

Examples of Ebola Policies & Procedures that Some Companies Have Developed

Several AAOHN members agreed to share the Ebola policies, procedures and communications that they have put in place over the past few months. Some of these may be helpful as you review, revise or develop your employer's protocols to control and reduce the risk of contamination within your organization.

Note: The examples presented here are samples of what other occupational and environmental health nurses and their employers have done. They are not intended to provide specific medical, healthcare or legal advice. Information and recommendations about how to deal with this virus and how to protect workers and the public rapidly changes and this information may as rapidly become inconsistent with immediate and current recommended practice. Readers should consult with the [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention – The Premier Resource for Ebola prevention and control recommendations](#) and develop policies and procedures for your employer and its employees that are appropriate for the circumstance.

EXAMPLE #1

General Ebola Control Guidelines (date)

Issued by: Company Occupational Health & Wellness (OHW)

Scope: All Company colleagues and contractors

Purpose: Control and minimize risk of potential contamination or spread of Ebola Virus within Company's controlled workplaces.

Colleague/Contractor Responsibilities:

Effective immediately all colleagues are required to contact site OHW or, Human Resources (HR) if the colleague is at a site that does not have an OHW presence, by telephone prior to returning to the workplace if one or more of the following circumstances apply. Similarly, contractors are required to contact their employer to obtain clearance prior to returning to a company's workplace if one or more of the following circumstances apply. In addition to contacting company OHW or HR prior to returning to the workplace, colleagues and contractors must follow applicable governmental restrictions, health screenings and reporting.

1. Business and/or travel for personal reasons to the following areas during period of Ebola Epidemic as defined by CDC or WHO:
 - a. Sierra Leone
 - b. Guinea
 - c. Liberia
 - d. Any additional area deemed high risk for the Ebola Virus
2. Contact with person(s) medically confirmed or suspected of having Ebola Virus.
3. Colleagues and/or contractors that have been notified by the Centers for Disease Control and/or a medical official that they may have been in contact with a person infected with the Ebola Virus. The

CDC Risk Classification of Exposure: (<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/exposure/risk-factors-when-evaluating-person-for-exposure.html>)

- a. High Risk- Exposure to the blood or body fluids (including but not limited to feces, saliva, sweat, urine, vomit, and semen) of a person with Ebola while the person was symptomatic without appropriate PPE or having lived in the immediate household and provided direct care to a person with Ebola while the person was symptomatic
- b. Some Risk- Close contact in households, health care facilities, or community settings with a person with Ebola while the person was symptomatic
- c. Low (not zero) Risk- Having been in a country with widespread Ebola Virus within the past 21 days and having had no known exposures
- d. No identifiable risk –no exposure, travel to non-Ebola infected country

Colleagues or contractors who fit into category 1-3 above will not be permitted to return to the workplace until OHW can perform an individualized assessment of potential risk of contamination and provide clearance to return to work or impose conditions on return.

If a colleague or contractor reports to a Company site, who fits into one of these three categories, and has disregarded the above guidelines, they will be sent home immediately until further evaluation has been completed. Local HR should notify OHW immediately of the action taken so that appropriate follow-up can be conducted.

All colleagues who become ill outside of work and are suspected of possibly being infected with Ebola must isolate themselves, notify appropriate local authorities, report their condition to their primary care physician by telephone, and report their condition to Company OHW by telephone. Contractors will be required to contact their employer prior to reporting to a Company workplace if they become ill outside of work and are suspected of possibly being infected with Ebola.

Colleagues who become ill at work should isolate themselves and telephone OHW for further guidance.

Colleagues who believe, or know, that they are positive for the Ebola virus should not present themselves unannounced in OHW clinics.

Colleagues or contractors who visit hospitals that have been confirmed or suspected to have inpatient cases must report this information to their manager immediately. This is especially true of sales and service staff who may have hospitals as customer.

Colleagues must adhere to Company travel restrictions for any work travel.

All colleagues and contractors are required to wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when working in environments with tissue or body fluids (research facilities, laboratories, etc.).

For the health and safety of all, colleagues and contractors should ensure frequent hand washing and maintain high levels of personal hygiene.

Colleagues and contractors should minimize / avoid unnecessary close contact with others in high risk areas/situations.

OHW Responsibilities:

1. Once notified that a colleague has traveled within the past 30 days to Ebola infected regions:
 - a. Conduct an individualized assessment as to the potential risk of Ebola contamination and the potential risk of spread
 - b. Where actual contamination, risk of contamination or potential risk of spread of the virus is determined by OHW, OHW will inform the colleague that they are prohibited from reporting to a Company workplace for a period of not less than 21 days. OHW will engage local HR to review and discuss other options for performing work during this period, such as telecommuting.
 - c. Inform colleagues unable or unwilling to work from home of their options (e.g. pay, type of leave) during quarantine period* and refer to HR
 - d. Inform colleagues that they must report any adverse health events during quarantine to their primary care physician, local authorities as well as Company OHW. Make initial contact by telephone.
 - e. Inform colleagues not to return to work until an individualized assessment has been made by OHW and return to work has been approved.
2. Once notified that a colleague or contractor is feeling unwell after having either traveled to an Ebola infected region or having been in contact with a person infected with Ebola, will be addressed as follows:
 - a. Colleagues contacting OHW from offsite to say they are feeling unwell, will be instructed to contact their primary care physician, and not to return to work until an individualized risk assessment can be conducted.
 - b. Colleagues or contractors contacting OHW to say they are feeling unwell and it is confirmed they are at a Company worksite, will be instructed to isolate themselves in a room and then make contact with the colleague's primary care physician for the next steps or with the contractor's employer.
 - c. Colleagues appearing in person at a Company OHW clinic feeling unwell after having either traveled to an infected region and/or potential exposure to a person infected by Ebola will be isolated in a room immediately and the colleague's primary care physician will be contacted. Do not attempt any close contact, cleaning of individual or the workplace, clinical procedures or resuscitation without prior guidance from the authorities. Isolate any area contaminated by bodily fluids (vomit, etc.) but do not clean without guidance from the authorities. Conduct inquiries with colleague by telephone into the quarantine room. Wearing local PPE might bring additional protection, but do not deviate from above guidance irrespective of PPE.
2. Non-compliance: in order to maintain a safe workplace and to minimize risk of threat to public health, compliance with these guidelines is expected of all colleagues. Matters involving colleague non-compliance with any aspect of these guidelines should be referred to Human Resources for further review and the possible imposition of disciplinary sanctions.