

POLICY AV0300 – MANAGEMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE TO BLOOD AND BODY FLUIDS

Interior Health would like to recognize and acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Däkelh Dené, Ktunaxa, Nlaka'pamux, Secwépemc, St'át'imc, syilx, and Tšilhqot'in Nations, where we live, learn, collaborate, and work together.

Interior Health recognizes that diversity in the workplace shapes values, attitudes, expectations, perception of self and others and in turn impacts behaviors in the workplace. The dimensions of a diverse workplace include the protected characteristics under the human rights code of race, color, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, criminal or summary conviction unrelated to employment.

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to reduce the risk of exposure to blood or other potentially infectious body fluids or tissues, and, in the event of an exposure, reduce the risk of infection.

Interior Health's (IH) guidelines for the management of Occupational Exposures to Blood and Body Fluids reflects the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) Communicable Disease Manual ([Chapter 1: Communicable Disease Control - Blood and Body Fluid Exposure Management](#)), BC Centre for Excellence in HIV / AIDS ([HIV Post-Exposure Prophylaxis \(PEP\) Guidelines](#); [Therapeutic Guidelines](#)), and [BC Occupational Health and Safety \(BC OHS\) Regulations Part 6 – Biological Agents, Section 6.33 – 6.41](#).

2.0 DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<i>Blood and Body Fluids (BBF)</i>	<i>For the purpose of this policy, this is blood or any other potentially infectious body fluids or tissues.</i>
<i>Blood or Body Fluid Exposure (BBFE)</i>	<i>An event where a person is exposed to potentially infectious blood or bodily fluid through one of the following exposures:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percutaneous: puncture of skin by needlestick or another sharp object • Permucosal: contact with mucous membranes • Non-intact skin: eczema, scratches, and damaged skin.
<i>Communicable Disease</i>	<i>For the purpose of this policy, an illness caused by virus or bacteria that is transmissible from person to</i>

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	<i>person via contact with the infected individual's blood or body fluids.</i>
<i>Employee</i>	<i>A person currently employed by Interior Health in a full-time, part-time, and/or term-specific position.</i>
<i>Non-IH Worker</i>	<i>A health-care worker not employed by IH but who provides patient care or works in institutions that provide patient care on behalf of IH (e.g. contract physicians, students, volunteers, contractors, or other health authority/services employees).</i>
<i>Occupational Exposure</i>	<i>As it applies to this policy, the exposure to blood or body fluid resulting from conducting work-related duties during the course of employment that can result in an occupational disease.</i>
<i>Screening</i>	<i>Verbal-history taking and / or examination of documented evidence and / or laboratory serological tests to determine current or previous infection, vaccination status and immunity status regarding a Communicable Disease.</i>
<i>Source</i>	<i>Any individual/person, living or dead, whose blood or body fluids may be a Source of occupational exposure to a worker.</i>
<i>Vaccination</i>	<i>The safe and appropriate administration of a vaccine by a licensed professional to stimulate the body's own immune system to protect the individual against the communicable disease in the event of an exposure.</i>

3.0 POLICY

IH recognizes that exposure to Blood and Body Fluids in the workplace is an occupational hazard in health care and is committed to providing a safe environment for Employees, Non-IH Workers, clients, and the public. IH supports this commitment through the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of initiatives that support this policy as part of the [Occupational Health and Safety Program \(AV0100\)](#).

This policy supports the [IH Biological Exposure Control Plan](#). When the risk of exposure to Communicable Disease cannot be eliminated, any planned interventions and responses will prioritize the health and safety of Employees and Non IH Workers by decreasing the risk as low as reasonably practicable.

3.1 Scope

This policy applies to all Employees and Non-IH Workers.

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3.2 Education and Training

Employees must receive instruction in prevention strategies and behavior appropriate to the level of risk in their work. Employees must complete department and job specific WHS orientation to hazards & programs specific to their work. Screening, education, and Vaccination reporting are incorporated into the recruitment and orientation process for new Employees.

All Non-IH Workers must receive education and training in prevention strategies and behavior appropriate to the level of risk of their work from their employer or academic institution. All Non-IH Workers must complete department and job specific WHS orientation to hazards & programs specific to their work.

New and returning Employees are to receive orientation to Communicable Disease prevention, including Vaccination and immunity status requirements and the management of Blood and Body Fluid Exposures ([New Employee Orientation: i-Learn 977](#)).

4.0 PROCEDURES

4.1 Procedures Available at Sites

4.1.1 Procedures Available at All Sites

4.1.1.1 BBF Exposure Procedure Chart Pack – IH Employee

The [BBF Exposure Procedure Chart Pack – IH Employee](#) is to be used by Managers, Supervisors and Employees in the event that an Employee experiences a BBFE.

4.1.1.2 BBF Exposure Procedure Chart Pack – Non-IH Worker

The [BBF Exposure Procedure Chart Pack – Non-IH Worker](#) is to be used by Managers, Supervisors and Non-IH Workers in the event that a Non-IH Worker experiences a BBFE.

4.1.2 Procedures Available in Emergency Departments

4.1.2.1 BBF Exposure Management Packages – IH Employee

The [BBF Exposure Management Package – IH Employee](#) is to be used by the First Aid Attendants, Emergency Departments and Lab in the event that an Employee experiences a BBFE.

4.1.2.2 BBF Exposure Management Package – Non-IH Worker

The [BBF Exposure Management Package – Non-IH Worker](#) is to be used by the First Aid Attendants, Emergency Departments and Lab in the event that a Non-IH Worker experiences a BBFE.

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

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In addition to the roles and responsibilities outlined in the [IH Biological Exposure Control Plan](#), and the [Occupational Health and Safety Program \(AV0100\)](#) the following responsibilities are required:

Senior Management:

- Support and actively promote IH's commitment to prevent transmission of bloodborne Communicable Diseases.
- Include preventive control measures in budget plans.
- Ensure directors/managers/supervisors monitor the prevention strategies and take appropriate action as outlined by policies and procedures.
- Promote a culture of safety within the organization.
- Support front line management in the delivery of Blood and Body Fluid Exposure follow-up.

Management and Supervisors:

- Be familiar with this policy ([AV0300](#)) and its procedures (Section 4.2).
- Ensure that all Employees and Non IH Workers receive necessary training and education (Section 3.1).
- Ensure BBFE Incident Poster (Section 5.0) is posted in common areas.
- Monitor work practices of all Employees and Non IH Workers for compliance with this policy.

First Aid Attendants:

- Be familiar with this policy ([AV0300](#)).
- Follow the procedures as outlined in Section 4.2.2.1 of this policy.

Emergency Departments:

- Be familiar with this policy ([AV0300](#)).
- Follow the procedures as outlined in the *BBF Exposure Management Packages* for IH Employee and Non-IH Worker (Section 4.2.2).
- Maintain an appropriate level of anti-retroviral medication starter kits and [Blood & Body Fluid Exposure Management Packages](#).

Employees

- Be familiar with this policy ([AV0300](#)).
- Follow the procedures as outlined in the *IH Employee Reference Guide* found in the *BBF Exposure Procedure Chart Pack – IH Employee* (Section 4.2.1.1).
- Follow all [Infection Prevention and Control Practices](#), including [Point of Care Risk Assessment](#).
- Maintain personal Vaccination records per policy [AV0900](#).
- Report unsafe conditions, incidents and near misses as per policy [AV1100](#).

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Non-IH Workers

- Be familiar with this policy ([AV0300](#)).
- Follow the procedures as outlined in the *Non-IH Workers Reference Guide* found in the *BBF Exposure Procedure Chart Pack – Non-IH Workers* (Section 4.2.1.2).
- Follow all [Infection Prevention and Control Practices](#), including [Point of Care Risk Assessment](#).
- Maintain personal Vaccination records per policy [AV0900](#).
- Report unsafe conditions, incidents and near misses to IH supervisor as well as their employer or academic institution for follow up. Volunteers must report incidents as per the [Volunteer Incident Reporting and Investigation Policy VD0100](#).

Laboratory:

- Be familiar with this policy ([AV0300](#)).
- Follow the procedures as outlined in the BBF Exposure Management Packages for both Employees and Non-IH Workers (Section 4.2).
- Follow all [Infection Prevention and Control Practices](#).
- Follow lab specific protocols.

Infection Prevention and Control Program (IPAC):

- Be familiar with this policy ([AV0300](#)).

Joint Occupational Health and Safety (JOHS) Committee/Worker Representatives:

- Be familiar with this policy ([AV0300](#)).
- Be familiar with the training, education, procedures and resources available to all sites and Emergency Departments (Sections 5.0, 6.0 and 7.0).

Workplace Health and Safety (WH&S):

- Develop and maintain this policy ([AV0300](#)) as well as its related education, training and procedures.
- Provide site support as necessary.

Provincial Workplace Health Contact Centre (PWHCC):

- Provide Employees with BBFE post-exposure management as outlined by the BCCDC ([Communicable Disease Manual, Chapter 1: Communicable Disease Control - Blood and Body Fluid Exposure Management](#)) and BC OHS Regulations ([Part 6 – Biological Agents, Section 6.33 – 6.41](#)).

5.0 RESOURCES

[BBFE Incident Poster](#)

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[Blood and Body Fluid Exposure – Document Ordering](#)
[Biological Exposure Control Plan](#)
[Infection Control Manual](#)
[Employee and Family Assistance Program](#)
[Provincial Workplace Health Contact Centre](#)
[HIV Post-Exposure Prophylaxis \(HIV PEP\)](#)

6.0 REFERENCES

1. BCCDC. (2021). Communicable Disease Manual. Retrieved from <https://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/communicable-disease-control-manual/communicable-disease-control>
2. BC Public Health Act Part 3 (2021) - Preventing Disease and Other Health Hazards. http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/08028_01/search/CIVIX_DOCUME
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