

**Georgia Department of Public Safety
Policy Manual**

SUBJECT EXPOSURE TO COMMUNICABLE DISEASES	POLICY NUMBER 18.01
DISTRIBUTION ALL EMPLOYEES	DATE 5/18/2020
	POLICY REVIEWED 5/18/2020

18.01.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to inform employees of the risks of exposure to communicable diseases in order to prevent the contraction of such diseases.

18.01.2 Procedures

A. These suggested hygiene guidelines have been developed and are aimed at employees who may deal with bodily fluids as a part of their work assignment. The best way to prevent possible infection is to avoid contact with bodily fluids. However, recognizing that this is not always possible, employees should be knowledgeable in and implement the following procedures.

B. Definitions

1. Bodily Fluids - Liquid secretions, including blood, semen, and vaginal or other secretions that might contain these fluids such as saliva, vomit, urine, or feces.
2. Communicable Disease - Infectious illnesses that are transmitted through contact with the bodily fluids of an infected individual.
3. Sharps - are sharp objects, such as broken glass, jagged metal, needles and syringes.
4. Social Distancing – the practice of maintaining a greater than usual physical distance from other people, or avoiding direct contact with people, or objects in public places. Recommendation is a distance of 6 feet or more.
5. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – Items recommended using on your person to help reduce the risk of spreading disease: gloves, goggles, face shields, facemasks, and respiratory protection (when appropriate).

C. Communicable Disease Prevention

1. Your first line of defense is your own skin. Cover cuts and scrapes.

2. In order to minimize potential exposure to communicable diseases, members shall assume that all persons are potential carriers of communicable diseases.
3. Disposable gloves shall be worn when handling any persons, clothing, or equipment with bodily fluids on them.
4. Masks and protective eye wear shall be worn where bodily fluids may be splashed.
5. Plastic mouthpieces or other authorized barrier/resuscitation devices should be used when performing CPR or mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
6. Engage in social distance whenever possible.
7. Members shall not smoke, eat, or drink around bodily fluid spills.
8. Evidence contaminated with bodily fluids shall be double bagged and marked with a red biohazard sticker.

D. Dealing with “Sharps”

1. All sharp instruments such as knives, scalpels, and needles shall be handled with care, and shall be considered contaminated items.
2. Members shall not place their hands in areas where sharp instruments are suspected of being hidden. An initial visual search of the suspected area shall be conducted, using a flashlight if necessary. Suspects shall be asked to remove any sharp objects from their person.
3. Needles shall not be recapped, bent, broken, removed from a disposable syringe, or otherwise manipulated by hand.
4. Needles shall be placed in a puncture resistant container when being collected for evidence or disposal purposes.

E. Transport and Custody

1. Members shall not put their fingers in or near any person's mouth.
2. Persons with bodily fluids on their person shall be transported in separate vehicles from other individuals.
3. Officers shall notify relevant support personnel during a transfer of custody that the suspect has bodily fluids present on their person, or has stated that they have a communicable disease.
4. Suspects taken into custody with bodily fluids on their person shall be placed in the designated holding area for processing.

5. Officers shall document on the appropriate arrest or incident report when a suspect taken into custody has bodily fluids on their person, or has stated that they have a communicable disease.

F. Disinfection

1. Unprotected skin surfaces that come into contact with bodily fluids shall be thoroughly washed with hot running water and soap. Alcohol or antiseptic towelettes may be used where soap and water are unavailable.
2. Members shall remove clothing that has been contaminated with bodily fluids as soon as possible. Any contacted skin area shall be cleansed in the prescribed manner.
3. Disinfection procedures shall be initiated when bodily fluids are spilled, or individuals with bodily fluids on their person are transported in a division vehicle.
4. Non-disposable equipment and areas upon which bodily fluids have been spilled shall be disinfected as follows:
 - a. Any excess of bodily fluids should be first wiped up with approved disposable absorbent materials.
 - b. A freshly prepared solution of one part bleach to 10 parts water or a fungicidal/antibacterial disinfectant shall be used to clean the area or equipment.
5. Disposable equipment and cleaning materials contaminated with bodily fluids shall be bagged and disposed of in compliance with State law provisions for disposal of biologically hazardous waste material.

G. Supplies

1. Supervisors shall maintain an adequate supply of communicable disease control equipment for their work area.
2. Supervisors are responsible for the dissemination of supplies for infectious disease control.
3. Division vehicles shall be stocked with the following communicable disease control supplies:
 - a. Disposable gloves;
 - b. Barrier resuscitation equipment such as goggles and masks;
 - c. Hand sanitizer; and

d. Face masks.

4. Officers using supplies stored in division vehicles are responsible for their replacement as soon as possible after use.

H. Line of Duty Exposure to Communicable Disease

1. Any member who has been bitten by a person, or who has had physical contact with bodily fluids of another person while in the line of duty shall be considered to have been exposed to a communicable disease.
2. The supervisor shall be contacted immediately and all appropriate duty injury forms shall be completed and worker's compensation procedures shall be followed in accordance with Department policy.