



# LINCOLN POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS

**NUMBER:** 1170  
**TOPIC:** INFECTIOUS DISEASE EXPOSURE  
**ISSUED BY:** TERESA EWINS, CHIEF OF POLICE  
**DATE:** 1-1-2022  
**SUPERSEDES:** G.O. 1170, 2020  
**REFERENCE:** G.O. 1220

## I. POLICY

The Lincoln Police Department will follow procedures to minimize exposure and reduce the likelihood of transmission of infectious diseases resulting from significant exposure to bodily fluids.

## II. PROCEDURE

A. Employees may contact the Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department for information regarding potential or actual exposure to infectious diseases. The Health Department can provide information on methods of transmission, risk of exposure, preventative measures, and post-exposure steps to reduce risk of contracting a disease.

### B. Infectious Disease Exposure Prevention and Precautions

1. Universal precautions should be observed by all employees to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. All blood or other potentially infectious materials must be considered infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source.
2. Protective Equipment
  - a. The department provides the following protective equipment:
    - (1) CPR face masks; disposable vinyl gloves; spit hoods;
    - (2) Disinfectant hand cleaner;
    - (3) Plastic evidence bags.
    - (4) Biohazard kits containing masks, gloves, gowns, and sharps containers.
  - b. Items may be obtained from the Property and Evidence Unit.
  - c. If possible, employees should use these supplies while engaged in duties that may bring them in contact with body fluids.
3. Employees should be aware that certain prescribed medications, such as steroids and asthma medications, suppress their immune systems, and make them more

susceptible to infectious disease.

Employees may wish to consult their private physician if they are taking prescription drugs.

### 4. Incident Scene Precautions

- a. Officers shall not eat or drink at incident scenes where body fluids are present.
- b. Officers should wear protective gloves if they are likely to have contact with body fluids, or contaminated items.
- c. Employees at the scene of an injury where the victim is being attended to by qualified medical personnel should maintain a distance sufficient to avoid exposure, unless their direct assistance is needed.
- d. Evidence contaminated with blood or body fluids should be clearly marked to avoid accidental exposure to those who may subsequently handle the evidence. Wet items of evidence should be placed in paper bags or boxes. The Property and Evidence Unit will hang these items to dry.

### C. Steps to Take Following an Exposure

1. Wash your hands thoroughly.
2. If blood or body fluids are splashed in the mouth, eyes, or nose, wash or flush the affected area thoroughly with saline or water.
3. If you are stuck with a needle that has been used, wash the area thoroughly with soap and water.
4. If your shoes or clothing are splashed with blood or body fluids, remove the contaminated articles (wear gloves to avoid further contamination) and place in a sealed plastic bag until cleaned or disposed of.

### D. Transportation of High-Risk Persons

1. The following types of individuals are to be considered persons who present a high risk of transmitting infectious diseases:
  - a. Persons who have been diagnosed with or claim to suffer from an infectious

disease, especially meningitis, HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, or active tuberculosis;

- b. Persons with open wounds, or whose person and/or clothing is otherwise contaminated with body fluids;
  - c. Persons who threaten to bite or attempt to infect employees.
2. Persons with open wounds, or injured persons who have blood or body fluids on their person or clothing should be transported for medical treatment by ambulance, unless emergency circumstances necessitate transportation in a department vehicle.
  3. Whenever officers receive information that a transport may create an exposure, they shall contact their immediate supervisor. The supervisor shall determine what, if any, preventative measures are appropriate. The supervisor may confer with the Health Department for assistance in this determination. Precautions such as the following may be employed:
    - a. Transportation by multiple employees;
    - b. Wearing of protective gear during transportation.

#### E. Reporting Significant Exposures to Infectious Diseases

1. Significant exposure shall mean a situation in which body fluids may have entered the body of an employee through a body opening (mouth, nose, eyes, etc.), a mucous membrane, or a break in the skin from cuts, abrasions, or a contaminated needle.
2. Whenever an employee has experienced such an exposure, a supervisor shall be notified as soon as possible.
3. The supervisor shall:
  - a. Complete a Lincoln Police Department Exposure Report form,
  - b. Fax a copy of the form to the Health Department at (402) 441-6205; and,
  - c. Contact the Health Department's Communicable Disease program nurse during normal business hours at (402) 441-8053 or afterhours at (402) 441-8000.
4. The Health Department will determine if the exposure is significant in regard to the transmission of disease.
5. If the exposure is deemed significant, the employee shall follow direction given by the Health Department for a blood draw.
6. The employee's supervisor shall contact the person responsible for the exposure and request they submit to a blood draw and

complete a significant exposure waiver. This can be accomplished on an outpatient basis at Bryan Medical Center - West Campus. This must be done within 8 hours of the exposure.

7. If the person responsible refuses to submit to a blood draw, contact a supervisor to secure a court order. Coordinate with the Bryan Medical Center – West Campus Lab to ensure usage of the correct blood vials.
8. If the employee is injured and treated at a hospital emergency room, the following steps shall be followed:
  - a. The employee's supervisor shall complete the LPD exposure report form.
  - b. The supervisor shall contact the Health Department for a determination.
  - c. If the Health Department deems it necessary, the supervisor will notify medical personnel so blood can be drawn on the employee.
  - d. The supervisor will then ensure that blood is obtained from the person responsible for the exposure.
  - e. If medication is needed, follow guidance of the Health Department or obtain a med card from the duty commander for initial purchase costs.
9. The original LPD significant exposure report form shall be given to the administrative assistant-for the chief for filing. This will be done whether or not the incident is deemed significant. If the employee is not injured, the LPD significant exposure report form is only required.

#### F. Hepatitis B Vaccination

1. All commissioned employees shall be afforded the opportunity to receive the hepatitis B vaccine. Public service officers in field assignments and non-sworn staff in the Identification Unit and Property and Evidence Unit who have regular contact with items contaminated with blood or body fluids shall also be eligible for hepatitis B vaccine.
2. The vaccine will be administered by the Health Department.