

Bloodborne Pathogens

The Board recognizes that staff/students may incur some risk of infection and illness each time they are exposed to blood or other potentially infectious materials. While the risk to staff/students of exposure to body fluids due to casual contact with individuals in the school environment is very low, the Board regards any such risk as serious.

Consequently, the Board directs adherence to universally recognized precautions. Universally recognized precautions require that staff and students approach infection control as if all direct contact with human blood and body fluids is known to be infectious for HIV, AIDS, HBV and/or other bloodborne pathogens.

HIV, HBV and HCV are bloodborne viruses that cause serious illnesses and are spread from one person to another, primarily through blood, fluids that contain blood, semen or vaginal fluids. The risk of spread of these diseases in the school setting is extremely low. The viruses are transmitted only when a body fluid from an infected person is introduced through broken skin, into the mucus membranes or through puncture wounds of another person. Risk for school employees is limited to persons exposed to infected students who exhibit aggressive behaviors such as biting, scratching or spitting and to persons who provide first aid to students, or staff who provide personal care or health procedures which may involve contact with blood or other potentially infectious material.

Recommendations by the Center for Disease Control emphasize the strict adherence to Standard Precautions to reduce the risk of communicable diseases, including bloodborne pathogens. Standard Precautions requires that all body fluids and substances of all persons must be considered potentially infectious for various diseases. Any staff assigned to assist with daily care or provide interventions that may have the potential for body fluid exposure working with the student be current in Bloodborne Pathogen Training as outlined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

1. Confidentiality
 - a. MESD's first responsibility is to protect the health and safety of its students and employees. A second responsibility is to recognize the rights of each individual student to a quality education.
 - b. These regulations shall be pursued so as to maintain the dignity and protect the privacy of the infected person. Confidentiality shall be a primary consideration.
 - c. HIV: Results of an HIV antibody test and the identity of a person receiving the test are confidential, and may not be released without specific written consent from the child(s) parent(s) or guardian(s). No person in Oregon may be tested for HIV without his or her informed consent, or in the case of a child, the consent of the child's parent(s) or legal guardians(s).

Special categories of children with HIV infection may pose a risk for others in the school setting. These include (1) all children less than 6 years of age; (2) children under 21 years of age whose providers have reasonable grounds to believe that they present risks to other children or to adults in an educational setting (e.g., an ongoing history of biting others, scratching, spitting and those who have uncoverable, oozing lesions) and (3) diagnosed with AIDS.

When an HIV-infected child in this category is reported, the Health Division or local health department will immediately contact the parent(s) or guardian(s). The parent(s) or guardian(s) will be required to notify the local component district superintendent of their child's infection if they wish the child to continue to attend school. The local health officer or the Health Division administrator will issue an order to exclude the child from school, unless the school superintendent has been notified.

Most cases of HIV infection among children over 5 years of age are not reportable. School staff must assume that the identity of HIV status of many HIV-infected children under their jurisdiction will not be known.

- d. HBV/HCV: All students health information, regardless of how information is obtained, is confidential and cannot be released without specific written consent of the child's parent(s) or guardian(s), including diagnosis (e.g., Hepatitis B, C). All persons diagnosed with Hepatitis B and diagnosed with acute Hepatitis C are required to be reported to the local health department by their health providers. Attempts to specifically identify carrier children are discouraged.

2. Students with a Confirmed/Suspected Diagnosis:

If any MESD employee has information that leads him/her to suspect that a student may be infected with HIV, HBV, or HCV, the following steps shall be taken:

- a. Maintain confidentiality. If the parent or student has noted the information on the registration material, remove the information from other's view and encourage the parent or student to complete a new registration without the confidential information.
- b. Immediately report the information to the immediate supervisor only.
- c. The supervisor will contact the MESD nurse consultant. It is the responsibility of the MESD nurse consultant to contact the Multnomah County Health Department Health Officer to establish the appropriate case-specific steps to be followed. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis with the permission of the parent and at the direction of the Multnomah County health officer.
- d. If development of a planning team to determine whether special measures are necessary for continuing the child's education is the recommendation of the health officer, members may include the child's parent(s) or guardian(s), child's physician, MESD or building administrator, school nurse, nurse consultant and the county health department.

3. Temporary Exclusion

- a. If a student identified as being infected with HIV, HBV, or HCV is, because of physical, mental, emotional disability or immaturity, unable to control personal behavior to avoid the

spread of disease, he/she shall be temporarily excluded from school, pending the development of the appropriate case-specific plan.

- b. If a student identified as being infected with HIV, HBV, or HCV is in an educational setting where there are persons who because of physical, mental, or emotional immaturity cannot control their conduct the student shall be temporarily excluded pending the development of the plan.
- c. Such exclusion should last no longer than five working days.
- d. A more restrictive educational environment may be advisable to minimize the exposure of the other children and staff to blood or other potentially infectious body fluids.

4. Re-evaluation

The nurse consultant and school nurse will be responsible for re-evaluating the child's needs. Re-evaluation should occur on a regularly scheduled basis, at the request of the teacher or administrator and when there are changes in the child's behavior or health.

5. Medical Records

Student health and medical records will be kept in a confidential manner at the school site and maintained by the school nurse.

In order to reduce the risk to staff-students by minimizing or eliminating staff exposure incidents to bloodborne pathogens*, the Board directs the Superintendent to develop and implement an Exposure Control Plan. The plan shall be reviewed and updated at least annually and whenever necessary to reflect new or revised employee positions with occupational exposure. The review and update shall also:

1. Reflect changes in technology that eliminate or reduce exposure to bloodborne pathogens;
2. Annually, document consideration and implementation of appropriate commercially available and effective safer medical devices designed to eliminate or minimize occupational exposure.

The plan shall include training followed by an offer of immunization with Hepatitis B vaccine and vaccination series for all staff who are required to provide first aid to students and/or staff and/or for all staff who have occupational exposure as determined by MESD. Training shall be provided at the time of initial assignment to tasks where occupational exposure may take place and at least annually thereafter. Personal protective equipment appropriate to job tasks shall be provided by MESD. Follow up by nursing/medical personnel will be provided by MESD to any employee sustaining an occupational exposure.

- * Bloodborne pathogens - pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. These include, but are not limited to, Hepatitis B virus (HBV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

END OF POLICY

Legal Reference(s):

[OAR 437-002-0360](#)

[OAR 581-022-0705](#)

[OAR 581-022-1440](#)

[OAR 581-024-0275](#)

[OAR 581-053-0517\(13\)\(c\),\(e\)](#)