

Biohazardous Material Handling Practices

I. PURPOSE

This policy is designed to help CMPD Crime Laboratory employees eliminate or minimize exposure to bloodborne pathogens or other potentially infectious materials by addressing laboratory specific circumstances.

II. PACKAGING AND DISPOSAL OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIALS

- A. Sharps or sharp items, including contaminated needles, scalpels, plastic slides and cover slips, broken glass and capillary tubes, ends of dental wires, and other contaminated objects that can penetrate the skin, are regulated medical waste and must be:
 - 1. Packaged in a biohazard-labeled or red sharps container that is rigid, closable, puncture-resistant and leak-proof (when in an upright position);
 - 2. Sharps containers must be located close to the work areas and replaced before overfilled;
 - 3. During removal of sharps containers from areas of use, they must be closed and placed in a second biohazard labeled, leak-proof container or a plastic biohazard bag if there is the possibility of leakage.
- B. Small volumes of blood (<20 ml) in individual containers, such as laboratory vacuum tubes should not be emptied for disposal purposes. These containers should be packaged in a container suitable for sharps, or in a plastic biohazard bag that is placed in a rigid biohazard-labeled fiberboard box or drum.
- C. Contaminated disposable items, such as dressings, drapes, etc., that could possibly release blood or body fluids in a liquid or semi-liquid state or items that are caked with dried blood must be discarded in plastic biohazard bags that are placed in a rigid fiberboard box or drum.
- D. All biologically contaminated evidence must be decontaminated using 1:10 dilution of bleach or 70% alcohol; or properly packaged before returning/submitting to the Property Control Bureau.
- E. All biological waste will be disposed of through the Property Control Bureau or the Crime Scene Search Section on an as needed basis.

III. HOUSEKEEPING

- A. Spills should be immediately decontaminated with a 1:10 dilution of bleach before collection and disposal.
- B. Laboratory work areas must be disinfected with 1:10 solution of bleach or 70% alcohol immediately after conducting work activities with biological materials.
- C. Biohazardous sinks shall be designated for biological cleanup and sterilization with necessary soaps and solutions readily available.

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- D. Contaminated glassware and micro-utensils should be immersed in a solution such as 1:10 bleach, 70% alcohol or decontaminated using heat and then washed using soap if necessary.
- E. Evidence reception areas subject to evidence contamination must be kept clean and periodically disinfected. A 1:10 solution of bleach or 70% alcohol may be used.

IV. HOOD USE

- A. When possible, any kind of biological work should be conducted in the biohazard hood.
- B. Reagent preparation involving biohazards will be conducted in the biohazard hood.
- C. All handling of liquid blood must be conducted in the biohazard hood.
- D. Immediate cleanup of hood areas is necessary to ensure safe and efficient operation by laboratory personnel. Hoods left in an untidy condition should be brought to the immediate attention of the supervisor.

V. EXPOSURE TO BIOHAZARDOUS MATERIAL

- A. If exposure occurs, do the following: If the exposed area is a break in the skin immediately wash the affected area with soap and water and flush the area with copious amounts of water. Then apply 70% alcohol to the wound.
- B. Should the possible infected material reach the eye or mucus membranes, flush the eye, nose or mouth with copious amounts of water and then seek medical attention.
- C. Any area of the skin that has been in contact with possible infected material should be thoroughly washed whether there is a wound or not.
- D. All biological exposure events should be immediately reported to the section supervisor and/or the bureau director for appropriate follow-up action as directed by the CMPD Rules and Policies Manual.

E. Any percutaneous injury from a biologically contaminated sharp must be recorded in the Sharps Injury Log maintained by the S&CHO.

VI. HANDLING BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE IN COURTS OF LAW

- A. It is not uncommon for bloodstained articles or toxic materials to be removed from their containers and passed around the court by attorneys, police officers, and the scientific experts. To avoid unnecessary handling of potentially infectious materials, the court should be advised of a possible health hazard and the proper handling procedures. If asked to handle such evidence, you should ask for proper PPE prior to doing so.