

HALIFAX FIRE DEPARTMENT SOG 30	UNPROTECTED EXPOSURE
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30.0 Purpose.

To provide a comprehensive guideline for dealing with unprotected exposures that maximizes protection against communicable diseases.

30.1 Scope:

This SOG applies to all members of the Halifax Fire Department.

Definition

Unprotected Exposure - An exposure capable of transmitting a bloodborne infectious disease dangerous to the public health as defined in 105 CMR 172.001 and shall include to the following:

- (1) Puncture wounds – including punctures resulting from:
 - (a) used needles;
 - (b) glass and other sharp objects contaminated with blood; or
 - (c) human bites;
- (2) Blood to blood contact through open wounds, which includes: open cuts, sores, rashes, abrasions or conditions which interrupt skin integrity; and
- (3) Mucous membrane contact – including such contact as would occur with mouth to mouth resuscitation or eye splashing with infected fluids. Such fluids would include: blood, sputum, oral and nasal secretions.

30.2 General Guideline

- A. Any member of the Fire Department who believes they have suffered an unprotected exposure should seek immediate medical evaluation for possible prophylactic immunization and/or treatment, as indicated.
- B. The Designated Infectious Control Officer (hereby referred to as the D.I.C.O.) shall be notified immediately. If the infection control officer cannot be reached the Fire Chief shall be immediately notified.
- C. Personnel having an unprotected exposure must complete the Massachusetts DPH Unprotected Exposure form on arrival at the health care facility and leave a copy with the nurse caring for the patient.
- D. The health care facility will review the information, which you provide and will determine if you have sustained an unprotected exposure as defined in DPH regulations. If the patient to whom you were exposed is diagnosed as having a bloodborne infectious disease dangerous to the public health, and if you sustained an unprotected exposure which, in the opinion of the health care facility, is capable of transmitting such a disease, the facility shall provide oral notification within forty-eight (48) hours of the diagnosis and written notification within seventy-two (72) hours of the diagnosis. This notice will be given to the designated infection control officer and shall include the appropriate precautions and actions which you should take, the identity of the disease to which you were exposed, necessary precautions to prevent the transmission of the disease to others, and instructions to contact a physician for follow up.
- E. All paperwork shall be copied and given to the D.I.C.O.. The D.I.C.O. will review all paperwork for completeness and will submit the package to the Fire Chief for placement in the record.