



# GENERAL POLICE ORDER CLEVELAND DIVISION OF POLICE



EFFECTIVE DATE:	REVISED DATE: JUNE 24, 2005	NO. PAGES: 1 of 6	NUMBER: 3.2.11
SUBJECT: CONTACTING BLOOD & BODY FLUID			
ASSOCIATED MANUAL: SECTION/UNIT/DISTRICT MANUAL		RELATED ORDERS: 2.3.08, 2.3.09, 2.3.10	
CHIEF OF POLICE: <i>Michael McGrath</i>			

*Revisions are printed in italics*

**PURPOSE:** To establish health and safety procedures, preventative measures and decontamination procedures for members of the Cleveland Division of Police who come in contact with blood and/or body fluids and to set guidelines for use of the Emergency Equipment Kit.

**POLICY:** The Division shall endeavor to provide the safest possible work environment.

**PROCEDURES:**

Because it is difficult to determine infection with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or Hepatitis B or C, hazards exist for personnel who handle persons or come in contact with blood and/or body fluids.

Sexual contact, blood transfusions, skin punctures, splashes to open skin or mucous membranes (e.g. nasal passages, mouth, eyelids) and childbirth are the most common transmission methods. No evidence indicates that casual or close contact with the AIDS virus poses a risk.

- I. Guidelines to prevent blood/body fluid exposure:
  - A. Assume **all** victims, suspects and individuals have an infectious disease.
  - B. Members should cover wounds, cuts, and hangnails on exposed body surfaces with waterproof dressings before reporting to work and keep the dressing dry.
  - C. Conditions such as severe acne, eczema, exudative lesions or weeping dermatitis should receive medical treatment before going on duty.

PAGE: 2 of 6	SUBJECT: CONTACTING BLOOD & BODY FLUID	GPO NUMBER: 3.2.11
-----------------	---	-----------------------

- D. Avoid touching your mouth and eyes.
- E. At a crime or accident scene, do not put objects (pens etc.), fingers in your mouth and do not eat, drink or apply cosmetics or lip balm. Do not use lotion that contains petroleum on hands during work.
- F. Wear disposable latex gloves if contact with body fluids or blood is possible and be careful that personal rings do not tear the gloves.
- G. When gloves are worn, avoid handling personal items (radios, papers etc.), which may spread contamination. Remove and dispose of contaminated gloves as soon as possible by placing them in a red, marked, biohazard bag.
- H. Wash hands immediately after removing the gloves. Use soap and water or a waterless hand cleaner.
- I. Protective eyewear and gowns/aprons shall be used if a splash or spray of body fluids is likely.
- J. To resuscitate, use **disposable** bag masks, mouthpieces or ventilation devices.
- K. Use emergency equipment kits and properly dispose of waste.
- L. Decontaminate equipment before reuse (cars, personal gear, etc.).
- M. The Emergency Medical Service (EMS) shall be called to transport persons only if they are experiencing a medical emergency.

## II. Soiled Uniforms/Clothing.

- A. Assume that all blood/body fluid is infectious. As soon as possible following contact, members shall:
  - 1. Change into a clean Class B uniform (General Police Order 1.1.12).
  - 2. Carefully place *one uniform only* in a biohazard bag available from the member's officer in charge. One biohazard bag for each complete soiled uniform.

PAGE: 3 of 6	SUBJECT: CONTACTING BLOOD & BODY FLUID	GPO NUMBER: 3.2.11
-----------------	---	-----------------------

3. Officers shall attach a Form-1 with their name, badge number, unit, and district/unit telephone number, *assignment and description of contamination*.
  4. Note on the Form-1 if other toxic material is present on the uniforms (i.e. battery acid).
- B. Administrative supervisors shall ensure supplies of biohazard bags are available for all shifts.
- C. Supervisor shall:
1. *Arrange, when operational needs permit, for drop off of biohazard bags, calling 623-5889 to insure that the EMS on duty shift captain is in to receive the laundry.*
  2. Ensure drop off of biohazard bags with contaminated uniforms to the EMS, Medic Four base, at Metro Hospital's main parking garage, across from the emergency room on South Pointe Drive.
  3. Arrange for the pick up of clean uniforms from the same location when EMS notifies the district/unit the uniforms are available for pick up.

### III. Guidelines for handling hypodermic needles

- A. Hypodermic needles and syringes **shall not** be recapped, purposely bent or broken, removed from disposable syringes or otherwise manipulated by hand.
- B. Evidence needles recovered in the field shall be placed in a rigid plastic container provided in the Emergency Equipment Kits. The rigid containers may be marked on or masking tape may be used and then inserted into an evidence envelope. Dispose of needles in the kit's "Sharps" container.

### IV. Preventing Blood/Body Fluid Exposure When Searching.

- A. Accidental needle-sticks are the most common, potentially infectious exposure in law enforcement.
- B. **Use gloves** to search, assuming that persons have hypodermic needles, razor blades, files or sharp objects that may have blood or body fluids on them.

PAGE: 4 of 6	SUBJECT: CONTACTING BLOOD & BODY FLUID	GPO NUMBER: 3.2.11
-----------------	---	-----------------------

1. Officers shall specifically ask about needles and sharp objects. If the individual admits possession, the officer shall direct the individual to specify the location so it may be safely removed.
2. If the individual denies possession, restrain them before the search.
3. Officers shall conduct a light pat-type search of areas that needles or sharp items may be located before doing a complete search.
4. Prior to the search, have the individual remove bulky external clothing.
5. If the pat down reveals a suspicious object, that does not seem to be a weapon, officers shall have the individual carefully remove the item(s). If it is in a pocket, have them turn the pocket inside out.
6. Shake the individual's shoes and then visually inspect the shoes. Finally, poke inside to feel for syringes or packets with a pencil or similar object before putting hands inside.
7. Wear gloves to touch genital areas, the mouth, or open skin areas.
8. If a detained individual is bleeding, officers shall cover the wound with a bandage, dressing, paper towel, plastic bag or other clean material to minimize an officer's exposure until medical care may be obtained.

C. Searching property:

1. Visually inspect property carefully. Purses, bags, eyeglass cases, containers and drawers should be emptied out and their contents visually examined before property or contents are handled.
2. If blood or body fluids are present, wear gloves. If a scene is contaminated to the degree that the emergency kit is insufficient, notify Crime Scene or Homicide Unit personnel who have additional protective gear.
3. Use a pencil or similar probe in drawers or like containers. Use flashlights to inspect rafters or ledges. Do not run hands over the top of window ledges or blindly probe. Use a flashlight even during the day. Look into hidden spaces with a long handled mirror.

PAGE: 5 of 6	SUBJECT: CONTACTING BLOOD & BODY FLUID	GPO NUMBER: 3.2.11
-----------------	---	-----------------------

4. Use a partner's assistance when confronted with tight fitting spaces or to see into exposed areas such as sofas or car seats. (One officer can hold cushions apart; the other uses a flashlight to illuminate the area).
5. Use gloves, tweezers, foil or waxed paper to handle contaminated evidence. The preferred method is gloves.
6. Wash hands thoroughly after a search.

**V. Transporting contaminated property/evidence:**

- A. Transporting contaminated property/evidence that is wet and/or seeping is a hazard. Properly bag and use non-porous surfaces or additional containers to maintain safety and protect the integrity of the evidence.
  1. Air-dry the evidence before transporting.
  2. If it is not possible to air-dry the evidence before transport, the laboratory shall air-dry it as soon as possible.
- B. Use sharps containers to dispose of sharps and rigid plastic containers for evidentiary purposes.

**VI. To report suspected or actual exposure to infectious disease:**

- A. Immediately after accidental contact with blood and/or body fluids:
  1. If stuck with a used hypodermic needle, wash the affected area a minimum of ten to fifteen seconds with soap and water, a waterless or antiseptic solution such as alcohol or BZK towelettes. Immediately seek medical attention at St. Vincent Charity Hospital's emergency room. Within two hours, prophylactic medication is recommended.
  2. Wash skin surfaces that have contact with blood and/or body fluids with soap and water, a waterless solution or an antiseptic solution for at least 30 seconds.
    - a) If mucous membranes are exposed (eyes or mouth):

PAGE: 6 of 6	SUBJECT: CONTACTING BLOOD & BODY FLUID	GPO NUMBER: 3.2.11
-----------------	---	-----------------------

- (1) Flush eyes in plain water for at least ten minutes.
  - (2) Rinse mouth with water and/or mouthwash for a minimum of five minutes.
- b) Immediately seek attention at the nearest medical facility if there is contact with a mucous membrane.
- B. Personnel who suspect exposure to blood and/or body fluids shall:
1. Immediately report the suspected exposure to their supervisor.
  2. Complete “Form A”, Evaluation of Incident for Blood and Body Fluid Exposure, available at the Medical Unit.
  3. Report to the Medical Unit the next regular business day for evaluation.
- C. Supervisors shall:
1. Assist personnel in completing “Form A”, Evaluation of Incident for Blood/Body Fluid Exposure.
  2. Complete a report package per General Police Order 1.1.13, “Duty Related Injuries”.