



Title/Subject: Exposure to Infectious and Environmental Hazards (Needle Stick)

Applies to: ☐ faculty ☒ students ☐ staff ☐ Other

☒ Policy ☐ System ☐ Process/Procedure ☐ Guideline/Standard ☐ Position Description

● **Introduction**

- **Reason for the Policy/Process:** The purpose of this document is to establish policy and procedures for student occupational exposure to potentially infectious agents and or environmental hazards.

In addition, this policy ensures the medical school meets the following LCME accreditation requirement:

Element 12.8: STUDENT EXPOSURE POLICIES/PROCEDURES

A medical school has policies in place that effectively address medical student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards, including the following:

The education of medical students about methods of prevention

The procedures for care and treatment after exposure, including a definition of financial responsibility

The effects of infectious and environmental disease or disability on medical student learning activities

All registered medical students (including visiting students) are informed of these policies before undertaking any educational activities that would place them at risk.

- **Scope:** This policy applies to all students in all courses and clerkships on all campuses.

- **Policy/Process Statement:** It is the policy of TAMU-COM that all students receive education and training regarding methods of prevention of exposure to infectious and environmental hazards prior to beginning any clinical experiences. This instruction includes procedures for care and treatment after exposure, including financial responsibility. Post-exposure evaluation and initiation of prophylaxis therapy, if indicated, will be available to students who have sustained occupational exposure to blood or body fluids that may be infected with blood borne pathogens.

● **Procedure**

Prevention

- Mandatory universal precaution and blood-borne pathogen training is provided in initial student orientation and prior to beginning clerkships.
- Students are required to do yearly online OSHA/HIPAA modules all four years.
- Visiting students are informed of this policy at their initial orientation.

Post-Exposure Requirements

- Wash the exposed area immediately based on CDC guidelines
- Gather identifying information about source of exposure
- Report the incident to the nursing supervisor and/or the faculty supervisor for site specific treatment instructions (As per AAMC Uniform Clinical Training Affiliation Agreement)
- Proceed immediately to the nearest emergency room for initial treatment

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- Contact clerkship coordinator and student affairs coordinator for assistance in completion of the Student Accident and Needle Stick Injury Report
- Follow up with primary care physician regarding ongoing care.

Financial Responsibility

- Students will be treated as an employee for initial management of a needle stick by our clinical affiliates in terms of exposure evaluation, potential initiation of prophylaxis, and incident follow-up (on initial lab tests). However, students are not eligible for workers' compensation insurance.
- TAMU-COM will reimburse the cost of the student's insurance co-pay and/or deductible, or any amount not paid by insurance, up to a maximum of \$500 per case. TAMU-COM does not cover financial reimbursement for visiting students. Visiting students should consult their home college for financial responsibility questions.
- Expenses incurred for any follow up visits, treatment, or lab work after the initial visit will be borne by the student and their insurance.
- TAMU-COM assumes no fiscal responsibility for the treatment of students who develop an illness as a result of an exposure. Long term management, if necessary, will be the responsibility of student and student's private insurance.
- In order to be eligible to receive reimbursement, each student must comply with the following requirements:
 - o Student must first submit expenses and seek reimbursement from the student's private insurance company
 - o Student must submit the Student Incident Report Form to the respective campus student services coordinator or the Office of Student Affairs.
 - o Student must initiate the request for reimbursement from TAMU-COM within 30 days from the date the student's insurance claim is approved/denied. A request for reimbursement must be submitted in writing along with a copy of Student's medical bill(s) and proof of payment for out of pocket expenses, to the respective campus student coordinator of the office of Student Affairs.

● **Resources and Tools:**

- o Definitions:
 - Blood borne pathogens: These primarily are human immunodeficiency virus (HIV-1), hepatitis B virus (HPV), and hepatitis C virus (HCV). Depending on the clinical situation, blood borne pathogens may not be limited to these infectious agents.
- o Related Policies, Processes, and Guidelines:
 - TAMU-COM Policy: Effects of Infectious & Environmental Disease or Disability on Medical Student Learning Activities
 - Student Incident Report Form
 - AAMC Uniform Clinical Training Affiliation Agreement
 - "In the event a student is exposed to an infectious or environmental hazard or other occupational injury (i.e., needle stick) while at the HOST AGENCY, the HOST AGENCY, upon notice of such incident from the student, will provide such emergency care as is

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provided its employees, including, where applicable: examination and evaluation by HOST AGENCY's emergency department or other appropriate facility as soon as possible after the injury; emergency medical care immediately following the injury as necessary; initiation of the HBV, Hepatitis C (HCV), and/or HIV protocol as necessary; and HIV counseling and appropriate testing as necessary. In the event that HOST AGENCY does not have the resources to provide such emergency care, HOST AGENCY will refer such student to the nearest emergency facility."

- **Revision History:**

Date of Change	Authority	Summary of Changes	Document Location
10-14-19	CQI	Converted to template format.	COM Policies and Procedures Team Drive

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