

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF SIERRA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING SIERRA COUNTY
BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY**

Resolution 2021-001

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Sierra County Board of Supervisors, County of Sierra, State of California does hereby adopt the attached Sierra County Bloodborne Pathogens and Communicable Disease Policy.

ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Sierra on the 5th day of January, 2021, by the following vote:

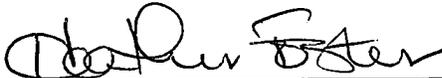
AYES: Supervisors Huebner, Roen, LeBlanc, Dryden, and Adams
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

COUNTY OF SIERRA



LEE ADAMS, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

ATTEST:



HEATHER FOSTER
CLERK TO THE BOARD

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



DAVID PRENTICE
COUNTY COUNSEL

**BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS
AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASE
POLICY ADOPTED
JANUARY 5, 2021**



Bloodborne pathogens are infectious microorganisms in human blood that can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B (HBV), hepatitis C (HCV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Needle sticks and other injuries may expose workers to bloodborne pathogens. Workers in many occupations, including first responders, law enforcement, maintenance personnel, and healthcare personnel, all may be at risk for exposure to blood borne pathogens and/or a communicable disease. A communicable disease is a disease that can be transmitted from one person to another. There are four main types of transmission including: 1) direct physical contact; 2) air (e.g.. a cough, sneeze, or other particle inhaled); 3) a vehicle (ingested or injected); and 4) a vector (via animals or insects). With respect to this policy, communicable diseases/illnesses include, but are not limited to, diseases and illnesses deemed reportable by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in conjunction with local health officials. Such communicable diseases include:

- Hepatitis viruses
- Diphtheria
- Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Tuberculosis
- Measles
- Meningococcal disease
- Mumps
- Influenza
- Varicella
- Pertussis
- Rubella
- Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)

OVERVIEW

It is the goal of Sierra County (the "County") to take steps to reduce the spread of bloodborne pathogens and communicable diseases in the workplace and protect the wellness of our employees. This policy represents the County's intention to inform all individuals of the risk of exposure to bloodborne pathogens/communicable diseases, and sets forth the principles the County will follow to protect employees and reduce the risk of spreading bloodborne pathogens/communicable diseases, in the workplace.

Any questions regarding the information contained in this policy should be addressed with the Personnel Department.

I. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Each employee has a responsibility to prevent the spread of bloodborne pathogens and communicable diseases when they are aware of, or suspect that they are or could be asymptomatic of a communicable disease/illness.

Employees are also required to notify the County in accordance with the notification section below. Employees must engage in good hygiene practices while at work, especially hand washing with soap and warm water or, if water is not available, using alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or sanitizers, which are provided.

Employees must also adhere to the recommendations issued by the CDC for specific illnesses and diseases. Additionally, this policy requires the following actions be taken to reduce the spread of communicable diseases/illnesses in the workplace:

- Individuals should stay home if they have or suspect they have a contagious communicable disease/illness.
- In most cases if an individual becomes ill due to a communicable disease/illness, they should return to the County's workplace only after at least 24 hours of being symptom free and/or after being released by a medical professional.
- Individuals who are well but who live with, or have had contact with, a family member or friend who has a communicable disease/illness may be permitted to continue reporting to the workplace. However, the County must be notified and may take action to limit the individual's potential for spreading any communicable disease/illness depending on the relevant circumstances.
- Employees should monitor their health on a daily basis to ensure they remain free of any communicable disease/illness.
- Employees should practice proper hygiene in the workplace by covering their mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, immediately washing or sanitizing hands, and avoiding touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Employees should avoid close contact with sick people encountered in the workplace, when possible. If close contact with sick people is unavoidable due to job responsibilities, proper personal protective equipment must be worn or other proactive actions should be taken as necessary.

II. EMPLOYEE NOTIFICATION AND DOCUMENTATION

If an employee has been exposed to someone with a known or suspected communicable disease/illness, suspects that they are or could be asymptomatic of a communicable disease/illness, is subject to mandatory or suggested quarantine, or receives a report of a communicable disease/illness from a health care provider, they are required to notify the Personnel Department immediately, or as soon as they become aware of this information.

If the exposure occurred on the job, the employee should complete a workers compensation form and submit it to their supervisor and/or the Personnel Department

If the exposure occurred while acting in a volunteer status with a fire district or during an ambulance or medical response, the workers compensation claim would be filed with that agency.

Individuals may be required to obtain a medical certification providing that they no longer present a threat to other individuals in the workplace prior to being permitted to return to work.

III. EMPLOYER RESPONSE

After receiving information that a County employee is, or may be, infected with a communicable disease/illness, the County will take prompt and appropriate action(s) to reduce the spread in the workplace. The County reserves the right to exclude any person from the workplace with a known or suspected communicable disease/illness if a determination is made that the restriction is in the best interests of the employees of the county worksite and the public.

The County's decisions regarding excluding individuals who have a communicable disease/illness from the workplace will be based on a current, medical judgment concerning the communicable disease/illness, the risks of transmitting the communicable disease/illness to others, the symptoms and special circumstances of each individual who has a communicable disease/illness, whether required by law to exclude individuals with the communicable disease/illness, and a careful weighing of the identified risks and the available alternatives for responding to an employee with a communicable disease/illness.

IV. COMPENSATION

An employee who has a communicable disease/illness may elect to utilize sick leave or paid time off in accordance with normal County policies. Additionally, an employee may be subject to the requirements of the county's Family and Medical Leave Act policy. An employee who has a confirmed communicable disease/illness that poses a threat to other employees may be required to utilize additional sick leave, paid time off, family and medical leave, and/or leave without pay and/or benefits until the threat is fully mitigated as determined by a qualified medical determination and approved by the County Health Officer.

V. GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE DURING LEAVE

If an employee participates in the County's group health plan, benefits may be maintained in accordance with any protections offered under the County's FMLA policy, equivalent state leave parallel policy, paid time off policy, and/or sick leave policy, if applicable. Unless otherwise specified in the relevant policy, whenever an employee is receiving pay from the County during a qualifying leave of absence where health insurance benefits are maintained, the employee's portion of the group health plan premium will be deducted from the employee's paycheck.

Employees should contact the Personnel Department with any questions regarding continuing benefits during any leave.

VI. DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION PROHIBITED

The County strictly prohibits and will not tolerate any retaliation or discrimination against any individual based on the individual having a communicable disease/illness or reporting a communicable disease/illness. Additionally, individuals will not be denied access to the workplace solely based on the grounds that they have a communicable disease/illness. However, the County reserves the right to exclude a person with a communicable disease/illness from the workplace if the County finds that, based on relevant factors, such a restriction is necessary for the welfare of the individual with the communicable disease/illness and/or the welfare of others within the workplace.

Any individual who believes that he or she has been wrongfully retaliated against or discriminated against for having a communicable disease/illness, reporting a communicable disease/illness, exercising any rights under this policy, or for any other reason may contact the Personnel Department for assistance.

VII. CONFIDENTIALITY

Communicable disease/illness-related diagnosis information reported to the County is treated as confidential information. The County is committed to complying with all applicable federal, state, and local laws that protect the privacy of persons who have a communicable disease/illness. Every effort will be made to ensure procedurally sufficient safeguards are in place to maintain the privacy of individuals who have communicable diseases/illnesses.

VIII. COORDINATION OF LEAVE

To the extent possible, leave taken under this policy will be coordinated with the County's FMLA, equivalent state leave parallel policy, paid time off policy, and/or sick leave policy. To the extent possible, where multiple policies apply the leave may run concurrently under some or all of the relevant policies.

IX. QUESTIONS

Employees who have any questions or concerns, or who need additional information regarding this policy should contact the Personnel Department at (530) 289-2879.