

WINONA POLICE DEPARTMENT

NUMBER: 109-14 PAGES: 6

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 27, 2004

SUBJECT: COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

1.0 PURPOSE:

The purpose of this general order is to provide guidelines for law enforcement officers in preventing the transmission of communicable diseases.

2.0 POLICY:

It is the responsibility of the department to ensure that its members are able to perform their duties in a safe and effective manner. The safe performance of daily operations has recently become threatened by life-endangering communicable diseases. Therefore, it shall be the policy of this department to provide employees with up-to-date safety procedures and communicable disease information that will assist in minimizing potential exposure, while increasing their understanding of the nature and potential risks of communicable diseases.

3.0 DEFINITIONS:

3.1 Exposure to Body Fluids: When an officer's skin or mucous membrane is exposed to regular body fluids [including blood, semen, blood products, saliva, vomit, urine, feces, vaginal secretions (including menstrual blood), amniotic (pregnancy) fluid, cerebral spinal (brain and backbone) fluid, synovial (joint) fluid, pleural (chest) fluids, peritoneal (heart) fluid] through needlestick, cut, bite, splash or when the officer's skin is chapped, abraded, or otherwise non-intact, during the performance of his/her job.

3.2 Communicable Diseases: Those infectious illnesses that are transmitted through contact with the body fluids of an infected individual.

4.0 PROCEDURES:

4.1 Communicable Disease Prevention

4.1.1 In order to minimize potential exposure to communicable diseases, officers should assume that all persons are potential carriers of a communicable disease.

4.1.2 Disposable gloves shall be worn when handling any persons, clothing or equipment contaminated with body fluids and when performing body cavity searches.

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4.1.3 Masks, protective eyewear and coveralls shall be worn where body fluids may be splashed on the officer.

4.1.4 Plastic mouthpieces or other authorized barrier/resuscitation devices shall be used whenever an officer performs CPR or mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

4.1.5 All sharp instruments such as knives, scalpels and needles shall be handled with extraordinary care and should be considered contaminated items.

4.1.5.1 Leather gloves shall be worn when searching for or handling sharp instruments.

4.1.5.2 Officers shall not place their hands in areas where sharp instruments might be hidden. An initial visual search of the area should be conducted, using a flashlight, where necessary. The suspect may also be asked to remove such objects from his/her person.

4.1.5.3 Needles shall not be recapped, bent, broken, removed from a disposable syringe or otherwise manipulated by hand.

4.1.5.4 Needles shall be placed in a puncture-resistant container when being collected for evidentiary or disposal purposes.

4.1.6 Officers shall not smoke, eat, drink, apply makeup, or chew fingernails around body fluid spills and should avoid hand-to-mouth, hand-to-nose, or hand-to-eye contacts.

4.1.7 Any evidence contaminated with body fluids will be dried, double-bagged in plastic bags, sealed with tape, and marked to identify potential or known communicable disease contamination.

4.2 Transport and Custody

4.2.1 Where appropriate equipment is available, no officer shall refuse to arrest or otherwise physically handle any person who may have a communicable disease.

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4.2.2 Officers shall not put their fingers in or near any person's mouth.

4.2.3 Individuals with body fluids on their persons shall be transported in separate vehicles from other individuals. The individual may be required to wear a suitable protective covering if he/she is bleeding or otherwise emitting body fluids.

4.2.4 Officers have an obligation to notify relevant support personnel during a transfer of custody when the suspect has body fluids present on his/her person or has stated that he/she has a communicable disease.

4.2.5 Suspects taken into custody with body fluids on their persons shall be directly placed in the designated holding area for processing. Jail personnel shall be notified of this condition.

4.2.6 Officers shall document on the appropriate arrest or incident form when a suspect taken into custody has body fluids on his/her person or has stated that he/she has a communicable disease.

4.3 Disinfection

4.3.1 Any unprotected skin surfaces that come into contact with body fluids shall be immediately and thoroughly washed with hot running water and soap for 15 seconds before rinsing and drying.

4.3.1.1 Alcohol or antiseptic towelettes may be used where soap and water are unavailable.

4.3.1.2 The hands and forearms should be washed after removal of gloves.

4.3.1.3 Hand lotion should be applied after disinfection to prevent chapping and to seal cracks and cuts on the skin.

4.3.1.4 All open cuts and abrasions shall be covered with bandages before reporting for duty.

4.3.2 Officers should remove clothing that has been contaminated with body fluids as soon as practical. Any contacted skin area should then be cleansed in the prescribed fashion. Contaminated clothing should be

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handled carefully and bagged until it can be handled in the normal fashion. The addition of 1/2 cup of household bleach or non-chlorine bleach will further reduce potentially infectious agents.

4.3.3 Disinfection procedures shall be initiated whenever body fluids are spilled or an individual with body fluids on his/her person is transported in a departmental vehicle.

4.3.3.1 A supervisor shall be notified and the vehicle taken to the service center as soon as possible.

4.3.3.2 The affected area of the interior of the vehicle shall be cleaned and disinfected as soon as possible to prevent further exposure.

4.3.4 Nondisposable equipment and areas upon which body fluids have been spilled shall be disinfected as follows:

4.3.4.1 Any excess of body fluids should first be wiped up with approved disposable absorbent materials. Gloves must be worn.

4.3.4.2 A freshly prepared solution of one part bleach to ten parts water or a fungicidal/mycobactericidal disinfectant shall be used to clean the area or equipment.

4.3.5 All disposable equipment, cleaning materials or evidence contaminated with body fluids shall be bagged and disposed of in compliance with state law provisions for disposal of biologically hazardous waste material.

4.4 Supplies

4.4.1 Supervisors are responsible for continuously maintaining and storing in a convenient location an adequate amount of communicable disease control supplies for their units.

4.4.2 Supervisors are responsible for dissemination of supplies for infectious disease control. Protective gloves, other first aid supplies and disinfecting materials will be made readily available at all times.

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4.4.3 The department shall have the following communicable disease control supplies available.

4.4.3.1 Clean coveralls.

4.4.3.2 Disposable gloves and leather gloves.

4.4.3.3 Puncture-resistant containers and sealable plastic bags.

4.4.3.4 Barrier resuscitation equipment, goggles and masks.

4.4.3.5 Liquid germicidal cleaner.

4.4.3.6 Disposable towelettes (70 percent isopropyl alcohol).

4.4.3.7 Bandages.

4.4.3.8 Absorbent cleaning materials.

4.4.4 Officers are required to keep disposable gloves in their possession while on either motor or foot patrol.

4.5 Line of Duty Exposures to Communicable Diseases

4.5.1 Any officer who has been bitten by a person or who has had physical contact with body fluids of another person while in the line of duty shall be considered to have been exposed to a communicable disease. See exposure definitions: Page 2 of "Guidelines for Prevention or Transmission of HIV and HBV."

4.5.2 A supervisor shall be contacted and all appropriate duty injury and medical forms shall be completed by the supervisor.

4.5.3 Immediately after exposure, the officer shall be transported to the appropriate health care facility for clinical and serological testing for evidence of infection.

4.5.3.1 The department shall ensure continued testing of the officer for evidence of infection and provide psychological counseling as determined necessary by the health care official.

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4.5.3.2 Unless disclosure to an appropriate departmental official is authorized by the officer or by state law, the officer's test results shall remain confidential.

4.5.4 Any person responsible for potentially exposing the officer to a communicable disease shall be encouraged to undergo testing to determine if the person has a communicable disease.

4.5.4.1 The person shall be provided a copy of the test results and guaranteed its confidentiality.

4.5.4.2 Criminal charges may be sought against any person who intentionally acts to expose an officer to a communicable disease.

4.5.5 Officers who test positive for a communicable disease may continue working as long as they maintain acceptable performance and do not pose a safety and health threat to themselves, the public or members of the department.

The department shall make all decisions concerning the employee's work status on the medical opinions and advice of the health care officials.

4.6 All personnel shall treat employees who have contracted a communicable disease fairly, courteously and with dignity.

4.7 Record Keeping: The department shall maintain written records of all incidents involving employees who have potentially been exposed to a communicable disease while acting in the line of duty. The records shall be stored in a secured area with limited access and maintained in conformance with applicable privacy laws.