**Bloodborne Pathogens**

Bloodborne pathogens are microorganisms found in the blood of infected individuals that cause diseases. They may also be present in “other potentially infectious materials,” such as blood-tainted body fluids, unfixed tissues or body parts, some biological research materials, and even other primates. These pathogens are a concern because they are capable of infecting others who are exposed to infectious blood or other body fluids.

Some workers are at risk of exposure as a result of their occupational duties and these workers are required to receive bloodborne pathogens training prior to initial assignment to tasks where occupational exposure may occur. Annual refresher training is also required. The training covers a variety of topics aimed at reducing the risk of exposure and disease transmission.

**Exposure Control Plan**

The Texas A&M Forest Service Exposure Control Plan is a written action plan that identifies occupational risks and specifies precautionary control measures needed to manage and minimize potential exposure to bloodborne pathogens.

**Hepatitis B Vaccination**

Hepatitis B virus (HBV) is a serious bloodborne pathogen that attacks the liver and can cause potentially life-threatening disease in humans. HBV is transmitted through exposure to blood or other body fluids.

Workers whose job duties have a reasonable anticipation of contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials are required to be offered a vaccination series against HBV. The vaccine is offered ***after*** bloodborne pathogens training and within 10 working days of initial assignment to work unless the employee has previously received the complete hepatitis B vaccination series, antibody testing has revealed that the employee is immune, or the vaccine is contraindicated for medical reasons.

Use the [Texas A&M University System Hepatitis B Vaccination Form](http://www.tamus.edu/assets/files/safety/pdf/HepatitisBvaccineForm.pdf) for acceptance or declination of the HBV vaccine. This form ***must*** be filled out by all employees whose job duties have been identified as placing them at risk for exposure. The completed form should be faxed to 979-458-6699.

**Exposure Incident Reporting**

If a bloodborne pathogen exposure incident should occur, report the incident immediately to your supervisor and the safety office. In addition, complete and submit a [Preliminary Report of Injury](https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/uploadedFiles/TFSMain/Finance_and_Admin/Staff_Resources/Employee_Development/Preliminary%20Report%20of%20Injury%20HR-60.doc) and, if a contaminated sharps was involved, the [Contaminated Sharps Injury Reporting Form](http://www.tamus.edu/assets/files/safety/pdf/sharpsShortForm.pdf). Completed forms should be faxed to 979-458-6699.

**DO NOT DELAY! If you think you may have been exposed to human blood or infectious materials through a needlestick or cut, or in your eyes, nose or mouth, do not delay. Immediately wash the affected area thoroughly and report the exposure to the Texas A&M Forest Service Safety Officer at 979-458-6697 to receive follow-up care.**