



## **Policy No. 2013- 15**

# **Occupational Exposure to Blood & Body Fluids Policy**

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## 1. Background

Central Highlands Council has a responsibility, as far as reasonably practicable, to eliminate risks to health and safety, and if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate risks to health and safety, to minimise those risks as far as is reasonably practicable, as stated in Section 19 of the [Work Health & Safety Act, 2012](#) (The Act).

Central Highlands Council must, as far as is reasonably practicable, provide and maintain a safe work environment with safe systems of work, and plant and substances maintained in a safe condition.

Several diseases can be transmitted from an infected person to an employee by accidental exposure to blood and other body substances. This policy is concerned with blood borne diseases as follows:-

- HIV/AIDS
- hepatitis B
- hepatitis C

## 2. Application

This policy applies in all workplaces in relation to occupational exposure incidents involving employees.

## 3. Policy

- 3.1 Central Highlands Council is committed to ensure that working environments, equipment and systems of work are designed to prevent occupational exposure incidents in the workplace.
- 3.2 All exposures to blood and body substances shall be reported immediately to the Supervisor or Manager.
- 3.3 Supervisors/Managers shall ensure that the employee consults with a Medical Practitioner for review, blood testing and counselling, (where relevant) as soon as possible.

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- 3.4 If identifiable, the Source person shall also be evaluated. Explicit and informed consent of the individual must be obtained and pre and post test counselling arranged for the individual.
- 3.5 Confidentiality shall be maintained.
- 3.6 All Council workplaces shall develop and implement procedures relevant to their own environments to manage occupational exposures.

#### **4. Responsibilities**

##### **Managers**

- 4.1. Managers/supervisors shall ensure that the employee's exposure site has been cleansed thoroughly as appropriate.
- 4.2. Managers/supervisors shall ensure that the employee has consulted a Medical Practitioner and that blood has been taken from the employee if applicable.
- 4.3. Managers/supervisors shall investigate whether a known source individual is involved and if so, consult a Medical Practitioner to arrange blood to be taken from the source individual. This must include gaining explicit and informed consent of the individual and arranging pre and post test counselling for the individual.
- 4.4. Managers/supervisors shall ensure that follow up counselling processes are in place for the employee.
- 4.5. Managers/supervisors shall conduct an investigation and complete the Incident Report form.

##### **Employees**

- 4.6. Employees shall report any occupational exposure incident to the relevant manager/supervisor as soon as practicable and complete the Council's Incident Report Form.
- 4.7. Employees shall initiate first aid action as appropriate e.g. wash area.
- 4.8. Employees shall consult Medical Practitioner or Approved Health Care Worker for assessment of incident, blood testing and follow up counselling as appropriate.

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## 5. Glossary

5.1. Occupational Exposure:- Accidental exposure to blood and/or body substances including:

- Needle stick injury;
- Penetration injury with contaminated sharp objects; (This may include scratching/biting); and
- Splashing of blood and/or body substances into mucous membranes of mouth, nose and eyes.

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