteria are put into the air when a person with active TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs or sneezes. People nearby may breathe in these bacteria and become infected. Practicing good hygiene, Universal Precautions, use of PPE, and use of masks will greatly reduce the chance of contracting TB.
  
- C.** In the interest of the health and safety of all employees of this agency, all needle-stick, puncture wounds and exposure to mucocutaneous blood and/or body fluid must be reported immediately.
  
- D.** Employees may be reluctant to report occupational risk exposures for a variety of reasons; however immediate medical management is vital for the following reasons:

1. Immediate reporting allows time for you and your physician to discuss anti-viral treatment risks/benefits.
  
2. Anti-viral treatment has been shown to decrease the rate of HIV seroconversions following occupational exposures by 79% if initiated within 1-2 hours. As time goes by, the potential effectiveness of anti-viral medications preventing HIV infection decreases.
  
3. If after 24 - 36 hours anti-viral medications have not been initiated expert consultation for HIV post exposure prophylaxis (PEP) is advised. Information and advice can be sought either with local infectious disease specialist or by contacting the National Clinicians/ Post Exposure

Prophylaxis Hotline (PEPline), telephone **888-448-4911**.

4. Reevaluation is strongly encouraged within 72 hours post exposure, especially as additional information about the exposure or source person becomes available.

5. Post exposure prophylaxis management for Hepatitis B is also available, and should be considered.

#### **A. Disease Prevention and Control Guidelines:**

- A.** This agency subscribes to the principles and practices for prevention of HIV and HBV exposure as detailed in the "universal precautions" prescribed by the CDC and the federal regulations of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Where otherwise not detailed in this policy, Deputies are guided by those practices and procedures.
- B.** Deputies should assume that all persons are potential carriers of HIV or HBV.
- C.** No Deputy may refuse to arrest or otherwise physically handle any person or prisoner who may carry the HIV or HBV virus when appropriate protective equipment is available.
- D.** Deputies must use protective gear under appropriate circumstances unless its use would prevent the effective delivery of health care or public safety services or impose an increased hazard to the Deputy's safety or the safety of others.
- E.** Leather gloves or their protective equivalent must be worn when searching persons or places or when working in environments such as accident scenes where sharp objects and bodily fluids may be expected.
- F.** Searches of automobiles or other places should be conducted using a flashlight, mirror, or other devices where appropriate. After a cautious frisk of outer garments, suspects should empty their pockets or purses and remove all sharp objects.
- G.** Needles must not be recapped, bent, broken, removed from a disposable syringe, or otherwise manipulated by hand. No needle shall be re-capped using two hands. If it becomes necessary to re-cap a needle the one hand method will be utilized where the Deputy holds the syringe with one hand and inserts the needle into the cap which has been placed on a hard stationary surface. The Deputy will not touch or hold the cap during the re-capping procedure. This procedure insures the Deputy will not sustain a needle stick.
- H.** Needles must be placed in, puncture-resistant, leak proof containers provided by the agency that are designated for biohazardous materials when collected as evidence, disposal or transportation purposes.
- I.** Deputies must not smoke, eat, drink, or apply makeup while on active crime or accident scenes where bodily fluid spill could be expected.
- J.** Any evidence contaminated with bodily fluids must be completely dried, double bagged, and marked to identify potential or known communicable disease contamination.
- K.** Deputies must not pick their noses, rub their eyes, or place their fingers in their mouth or ears, until after they've washed their hands.

#### **B. Custody and Transportation of Prisoners:**

- A.** When appropriate protective equipment is available, no Deputy may refuse to interview, assist, arrest, or otherwise physically handle any person who may have a communicable disease. Should an Deputy be involved in an incident where proper safety materials are not available; the Deputy should immediately contact his or her supervisor and request assistance.
- B.** Deputies must not put their fingers in or near the mouth of any conscious person. Deputies utilizing protective gloves can, in life threatening situations, insert their finger into the mouth of an unconscious person to attempt to clear a blocked airway. This action should be performed in accordance with prescribed foreign body airway obstruction procedures.
- C.** When possible, persons with body fluids on their body or clothing are transported in separate vehicles from other individuals. The individual may be required to wear a suitable protective covering if he is bleeding or otherwise emitting bodily fluids.
- D.** During a transfer of custody, Deputies must discreetly notify support personnel that the suspect/victim has body fluids on the person or that the suspect/victim has said that he or she has a communicable disease. Care must be taken to ensure that the information is given only to those who have a need to know.
- E.** When possible, suspects taken into custody with body fluids on their body or clothing, and not in need of medical attention, must be isolated from other persons in a designated holding area posted with an "Isolation Area-Do Not Enter" sign until clean-up has been completed and a change of clothes has been provided.
- F.** Deputies will document on the appropriate arrest or incident form when a suspect taken into custody has bodily fluids on his person or has stated that he has a communicable disease.

**C. Housekeeping:**

- A.** Supervisors and their employees are responsible for the maintenance of a clean and sanitary workplace and shall conduct periodic inspections to ensure that these conditions are maintained.
- B.** Supervisory personnel will determine and implement written schedules as appropriate for cleaning and decontamination based on the location within the facility or work environment, the type of surface or equipment to be cleaned, the type of soil present and the tasks and procedures to be performed in the area.
- C.** All equipment and environmental and work surfaces must be cleaned and decontaminated after contact with blood and other potentially infectious materials. protective coverings used in laboratory, evidence custody, or enforcement operations for covering surfaces or equipment are removed or replaced as soon as possible following actual or possible contamination.
- D.** Bins, pails, and similar receptacles used to hold actual or potentially contaminated items are labeled as BIOHAZARD. These receptacles are decontaminated as soon as feasible following contamination and then inspected and decontaminated on a regularly scheduled basis.
- E.** Broken and potentially contaminated glassware, needles, or other sharp instruments must not be retrieved by hand but by other mechanical means and may not be stored in a manner that requires that they be retrieved manually.
- F.** Deputies must remove clothing that has been contaminated with bodily fluids as soon as practical and with as little handling as possible. Any contacted skin area must be cleansed in the prescribed fashion.

- G. Contaminated laundry and personal protective equipment must be bagged or containerized at the location where it is used in agency approved leak proof containers.
- H. Personnel working in or supporting a criminalistics laboratory adhere to agency policy and procedure as well as the laboratory's policy and procedures.
- I. Only employees specifically designated by the Sheriff may discard actual or potentially contaminated waste materials. Disposals conform to established federal, state, and local regulations.

**D. Disinfection of Skin Surfaces:**

- A. Any unprotected skin surfaces that come into contact with bodily fluids must be thoroughly washed as soon as possible with hot running water and soap for at least one [1] minute then rinsed with an antiseptic solution before drying.
- B. Alcohol or antiseptic towelettes or anti-bacterial gel may be used when soap and water are unavailable.
- C. Disposable gloves should be removed inside out, with the contaminated side not exposed, and then the hands and forearms washed.
- D. Skin surfaces are washed, showering if necessary, and mucous membranes flushed as soon as feasible following the removal of any clothing.
- E. Hand lotion should be applied after disinfection to prevent chapping and to seal cracks and cuts on the skin.
- F. All open cuts and abrasions must be covered with waterproof bandages before reporting to duty.
- G. Other items such as handcuffs, etc., should be disinfected with a bleach solution (1 part bleach to 9 parts water), rubbing alcohol, or commercial disinfectant.
- H. Contaminated shoes and boots, including soles, should also be disinfected with an approved disinfectant. Extreme care should be taken to assure that contaminated footwear is not worn home or taken into a work area.

**E. Disinfection of Vehicle Surfaces:**

- A. Vehicle surface areas must be disinfected whenever bodily fluids are spilled or after individuals with bodily fluid contamination are transported in an agency vehicle.
- B. A supervisor shall be notified and the vehicle taken to the service center as soon as possible.
- C. Affected vehicles must be immediately designated with the posting of an *Infectious Disease Contamination* sign upon arrival at the service center and while awaiting disinfection.
- D. Service personnel must remove any excess bodily fluids from the vehicle with absorbent cloths, paying special attention to any cracks, crevices, or seams that may be holding fluids.
- E. The affected areas should be disinfected using 1 part bleach to nine parts water ratio and allowed to air. Detergents and hot water maybe used following the bleach / water decontamination.
- F. Vehicles taken to a service center for scheduled washing and routine maintenance will, as part of that routine, be cleaned in the interior with an approved disinfectant.
- G. Non-disposable equipment and areas upon which bodily fluids have been spilled must be disinfected as follows:

- a. Excess bodily fluids should be wiped up with approved disposable absorbent materials.
- b. A freshly prepared solution of one-part chlorine bleach to 9 parts water or a fungicidal/ micro bactericidal disinfectant must be used to clean the area or equipment.

#### **H. Supplies:**

This agency is responsible for purchasing, storing, and issuing communicable disease prevention supplies to all personnel. Deputies are responsible for notifying their supervisor for the replacement of any item. The agency will make available the following protective equipment to all Deputies:

- A.** Disposable coveralls, aprons, and shoe covering in appropriate sizes;
- B.** Disposable latex gloves and leather gloves;
- C.** Puncture resistant containers and sealable plastic bags;
- D.** Barrier resuscitation equipment, protective eye goggles, and surgical face masks;
- E.** Disposable towelettes (70% isopropyl alcohol);
- F.** Waterproof bandages;
- G.** Absorbent cleaning materials;
- H.** *Do Not Use - Possible Infectious Disease Contamination* signs;
- I.** Biohazard disposal bags;
- J.** Portable metal mirrors; &
- K.** Non-porous tongs.

#### **I. Vaccination, Exposure, Evaluation and Treatment:**

- A.** All members The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office who may be at risk for occupational exposure to the hepatitis B virus are provided with the opportunity to take the HBV vaccination series at no cost within 10 working days of assignment to an occupationally exposed duty. The vaccination is provided unless the Deputy has previously received the vaccination or medical reasons contradict the procedure.
- B.** Any person who has unprotected physical contact with blood or other bodily fluids of another person while in the line of duty is considered to have been potentially exposed to HBV and/or HIV.
- C.** In cases of exposure, a supervisor will be contacted who will complete appropriate on duty injury and medical forms and take appropriate steps to document the means and circumstances under which the exposure occurred.
- D.** Immediately after exposure, the Deputy will proceed to the designated health care facility for tests of evidence of infection and treatment of any injuries.
- E.** This agency ensures continued testing of the member for evidence of infection and provides psychological counseling as determined necessary by the health care official.
- F.** The Deputy will receive a copy of the health care provider's written opinion within 15 days of the evaluation and information on any conditions resulting from the exposure that require further evaluation or treatment.
- G.** Unless disclosure to an appropriate agency official is authorized by the Deputy or by state law, the Deputy's medical evaluation, test results, and any follow-up procedures remain confidential.

**H.** Any person responsible for potentially exposing a member The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office to a communicable disease is encouraged to undergo testing to determine if the person has a communicable disease.

**I.** The person is provided with a copy of the test results and a copy is provided to the exposed agency Deputy. The Deputy is informed of applicable state laws and regulations concerning the disclosure of the identity and infectious status of the source individual.

**J.** Criminal charges may be sought against any person who intentionally exposes a member The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office to a communicable disease.

**K.** Deputies who test positive for HIV or HBV may continue working as long as they maintain acceptable performance and do not pose a safety and health threat to themselves, the public or other members of this agency.

**L.** This agency makes all decisions concerning the employee's work status solely on the medical opinions and advice of the agency's health care officials.

**M.** The agency may require an employee to be examined by the agency health care officials to determine if he is able to perform his duties without hazard to himself or others.

**N.** All members The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office treat employees who have contracted a communicable disease fairly, courteously and with dignity.

#### **J. Supervisory Responsibilities: In accordance with**

A. Without delay – If a significant blood borne exposure has occurred, get the exposed individual to the nearest emergency room for evaluation. Supervisor should call the emergency room and inform them that they are sending an employee to the emergency room for evaluation and follow-up to a blood borne exposure.

B. Report exposure to your next level supervisor.

#### **K. Training:**

**A.** The training coordinator will ensure that all members The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office with occupational exposure are provided with a complete course of instruction on prevention of blood borne diseases prior to their initial assignment.

**B.** Affected employees will receive annual refresher training and additional training whenever job tasks or procedures are modified in a manner that may alter their risk of exposure.

**C.** Trainees will have access to applicable federal and state regulations pertaining to the regulation of blood borne pathogens.

**D.** The training coordinator will complete records on member training to include dates and content of training sessions, names and qualifications of persons conducting the training and names of those persons successfully completing the training.