

## Community Connections Support Services - Policies and Procedures

<b>Section</b>	<b>Health and Safety Policy and Procedures</b>
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Infection Control (hs035)</b>
<b>Applies To</b>	<b>Employees</b>
<b>Revised Date</b>	<b>March 2020</b>

**Policy:** Employers are required by law to ensure that work is being conducted safely and to protect their workers from all work-related hazards including exposure to infectious diseases.

### **Procedures:**

\* The following procedures are taken directly from [WorkSafe BC website](#). In addition to the following procedures, the employer and employees will review and implement strategies identified in the [WorkSafe BC handbook for Controlling Exposure: Protecting Workers from Infectious Disease](#)

### **Responsibilities**

#### ***Employer Responsibilities***

- Identify infectious diseases that are, or may be, in the workplace
- Develop and implement an exposure control plan, when required (see hs035.2 Exposure Control Plan)
- Inform workers about how they may be exposed to infectious diseases in the workplace
- Educate, train and supervise workers on safe work procedures, including correct Routine Practices (see hs035.1 Routine Practices) and proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE), where applicable.
- Offer vaccinations as recommended by the BC Centre for Disease Control, at no cost to workers who are at risk of occupational exposure.
- Purchase safety-engineered medical devices, where appropriate.
- Tell workers to seek medical attention, as required.
- Tell workers that they must report incidents of exposure using the Health and Safety Incident Report form (hs040.4)

#### ***Employee Responsibilities***

Employees have responsibilities to help reduce their risk of exposure to infectious pathogens, including the following:

- Attend education and training sessions.
- Follow safe work procedures, including implementing Routine Practices and wearing

## **Community Connections Support Services - Policies and Procedures**

- PPE, if applicable.
- Seek immediate First Aid and medical attention after an occupational exposure.
- Report exposure incidents to supervisors or managers (use hs040.4 Health & Safety Incident Report form)\
- Refuse work that they have reasonable cause to believe will put them or others at risk and notify Service Coordinator immediately of risk.
- Keep records of personal vaccinations and ensure vaccinations are up to date.

### **Risks for Disease Exposure Defined**

#### ***Airborne Diseases***

- can be spread through the air when infected people cough, sneeze or speak.
- A person becomes infected by breathing in air contaminated with the virus or bacteria.
- Common airborne diseases include:
  - chicken pox (varicella)
  - pandemic influenza
  - mumps
  - tuberculosis

#### ***Bloodborne Diseases***

- transmitted through contact with infected blood or certain body fluids.
- Common bloodborne diseases include:
  - HIV/Aids
  - Hepatitis B and C

#### ***Contact Diseases***

- Transmitted through direct or indirect contact with bacteria or viruses.
- Direct contact can include physical contact with an infected person, or contact with blood and body fluids.
- Indirect contact involves touching an object or surface that has been contaminated by an infected person.
- Common contact diseases include:
  - Norovirus

#### ***Zoonotic Diseases***

- Caused by infectious agents that can be transmitted between animals and humans in a variety of ways.
- Some zoonotic diseases can be transmitted directly to humans through contact with saliva, some are airborne and others are transmitted through insect bites.
- Common zoonotic diseases include:
  - Avian flu
  - Campylobacteriosis

## **Community Connections Support Services - Policies and Procedures**

- Hantavirus
- Histoplasmosis
- Rabies
- West Nile virus

### **Reducing Risks**

If workers are at risk for infectious disease at the workplace, employers must develop and implement an Exposure Control Plan (see hs035.2). As a general rule, safe work practices everyone should follow include:

#### ***Getting Vaccinated***

- Many infectious diseases are preventable through vaccination.

#### ***Washing Hands Frequently***

Wash your hands:

- When entering the workplace.
- Immediately before any aseptic procedure or any personal care
- Immediately after providing personal care to a person supported.
- Immediately after an exposure risk to body fluids (and after glove removal)
- Before leaving the workplace.
- After touching contaminated materials or surfaces.
- Before and after eating, drinking, smoking, handling contact lenses, applying makeup or using the toilet.

#### ***Handling Sharps Properly***

- Follow manufacturer recommendations for using and disposing of sharps

#### ***Cleaning and Disinfecting Spills***

- Specific procedures are required to contain spills of bodily (see policy hs035.1 Routine Practices).

#### ***Using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)***

Workers should know how to select appropriate PPE and how to properly put it on and take it off, including:

- gloves
- respirators
- face shields
- gowns
- foot covers
- eye protection

#### ***Practising Cough Etiquette***

## **Community Connections Support Services - Policies and Procedures**

- Always cough into your sleeve or a tissue instead of your hand and wash hands after coughing.

### ***Staying Home if you are Sick***

- Workers should stay home if they are ill, especially if they are vomiting or have a fever or diarrhea.

### **References:**

WorkSafe BC. (2020). Infectious diseases. Retrieved March 9, 2020, from <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/injuries-diseases/infectious-diseases>

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