



Infection Control

September 22, 2022

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INFECTION CONTROL

This infection control policy is applicable to Title III Programs of the Older Americans Act of 1965 as amended in subsequent years, 902 KAR 45:005 Retail Food Code (amended 2013), Kentucky's Home Care Program, Adult Day /Alzheimer's Program and any other program for older persons or persons living with disabilities which is implemented by KIPDA.

INTRODUCTION

Infection is caused by pathogens ('bugs') such as bacteria, viruses, protozoa or fungi getting into or onto the human body. It can take some time before the microbes multiply enough to trigger symptoms of illness, which means an infected person may unwittingly be spreading the disease during this incubation period.

Infection control aims to prevent pathogens from coming into contact with a person in the first place.

DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

A. PROGRAM DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

- 1) **Bacteria:** Microscopic single cell organisms that thrive in diverse environments. They can live in soil, oceans, and humans. Bacteria can be helpful or destructive.
- 2) **Fungus:** A simple organism that is neither plant nor animal. Fungi can be helpful or harmful.
- 3) **Virus:** A small infectious agent that replicates only inside living cells of an organism.
- 4) **Parasite:** An organism that lives in or on a host and gets its food from (at the expense of) its host.
- 5) **Potentially infectious materials:** Human bodily fluids (blood, saliva, mucus, semen, synovial fluids, vaginal secretions, pleural fluids, cerebrospinal fluids, human waste, etc.) or where it is difficult or impossible to differentiate between body fluids. Also includes unfixed human tissues or organs.

- 6) **Occupational exposure:** skin, eye, mucous membrane or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that may result from the performance of an employee's duties.
- 7) **Parenteral exposures:** Piercing mucous membranes or the skin barrier through such events as needle sticks, human bites, cuts and abrasions.
- 8) **Personal protective equipment:** Specialized clothing or equipment worn by an employee for protection against a hazard.
- 9) **Outbreak:** According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an outbreak is the occurrence of more cases of a disease than would normally be expected in a specific place or group of people over a given period of time.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF KIPDA SERVICE PROVIDERS

- A. Identification of a contagious illness affecting an employee or client which represents a potential risk to others should be reported to the AAAIL as soon as possible in order to ensure that timely control measures are taken.
- B. Encourage the exposed individual to seek medical treatment as advised.
- C. Exposure incidents are reported immediately; written follow-up is to be made using the official KIPDA incident report form.
- D. Implement personnel practices that limit the spread of infectious agents.
- E. Train staff on infection control policy (universal precautions)
- F. See General Administration Section for additional duties/responsibilities of service providers.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF KIPDA CLIENTS

- A. Clients are expected to report the identification of a contagious illness affecting themselves, an employee of the AAAIL or its service providers, as soon as possible in order to ensure that timely control measures are taken.
- B. Clients should seek medical attention as advised.
- C. Clients are expected to report progress in the treatment of their infectious illness as often as is necessary.
- D. If necessary, and if the medical condition warrants it, services will be suspended until the client is no longer contagious.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF KIPDA AREA AGENCY ON AGING AND INDEPENDENT LIVING

- A. Inform clients and service providers of the need to report infection diseases and/or possible exposure to them.

- B. Assure, through monitoring, that all incidents reported are properly handled and documented.
- C. Educate providers regarding local outbreaks.
- D. Inform local public health authorities of any potential large scale or serious outbreaks.
- E. See General Administration Sections for additional KIPDA duties/responsibilities.

TRANSMISSION OF INFECTION

Policy: Infectious agents can be spread in a variety of ways (airborne, touch, transfer); personal hygiene practices (referenced below) can limit the spread of infectious agents.

Procedure:

- A. Cover coughs or sneezes that release airborne pathogens; then inhaled by others.
- B. Avoid touching contaminated objects or eating contaminated food – pathogens in a person’s feces may be spread to food or other objects, if their hands are dirty.
- C. Limit the transfer of some pathogens through touch, or sharing of personal items, clothing or objects. Pathogens in saliva, urine, feces or blood can be passed to another person’s body via cuts or abrasions, or through the mucus membranes of the mouth or eyes.
- D. Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with warm soap and water. If soap and water is not available, thoroughly rub hands with hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK

Policy: The basis of good infection control in the workplace is to assume that **everyone is potentially infectious.**

Procedure:

- A. Every workplace should have an appropriate first aid kit.
- B. At least one staff member, on duty, should be trained in first aid.
- C. Equipment, gloves, gowns, eye goggles, and face shields should be provided.

PERSONAL HYGIENE PRACTICES

Policy: Generally, employees should practice basic hygiene every working day.

Procedure:

Regular hand washing is required to limit the spread of pathogens. At minimum wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after visiting the toilet, before preparing food, and after touching clients or equipment. Hands should be air dried or dried with disposable paper towels.

- A. Covering cuts or abrasions with a waterproof dressing forms an effective barrier to pathogens.
- B. Wearing gloves when handling body fluids or equipment containing body fluids, touching broken skin or mucus membrane, or performing any other invasive procedure protects against pathogens. Washing hands between clients and using fresh gloves for each client is necessary.
- C. Never share towels, clothing, razors, toothbrushes, shavers or other personal items.

FOOD PREPARATION AND INFECTION CONTROL

Policy: Infection control includes good practices when preparing or portioning food.

Procedure:

- A. Wash hands before and after handling food.
- B. Avoid touching hair, skin, nose or mouth during food preparation and clean up.
- C. Keep hot food hot and cold food cold.
- D. Use separate storage, utensils and preparation surfaces for cooked and uncooked foods.
- E. Wash all utensils and preparation surfaces thoroughly with hot water and detergent after use.
- F. See the nutrition section of policies and procedures for more detailed food preparation/service policy and procedures.

WORKPLACE CLEANLINESS

Policy: Infection control includes good cleanliness practices for all facilities.

Procedure:

- A. Regularly wash the floors, bathrooms and surfaces (tables, chairs) with hot water and detergent.
- B. Periodically wash the walls and ceilings.
- C. Thoroughly wash and dry mops, brushes and cloths after every use; dry the mops and cloths thoroughly since many pathogens rely on moisture to thrive.
- D. Use disinfectants to clean up blood and other spills of bodily fluids.
 - 1. Wear gloves when using disinfectants.
 - 2. Clean surfaces before using the disinfectant
 - 3. Always follow manufacturer's instructions exactly.
- E. Spot clean whenever necessary.

DEALING WITH SPILLS OF BODILY FLUIDS

Policy: Proper response to spills of body fluids allows greater protection for employees and customers.

Procedure:

- A. Isolate the spill area.
- B. Wear gloves, a plastic apron and eye protection during clean up.
- C. Soak up the fluid with disposable paper towels or cover the spill with a granular chlorine-releasing agent for a minimum of 10 minutes.
- D. Scoop up granules and waste using of piece of cardboard (or similar); place in a plastic bag and dispose of appropriately. (See disposing of infectious waste section)
- E. Mix one-part bleach to 10 parts water and apply to the area for 10 minutes.
- F. Wash the area with hot water and detergent.
- G. Dry the area.
- H. Dispose of paper towels and gloves appropriately.
- I. Wash hands.
- J. Rinse any contaminated clothing in cold running water, soak in bleach solution for half an hour, then wash separately from other clothing with hot water and detergent. Dry thoroughly.

DISPOSING OF INFECTIOUS WASTE

Policy: Proper disposal to of infectious waste allows greater protection for employees and customers.

Procedure:

- A. Wear gloves
- B. Place waste in plastic bags
- C. Dispose of waste according to local public health guidance.

HANDLING CONTAMINATED SHARPS

Policy: Extreme caution is needed when handling needless and other sharp contaminated objects.

Procedure:

- A. Never attempt to re-cap or bend used needles.
- B. Handle syringes and needles by the barrel.
- C. Place in an appropriate puncture-proof container; follow providers instructions for return and disposal.

OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE TO BODILY FLUIDS

Policy: Disease, injury, and near miss accidents require immediate action.

Procedure:

- A. Flush the area with warm running water.
- B. Wash the area with plenty of warm water and soap.
- C. Report the incident to the appropriate staff member.
- D. Record the incident on the appropriate form.
- E. Seek medical advice.

WHERE TO GET HELP

Policy: Clients should seek direction from their physician or local public health department for any issues related to infectious diseases.

COVID-19 RECOMMENDATIONS

In early 2020, Coronavirus (Covid-19) spread throughout the world. The World Health Organization declared it a pandemic. Symptoms include; fever, cough, shortness of breath, and other respiratory symptoms.

Among the population, the CDC has released groups that are at higher risks for developing more serious complications from the COVID-19 illness. These groups included older adults aged 60 or above and those with underlying chronic medical conditions.

To prevent the spread of illness, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has released specific recommendations to follow.

Policy: Social Distancing

Procedures:

- a. Keep a social distance from others of six (6) feet.
- b. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- c. Stay home if you are sick, except to seek medical care.
- d. If vulnerable, consider avoiding crowded locations, especially indoors.
- e. Wear a mask when unable to engage in appropriate distancing (especially indoors).
- f. If vulnerable, consider politely asking those who will be within six feet of you indoors to wear a mask.

Policy: Hand Washing

Procedures:

- a. Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds especially after being in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- b. If soap and water are not readily available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.

Policy: Use of facemasks, cleaners, tissues, etc.

Procedures:

- a. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow
- b. Follow state and CDC guidance for masks as the recommendations can vary depending on the wave in the pandemic.
- c. As a general rule, those who work with a vulnerable population should utilize masks whenever providing services within six feet of the client. Clients should consider wearing masks as well whenever they are within six feet of their service providers.
- d. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks
- e. To disinfect: Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work. Use disinfectants appropriate for the surface.
Options include:
 1. Diluting your household bleach: mix 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water
 2. Alcohol solutions – ensure solution has at least 70% alcohol
 3. Other common EPA-registered household disinfectants