

Veterinary Insurance Program



Veterinary Loss Prevention Program

Zoonotic Disease Safety in the Veterinary Setting – Aerosol Transmission

Zoonotic Disease Safety in the Veterinary Setting - Aerosol

Trainer's Overview

To have your employees get the most out of their training sessions, it is suggested that:

- **The training sessions should be conducted in a relatively quiet uninterrupted environment.**
- **The sessions should be held the same time and day of the month (i.e., first Tuesday at 12:30).**
- **Employee handouts should be given out along with pencils/pens.**
- **Review the trainers guide, employee handout and any references.**
- **Keep the sessions to a maximum of 20 minutes.**
- **Give personal examples of incidents or prevention techniques that worked for you.**
- **Ensure that all employees present sign the Safety Training Sign-in Sheet for documentation purposes.**
- **If some employees were not present, a second training session should be given.**

Zoonotic Disease Safety in the Veterinary Setting - Aerosol

Trainer's Overview

Regulations

In 2009, California issued the first regulation in the country designed to protect employees from zoonotic aerosol transmissible diseases (Zoonotic ATD).

Cal OSHA's General Industry Safety Order (GISO) section 5199.1 includes veterinary, animal inspection, and other animal health operations, and related activities with potential occupational exposures.

References

- §5199.1. Aerosol Transmissible Diseases - Zoonotic. <http://www.dir.ca.gov/title8/5199-1.html>
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- Cal OSHA Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP). <https://www.dir.ca.gov/title8/3203.html>
- Compendium of Veterinary Standard Precautions for Zoonotic Disease Prevention in Veterinary Personnel, National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians:
 - <http://www.nasphv.org/Documents/VeterinaryStandardPrecautions.pdf>
- National Association of Public Health Veterinarians (NASPHV) Model Infection Control Plan for Veterinary Practices, 2008
 - <http://www.nasphv.org/Documents/ModelInfectionControlPlan.docx>
- World Health Organization (WHO) Zoonoses Factsheet. <https://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/zoonoses>

Background

Zoonotic diseases are caused by viruses, bacteria, or other pathogens that are transmitted from animals to humans, and cause human diseases.

Zoonotic Aerosol Transmissible Diseases (Zoonotic ATD's) are diseases that are transmitted to humans by infectious aerosols, including dusts and respiratory secretions. Some examples include exotic Newcastle disease, bovine tuberculosis, hantavirus, avian influenza, and COVID-19.

The Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal-OSHA) regulates employee exposure to zoonotic ATDs in the following workplaces or situations:

Zoonotic Disease Safety in the Veterinary Setting - Aerosol

Trainer's Overview

- Operations involving the management, capture, sampling, transportation or disposal of wild birds or other wildlife.
- Farms producing animals or animal products, including the transport of animals and untreated animal products, byproducts, or wastes to or from farms.
- Slaughterhouses and initial processing facilities for untreated animal products, byproducts, or wastes.
- Veterinary, animal inspection and other animal health operations.
- Importers of live animals and untreated animal products.
- Zoos, animal parks, pet stores and other operations in which animals are displayed, transported, or housed.
- Laboratory operations involving samples, cultures, or other materials potentially containing zoonotic aerosol transmissible pathogens (zoonotic ATPs).
- Zoonotic ATP incident response operations conducted to control an outbreak of an animal disease involving the destruction and/or disposal of animals infected with zoonotic ATPs and the clean up, decontamination and disinfection of areas and equipment associated with the infected animals or their remains.

Since veterinary practices and veterinarians treat all types of patients and maybe involved in a variety of situations they logically were included under in this standard.

The Zoonotic ATP standard does not require a new program but can be part of the Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP).

Under the Zoonotic ATP standard, employers must establish, implement, and maintain effective procedures for preventing employee exposure to zoonotic ATP's.

The procedures to comply with the Zoonotic ATP standard must include sanitation, exposure monitoring, investigation of occupational injuries and illness, personal and respiratory protection, personnel and facilities decontamination, handling of hazardous waste and animal carcasses, and and training for all personnel potentially exposed.

A complete coverage of the requirements of the Zoonotic ATP rule is beyond the scope of this newsletter. It is important to note that additional precautions need to be taken per GISO 5199.1 if personnel are involved in operations which include:

- capturing or sampling wildlife to determine if they are infected with zoonotic ATP's, or
- collecting and disposing of wildlife for which an alert regarding the potential of zoonotic ATP infection has been issued.

Exposure Control Plan

The Veterinary practice must establish an Exposure Control Plan to limit limit employee exposure to Zoonotic ATP's.

NASPHV's Model Infection Control Plan for Veterinary Practices referenced above may be adopted by your practice. This Model Plan contains good suggestions regarding personal protective equipment, isolation of infectious animals, cleaning and disinfection of equipment and surfaces etc. If used, the Model Plan should be customized to the practice.

The main sections of the Model Infection Control Plan include:

- Personnel Protective Actions and Equipment
 - Hand hygiene
 - Gloves and Sleeves
 - Facial Protection – when exposure to splashes and sprays likely
 - Respiratory Protection
 - Protective outerwear
- Protective Actions During Veterinary Procedures
 - Bite Prevention
 - Needle handling
- Environmental Infection Control
 - Isolation and handling of infectious animals
- Employee Health.
 - Vaccinations
 - Training

Questions for Discussion

- Question: Zoonotic diseases are transmitted from animals to what? Answer Humans.
- Question: Zoonotic Aerosol Transmissible Diseases are transmitted to humans by infectious what? Answer: Aerosols, including dusts and respiratory secretions.
- Question: What domestic and wild animals are known to have contracted COVID-19?
Answer: More than 400 animals from 29 countries have been reported infected, including nearly 300 animals in the United States, as well as thousands of mink in mink farms in the U.S. and abroad. The virus has infected companion, wildlife, zoo, and production animals, including cats, dogs, tigers, lions, gorillas, white-tailed deer, mink, and others. Most of these animals became infected after contact with people who had COVID-19. Currently, animals do not appear to play a significant role in the spread of the virus among people.

Questions?

Please complete the Sign-In sheet.

Zoonotic Disease Safety in the Veterinary Setting - Aerosol Employee Handout



Zoonotic diseases are caused by viruses, bacteria, or other pathogens that are transmitted from animals to humans, and cause human diseases.

Zoonotic Aerosol Transmissible Diseases (Zoonotic ATD's) are diseases that are transmitted to humans by infectious aerosols, including dusts and respiratory secretions.

Some examples include Exotic Newcastle Disease, bovine tuberculosis, hantavirus, and avian influenza (bird flu or H5N1 found in Asia, Europe, and Africa), and COVID-19.

Employees should follow the Exposure Control Plan. These are procedures you need to follow them at all times:

Personal Protective Actions and Equipment

- Hand Hygiene,
- Use of Personal Protective Equipment when necessary such as:
 - Respiratory protection
 - Protective outerwear
 - Gloves and sleeves
 - Mask, goggles face shield for sprays
 - Bite prevention
- Protective Actions during procedures
 - Intake
 - Examination
 - Injections, venipuncture, and aspirations
 - Needlestick prevention
 - Dental procedures
 - Resuscitation
 - Obstetrics
 - Necropsy
 - Diagnostic specimen handling
- Environmental Infection Control
 - Isolation of infectious animals
 - Cleaning & Disinfection of equipment and surfaces
 - Handling laundry,
 - Decontamination and spill response
 - Veterinary medical waste
 - Other control



