

Occupational Exposure to Blood Borne Pathogens Employer Responsibility Procedure

Purpose

This document tells employers what their responsibilities are to prevent and respond to occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens.

Guidance

The Blood Borne Pathogens Standard, WAC 296-823, provides requirements to protect employees from exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM) that may contain blood borne pathogens. There are many blood borne pathogens, but the infections that pose the greatest risk to workers are the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), Hepatitis B virus (HBV), and Hepatitis C virus (HCV). The Blood Borne Pathogens Standard applies to you if you have employees with OPIM, even if no actual exposure incidents have occurred. If you require your employees to have certification as a First Aid provider you must follow Washington State's Blood Borne Pathogen Standard.

Procedure

You must plan ways to protect your employees from the risk of exposure to blood or OPIM. Determine if you have employees with occupational exposure and develop and implement a written exposure control plan.

To determine if you have employees with occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens:

1. You must prepare a written exposure determination if your employees have occupational exposure to blood or OPIM. This determination must be made without considering the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).
2. Make sure the exposure determination contains:
 - a list of job classifications where all employees have occupational exposure
 - a list of job classifications where some employees have occupational exposure (must include a description of all tasks and procedures or groups of related tasks and procedures and the risk of occupational exposure for these employees)

You must establish a written exposure control plan designed to eliminate or minimize employee exposure in your workplace

Make sure the plan minimally contains the following elements:

- the exposure determination, WAC 296-823-11005
- a procedure for evaluating the circumstances surrounding exposure incidents, including documentation of the routes of exposure and the circumstances under which the exposure incident happened
- how and when you will implement applicable requirements of this rule

Resources

Find a sample exposure plan here:

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/wisha/rules/bbpathogens/html/ht7.htm>

References used in this document:

WAC: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=296-823>