



A Union of Professionals

WORK SHOULDN'T HURT

Bloodborne Pathogens

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) developed a standard for work-site prevention of blood borne pathogen transmission in 1992. The OSHA standard covers all private sector workers and public workers in state-plan OSHA states¹ who “reasonably anticipate skin, eye, mucous membrane or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.” Under this standard, employers must develop a work-site exposure control plan that describes:

- What jobs are at risk for exposure;
- Methods to reduce/eliminate chances of infection(when exposures occur);
- Training on avoiding or reducing exposure risks;
- A program of hepatitis b vaccination for covered employees; and,
- Methods of record keeping for the standard.
- Provide adequate and accessible protective clothing and equipment;
- Provide hepatitis b vaccine at no cost to employees expected to come in contact with infectious materials;
- Develop a post-exposure plan that includes confidential medical evaluation and counseling after a work-site contact with infected materials; and
- Provide annual training on blood borne diseases, including modes of transmission, effective preventive measures and work-site exposure control plans, through a knowledge instructor.

You Have a Right to:

- See the work-site exposure plan;
- Receive hepatitis b vaccine free of charge, if your job is designated as at risk for exposure to infectious materials;
- Receive proper protective equipment and training in its use;
- An investigation of any work-site exposure you may have, including identifying and requesting voluntary testing of the exposed individual and receiving copies of any medical evaluation performed.

How Can the Union Help?

AFT locals strive to protect workers across the country from occupational transmission of diseases like Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Hepatitis B. Joint union-management occupational safety and health programs are one way to protect workers. An effective program starts with a joint union-management committee that:

- Develops training for all employees on safety and health issues, including rights under the Occupational Safety and Health Act (1970);
- Guarantees accessible supplies and equipment for all employees, to be provided by the employer;
- Investigates incidents of exposure; and
- Regularly contacts health agencies for updates on regulations.

For more information, contact the AFT health and safety team at 4healthandsafety@aft.org

¹OSHA plan states (and territories) include Alaska, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico,

New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Virgin Islands, Washington and Wyoming.

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of 1.7 million professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

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