



**TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**



## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

<b>SUBJECT:</b> Communicable Diseases		<b>NO. OF PAGES:</b> 4
<b>REFERENCES:</b> Texas Workers Compensation Commission Rules: 122.3, 122.4 & 110.108	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> Jan. 1, 2009	<b>REVIEW DATE:</b> N/A
<b>General Order 024</b>	<b>SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS/SUPERSEDES:</b> N/A	<b>ISSUING AUTH.:</b> CHIEF OF POLICE

**PURPOSE:** To establish policy to be followed when a member of this department comes in contact with a communicable disease or human bite.

**A. Obligation to Perform Duty:**

1. As a part of police operations, employees may come into contact with persons carrying infectious diseases, including AIDS, hepatitis and tuberculosis. Employees should use caution and follow the guidelines in this policy when dealing with blood or body fluids.
2. Employees are expected to take every precaution to prevent contracting a communicable disease. Research has shown that when standard precautions are taken, the transmission of disease through the types of contacts experienced by police are unlikely. Employees are reminded that fear of communicable disease does not excuse them from their obligation to perform their duty.

**B. All Body Fluids are Presumed to be Contaminated:**

1. For the purpose of employee safety, all blood and body fluid, or clothing and property soiled with blood or body fluid, are assumed to be contaminated. Saliva and urine may contain only trace amounts of the HIV virus and actually pose little risk of infection. Blood, semen and vaginal discharge are known to carry high concentrations of the HIV virus.

**C. Officer Responsibilities:**

1. Officers will carry rubber latex gloves while on duty.
2. Officers will ensure that gloves are not torn prior to use. Rings, jewelry or long fingernails may compromise the strength of the gloves. Officers should properly dispose of used gloves in OSHA approved contamination bags. Gloves should not be left at the scene of a call or arrest.
3. Officers will exercise caution and use gloves when doing any of the following:
  - a. Searching arrested persons.
  - b. While searching vehicles, officers should be wary of placing their hands in blind spots where they might be stuck with a hypodermic needle.
  - c. Handling, packaging or transporting any items which may contain blood or body fluid.
  - d. Administering first aid to injured persons when officers risk exposure to body fluid or blood.
  - e. Cleaning areas contaminated by blood spills or body fluid.
4. Officers will wash their hands after using gloves. Gloves are not to be re-used.
5. Officers will dispose of "sharps" in an OSHA approved storage container.
6. Transporting procedures.
  - a. When transporting any person with blood or body fluid on their person, they should be transported alone.
  - b. If arrested are uninjured, but contaminated, they will be transported directly to the University Police Department. If taken to the University Police Department, they will be

placed immediately in detention and the shift commander notified. Injured arrested will be treated at Ben Taub General Hospital.

- c. After transporting, officers will inspect the vehicle to determine if it is contaminated by blood or body fluid. Should either substance be found, officers will notify their supervisor who will supervise clean up. Arresting or transporting officers are responsible for cleaning vehicles or detention areas. The effected area should be washed with a solution of one part bleach to nine parts water.
- d. Special precautions are required when transporting and arresting persons suspected of carrying tuberculosis. Persons having TB can cough up disease carrying droplets. If another person inhales these droplets, they can become infected. The most notable symptom of TB is a persistent cough in which the person is coughing up phlegm. Police officers are most likely to encounter infected persons when dealing with transients, aliens and IV drug users. Officers can best safeguard against exposure by insuring adequate ventilation when interviewing or transporting suspected carriers of TB.

#### 7. First Aid

- a. All persons must have equal access to first aid.
- b. If an officer begins first aid, they may not stop unless: Administration of treatment is complete and the recipient is no longer in an acute emergency situation; EMS has arrived and assumed responsibility of providing first aid; or the officer becomes physically exhausted and is unable to continue care.
- c. Officers will not use CPR barrier equipment unless they have been trained in its use.
- d. Should an arrested person, or former arrested person, claim that they were exposed to a reportable disease while in the custody of Texas Southern University Department of Public Safety, the claimant may: Request that the person who exposed them to the disease submit to testing and be entitled to diagnostic testing.

#### 8. Crime scenes - evidence

- a. Only those who need access shall enter a crime scene.
- b. Officers shall not smoke, eat, drink, or chew gum at a crime of accident scene.
- c. All blood spills shall be considered contaminated.
- d. Evidence that is stained with body fluid or blood will be transported to the University Police Department in a plastic bag. If wet, it will be allowed to air dry. Sharp objects will be placed in a plastic bag so the edge will be visible. If unable to secure in plastic, sharp edge will be covered.
- e. Gloves will be worn during handling of contaminated evidence.
- f. Officers will wash hands upon leaving crime scenes.
- g. Officers are not responsible for cleaning spills of blood or body fluid at the scene of a crime or accident. However, officers should insure that the scene is secured until clean, or otherwise insure that no risk to public health results from exposure to the crime scene.

#### D. Equipment and Supplies:

1. Each patrol vehicle shall contain the following equipment in the Emergency Response Kit. The first Aid kit and the Clean-up kit shall be contained in separate clear, re-sealable bags (12"x 15").
  - a. First Aid Kit: Rubber gloves, CPR barrier, alcohol wipes, goggles, paper towels, plastic emergency thermal blanket, & one page instruction sheet.
  - b. Clean-up Kit: Rubber gloves, disposal bags, liquid hospital disinfectant which is tuberculocidal, paper towel, One page instruction sheet.
2. A first aid kit is kept in the commander's office for use in the University Police Department.
3. The kits shall be inspected as part of the Emergency Response Kit (ERK) by the shift sergeants. Each inspection shall be noted on the inspection log contained in each ERK.

#### E. Confidentiality:

1. All medical information, including information about HIV/Aids, shall be treated confidentially. HIV status shall not be released to non-medical personnel unless written consent specifying certain individuals or classes of individuals is obtained from the detained. Non-medical personnel receiving such information shall keep this information confidential.

F. Occupational Exposure to HIV:

1. When an officer has been involved in line of duty incident resulting in an exposure, which the officer believes has put them at risk of a reportable disease, the officer may request the Texas Department of Health to order the testing of the person who may have exposed the officer. In order to request such testing, the officer shall:
  - a. Immediately notify their supervisor, who will prepare a first report of injury.
  - b. Document the exposure in an incident/offense report.
  - c. Within 72 hours of the exposure, the officer must file a sworn affidavit to the Texas Department of Health delineating the reasons for the request. The Texas Department of Health may order testing of an individual if it determines that an exposure capable of transmitting a reportable disease.
2. When an officer claims occupational exposure to a reportable disease, including HIV/AIDS, the claimant may request testing and counseling. The state must assume the expenses for testing and counseling. The payment shall be from funds appropriated for payments of worker's compensation benefits. Payment is to be based on rules established by the Attorney General's Office.
3. The Texas Worker's Compensation Commission has passed rules regarding exposure to certain communicable diseases and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). These rules require that in order to be eligible for worker's compensation benefits, an employee must have a negative baseline test within ten days of the exposure and provide documentation of the test and the circumstances of the exposure to the employer. The cost of the testing is to be paid by the employee's worker's compensation carrier.
  - a. Rule 122.3 applies to law enforcement workers, fire fighters, emergency service workers, paramedics, and correctional officers who are exposed to a reportable disease. Reportable diseases are those communicable diseases required to be reported to the Texas Department of Health. A sworn affidavit is required to be filed with the employer.
  - b. Rule 122.4 applies to all state employees who claim a possible work-related exposure to HIV. A written statement is required to be filed with the employer.
  - c. Rule 110.108 requires employers to notify employees of these requirements by posting a notice in personnel offices and where employees are likely to read the notice on a regular basis.
  - d. These rules apply only to the baseline test and do not include any benefit for follow-up testing or prophylactic treatment. In the past, these costs, including the cost for the baseline test, have been absorbed by the components in accordance with recommendations of the Occupational Exposure Work Group (OEWG). Nothing in these rules or the Worker's Compensation Act prohibits handling exposures in the current manner providing the proper protocols are followed for documentation and the employee is not required to pay.

APPROVED:

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Roger Byars                      Date  
Chief of Police

Review and Responsibility

Responsibility Party: Texas Southern University Department of Public's Safety's Command Staff

Review:                      Review will be conducted every even numbered

Retention:                      Original on file in the Office of the Chief of Police

Approval:                      Roger D. Byars, Director for Public Safety/Chief of Police

Date of Approval:              September 1, 2008