

Cobb County Police Department

Policy 2.06

EXPOSURE TO INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Effective Date: October 1, 2019	Issued By: Chief C.T. Cox
Rescinds: Policy 2.06 (November 1, 2017)	Page 1 of 3
The words “he, his, him,” which may appear in this policy, are used generically for clarity and ease of reading. These terms are not meant to imply gender and relate to all employees of the Department.	

Police officers and other employees of this Department may, in the line of duty, come into contact with persons who are known or suspected carriers of infectious diseases. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for reducing the risk of exposure or actual infection by such diseases, while still providing effective service to the community.

I. GENERAL

No Department employee shall discriminate against a person because that person is or may be an infectious disease carrier. That is, no employee may fail to provide appropriate police service to a person due to that person's status as a known or suspected disease carrier. However, all Department employees have a duty to take reasonable precautions to protect themselves, their fellow employees, and the public from exposure to infectious diseases.

II. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

- A.** The Department of Public Safety Training Unit is responsible for disseminating to all employees current information on the identification and handling of infectious disease carriers and disinfection procedures, as well as information on various infectious diseases themselves.
- B.** Each unit and shift commander is responsible for ensuring that adequate supplies are available within their respective units for infectious disease control.
- C. Each supervisor is responsible for the following:**
 - 1. Ensuring that subordinates take proper precautions when facing exposure to infectious diseases.
 - 2. Observing proper disinfection procedures when exposure occurs.
 - 3. Treating any direct contact between an infectious disease carrier and Department personnel as a line-of-duty injury.

D. Each Department employee shall:

1. Take reasonable precautions to prevent exposing himself and others to infectious diseases.
2. Truthfully and accurately notify other involved support personnel (firefighters, paramedics, deputy sheriffs, hospital personnel, etc.) whenever it is known or reasonably believed that a person in custody, or receiving emergency service, is an infectious disease carrier. Department personnel are cautioned against making medical diagnoses. However, transmission of accurate information regarding medical symptoms, condition, or status is permitted.
3. Promptly report to a supervisor any direct exposure to infectious disease.

III. PROCEDURES FOLLOWING EXPOSURE

Exposure shall mean direct contact with bodily fluids or excretions (blood, saliva, urine, etc.) from a person known or reasonably suspected to be a carrier of an infectious disease.

A. Equipment Exposure

1. Vehicles

When a county vehicle has been exposed, the vehicle shall be driven or towed to Cobb County Fleet Maintenance headquarters for disinfection. A Fleet Maintenance supervisor shall be notified that the vehicle in question is contaminated. The wrecker service must be advised of the condition of the vehicle.

2. Equipment and Evidence

Any equipment or evidence which has been exposed shall be promptly and properly secured, labeled as contaminated, and delivered to the Property and Evidence Unit as soon as possible for storage or disposal.

B. Personnel Exposure

Any Department employee who is exposed shall immediately notify his supervisor of the exposure. The supervisor shall consider this exposure to be a line-of-duty injury and shall coordinate the response and investigation of the incident.

1. External Exposure (non-broken skin)

An external exposure occurs when the bodily fluids of a suspected carrier of an infectious disease carrier comes into contact with the intact skin of an employee. The probability of contracting a disease through this type of contact is minimal. As soon as practical, the employee should wash the

affected area with soap and water. The employee's supervisor shall prepare a First Report of Injury and proper supporting documents.

2. Internal Exposure (broken skin)

An internal exposure occurs when bodily fluids of a suspected carrier of an infectious disease carrier penetrates the skin of an employee. This could be due to a puncture by needle, a cut from a bloody knife, or as a result of an altercation where both the suspect and employee have open wounds. The employee's supervisor shall prepare a First Report of Injury and any additional supporting documents.

a. Special Investigative Actions

1. When an internal exposure occurs, the employee will immediately notify his supervisor.
2. The supervisor will contact the Crimes Against Persons Unit to investigate the incident and coordinate an acceptable method of testing the subject's blood for infectious disease.
3. The supervisor will ensure that EMS responds to the incident location. The supervisor will coordinate treatment of the officer with EMS (on-scene treatment of treatment at an emergency room).

b. Follow-Up Medical Treatment

Follow-up medical treatment of the affected employee will be coordinated with the Cobb County Department of Public Safety and the Cobb County Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services.

3. Inhalation

Certain types of infectious diseases (such as tuberculosis) are airborne. It is possible that an employee could be exposed to the disease while in a confined space with the carrier. If an employee believes that he has been exposed to an airborne disease, he should notify his supervisor immediately. The employee's supervisor shall prepare a First Report of Injury and any additional supporting documents.