



Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens

What Does the Law Require?

The Bloodborne Pathogens Standard was created to protect employees from workplace exposure to pathogens found in blood and bodily fluids, which they may be exposed to as a result of their specific work tasks. The law requires that employers make this protection available to employees by providing the following:

- A Written Exposure Control Plan that defines which employees have the potential for occupational exposure and how the employer complies with all aspects of the law.
- Annual information and training for employee groups defined in the Plan.
- Vaccination against Hepatitis B for defined employee groups.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that may be required.

A copy of the Bloodborne Pathogens Standard must be available to employees.



OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard:
Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens
29 CFR 1910.1030

Bloodborne Pathogens

Bloodborne pathogens are pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in exposed individuals. These pathogens include the Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), Hepatitis C Virus (HCV), and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV/AIDS). These viruses can be spread through contact with blood, sexual contact, contaminated needles from I.V. drug abuse and from mother to child during pregnancy. Types of job activities that place an employee at risk include tasks that may result in skin penetration with blood contaminated objects, blood contact with cuts and open wounds, contact with blood via the eyes, ears, nose, or mouth, or exposure to blood contaminated bodily fluids.

The Hepatitis B Virus (HBV)

The Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) causes inflammation of the liver and is responsible for liver disease. Symptoms include flu-like illness, headache, fever, chills, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and jaundice. Long-term effects include chronic liver disease and cancer. A vaccination process is available to prevent contracting this disease.

The Vaccination Process

The Hepatitis B Vaccine is 90% effective against the virus. This vaccination is a three (3) shot series administered over a six-month period. Minor side effects include soreness and swelling at the site of injection. The vaccination is thought to provide long-term immunity. Post-exposure vaccination is also available and is a viable alternative. This process provides identical protection to pre-exposure vaccination but should occur within 24 hours of exposure.

What Do School Employees Need to Know?

Who Receives Vaccination?

The school district will decide which employees are at risk based on their specific job assignments. These employees will be documented in the Exposure Control Plan and offered the opportunity to be vaccinated (free-of-charge) against the Hepatitis B Virus. Employees who decide not to be vaccinated are required to sign a Declination Form (to provide proof that the offer was made) but can change their mind at any time and still be vaccinated free-of-charge.

Exposure Incidents

If you believe you have had an occupational exposure to blood, immediately notify your supervisor. The school district is responsible for providing a free medical evaluation and follow-up. Immune Globulin should be given as soon as possible after exposure, but no later than 7 days. This will then be followed by the normal 3 shot series. The source individual should be identified, and if consent is obtained, tested for current bloodborne pathogen infection.

Universal Precautions

The practice of Universal Precautions assumes that all bodily fluids are infectious to humans. By making this assumption, individuals will take appropriate precautions and utilize Personal Protective Equipment to prevent exposure to bloodborne pathogens.

The Hepatitis C Virus (HCV)

Hepatitis C is contracted in the same way as HBV and exhibits the same symptoms and outcomes. However, over 80% of those infected with HCV will progress to the chronic form of the disease. Over 85% of those infected will become lifelong carriers that are able to infect others. There is no current vaccine to prevent HCV.

What Have You Learned?

1. Only those individuals documented in the employer's Exposure Control Plan are required to be trained and vaccinated? **T F**
2. A vaccination process is available to prevent the Hepatitis B and C viruses? **T F**
3. The employer makes the final determination on which employees have occupational exposure to blood? **T F**
4. Mosquitos are a source of transmission for bloodborne pathogens? **T F**
5. Vaccination after an exposure incident provides equal protection to pre-exposure vaccination processes? **T F**
6. Employees with occupational exposure to blood who decide not to be vaccinated must sign a Declination Form? **T F**
7. The school nurse determines whether an exposure incident has occurred? **T F**

Employee Information Contacts

**New York State Department of Labor
Division of Safety & Health
Public Employee Safety & Health Bureau**

516-228-3970

**New York State Department of Law
Environmental Protection Board**

212-341-2706

**Nassau BOCES Health & Safety Training
and Information Service**

516-396-2387

Thank You!

If we can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact the Nassau BOCES Health & Safety Training and Information Service at:

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