

AIRBORNE PATHOGENS: PREVENTIVE MEASURES AND EXPOSURE GUIDELINES

- AUTHORITY:** Administrative Directive
California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 5144(f)
County Injury and Illness Prevention Program
County of Orange Safety & Loss Prevention Resource Manual
109 Respiratory Protection Program
- RESCINDS:** Procedure Manual Item 1-3-309, dated 07/06/11
- FORMS:** [Report of Occupation Injury/Illness](#)
[Employee Occupational Injury or Illness Reporting Packet](#)
[Employer's Report of Occupation Injury or Illness](#)
[Supervisor's Investigation of Employee's Injury or Illness](#)
- PURPOSE:** To provide training and protection for employees and volunteers with a potential for occupational risk of tuberculosis exposure; to establish guidelines for use of respiratory protection in a potentially hazardous work setting; to establish procedures for reporting, evaluation and follow-up of suspected exposures.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease that is spread from person to person through respiratory droplets in the air. Only persons with active communicable disease can transmit TB. The germs are put into the air when a person with TB of the lung coughs, sneezes, laughs or sings.
1. A person with TB of the lungs may have a cough, chest pain, and/or cough up blood. He/she may first have fatigue, weight loss, and loss of appetite.
 2. The risk of transmission is increased where susceptible persons share crowded living spaces with poor ventilation or air circulation. TB is NOT spread in food, utensils, clothing, linen, or by touching.
- B. All Probation Department employees and volunteers receive communicable disease training, including bloodborne and airborne pathogens, as a component of their initial training, as well as annual update training thereafter.
- C. Institutional employees who work with **youth** in the department's 24-hour juvenile treatment facilities, receive annual TB screening through HCA/Employee Health Services
- D. All **youth** booked into the Orange County Juvenile Hall are evaluated for communicable tuberculosis based on symptoms, PPD skin testing, and possibly radiographic findings and sputum analysis.
- E. If a **youth** is determined to be potentially communicable, staff are alerted and the **youth** is placed on medical isolation status. The **youth** must wear a protective mask whenever he/she leaves the Medical Isolation Room, i.e., court, medical appointments, visits, etc.

- F. As soon as is practical, a potentially communicable **youth** is transferred to the contracted medical facility on atmospheric isolation status.
- G. All Probation Department area offices and juvenile institutions are equipped with emergency kits containing personal protective equipment. The location and proper usage of these items are addressed during annual communicable disease training.
- H. Employee Health will, upon request, test any confined space areas, such as reception booths and urinalysis testing rooms, for appropriate rates of air exchange. Improved ventilation is installed where necessary.

II. PROCEDURE

A. Preventive Measures

1. Departmental safety trainers attend annual Bloodborne Pathogens/TB control update training-for-trainers provided by HCA/Employee Health.

This training and information is then provided by in-house trainers to Probation employees and volunteers in the form of annual communicable disease update training.
2. Department employees and volunteers attend initial communicable disease/safety training as well as annual updates, thereafter following universal safety precautions in the course of their duties.
3. If a client is suspected of having communicable TB:
 - a. Remove the person from a public place (to an isolated room).
 - b. Minimize the length of contact.
 - c. Wear an approved personal protective equipment.
 - d. Ask the person to cover his/her mouth and nose with tissue when coughing.
 - e. Use approved personal protective equipment on a person who is unable to voluntarily cover his/her mouth.
4. When initially interviewing a new or prospective probationer, be it intake, investigation or indoctrination, always ask the person if he is under doctor's care or taking any prescribed medication. Of the following list of medications:

INH (Isoniazid)
PZA (R. Fampkin)
EMB (Ethambutol)
SM (Streptomycin)

Any of these medications may be indicative of communicable TB. This should alert the officer to inquire further, and to employ the precautions articulated in # 3, above.

5. When it is necessary to transport a probationer who is known or suspected to have communicable tuberculosis, the employee must wear an approved personal protective equipment and the car's windows should be rolled down. The probationer may be required to wear approved personal protective equipment, as well.
6. If an employee must spend time with a probationer known or suspected to have communicable tuberculosis, in an area with poor ventilation or air circulation, the employee must wear an approved personal protective equipment and require the probationer to also wear personal protective equipment.

B. On-The-Job Exposure

1. Report the suspected exposure immediately to the immediate supervisor, or next available person in the chain of command.
2. Refer to PMI 1-3-304 (Workers' Compensation [Employee Injuries, Accidents, Blood/Body Fluids Exposure]) for instructions on how to complete the necessary Workers' Compensation paperwork.

REFERENCES:

Procedures:	1-3-304	Workers; Compensation (Employees' Injuries, Accidents Blood/Body Fluids Exposure)
	1-3-308	Bloodborne Pathogens: Preventive Measures and Exposure Guidelines
	2-1-002	Transportation Security
	802	Tuberculosis (TB) Control Program (HCA)
Policy:	G-8	Injuries and Medical Emergencies

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Date