

Veterinary Loss Prevention Program

Zoonotic Disease Safety in the Veterinary Setting – Non-Aerosol Transmitted



Zoonotic Disease Safety in the Veterinary Setting – Non-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.**

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Regulations

Zoonotic Diseases include any infectious disease that can be transmitted from non-human animals, both wild and domestic, to humans or from humans to non-human animals by either aerosol or non-aerosol means. Cal OSHA Section 5199.1 Aerosol Transmissible Diseases rule addresses protection from airborne viruses and bacteria in droplets, droplet nuclei, aerosols, and fomites. This safety training module will focus on non-aerosol transmission risks.

Non-aerosol transmission is often made through a vector, an insect or any living carrier that transmits an infectious agent, or by direct contact with the agent, such as a virus, bacteria, fungi or other parasite in the animal's body, tissues, or waste. Vectors are organisms that transmit infections from one host to another, such as mosquitoes, ticks, mites, or hookworms. A vector is required for part of the parasite's developmental cycle, and it also transmits the parasite directly to subsequent hosts.

Cal OSHA's Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) requires employers to establish, implement and maintain effective procedures for identifying and evaluating work place hazards, including zoonotic disease hazards, and unsafe conditions, and to develop safe work practices for all job classifications.

According to the CDC: Approximately 60% of known infectious diseases in people can be spread from animals, and 75% of recently emerging infectious diseases affecting humans are of animal origin.

Who is at Risk?

Each clinic must evaluate employee job classifications to determine which of their employees may be "at risk" of occupational exposure to Zoonotic diseases.

- One clear threat is for any employee that works directly with animals that are (or could be) infected.
- Cats, dogs, and farm animals may carry significant zoonotic diseases. However, other animals less commonly seen in veterinarian offices such as birds, reptiles, rodents, wild or exotic animals may also present risks.
- At risk is anyone that has opportunity to come in contact with, or be in close contact to animal feces, saliva, bedding, fur, or hair.
- More significant risk is associated with any animal that may bite or scratch leading to an even higher probability of direct transfer of disease.
- Individuals that clean or maintain clinical areas or equipment must also be wary of exposures along with those that dispose of medical waste or soiled laundry.

Best Practice

A Best Practice for clinic management is to recognize that the most effective mechanism for prevention of infection with zoonotic diseases is to minimize occupational exposure by minimizing potential contact with contaminated materials through a combination of engineering and work practice controls.

Engineering Controls

Engineering controls are built into a piece of equipment or device, and work without requiring employee action. Examples of engineering controls designed to prevent disease transmission may include touchless devices such as hand washing faucets, towel dispensers, and light switches; automatic or foot operated doors; air curtains or electric bug zappers to prevent insect intrusion. Supervisors should inspect engineering controls that are used to reduce or eliminate potential exposures on a regular basis. Supervisors should maintain a written record of the maintenance schedule, the results of inspections and any corrective action taken. Maintenance should be performed when recommended by the manufacturer, and when examination indicates the need. Engineering controls should be replaced or modified as necessary to maintain safe working conditions.

Workplace Controls

Work practice controls are meant to reduce the likelihood of exposure by prescribing the manner in which an employee performs a task safely. They require establishing procedures, training employees, and overseeing compliance. Therefore, supervisors will be responsible for documenting and instituting work practices or laboratory procedures that will minimize potential exposure and will be responsible also for evaluating these on a regular basis to ensure their effectiveness. Work practice controls include, but are not limited to:

- Maintaining good personal hygiene. Washing hands thoroughly and frequently especially after contact with infected animals is critical.
- Keeping hands away from eyes, nose, ears, and mouth.
- Special care should be taken to ensure sanitary and sterile conditions when eating, drinking, or other high risk activities (cosmetic application, use of tobacco products, etc.).
- Following proper sharps practices including not recapping used needles, proper disposal containers, and immediate disposal of sharps after use.
- Discarding contaminated sharps into color coded "Biohazard" puncture resistant, leak proof, and closeable containers. Sharps containers should be easily accessible, kept upright, and not overfilled.
- Decontaminating reusable equipment, tools, and other items immediately after use or placing them in sealed, and properly labeled "decon" containers.
- Housekeeping-Work areas should be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. Use of a written schedule set for cleaning and a method of decontamination outlined based on tasks performed. Protective coverings (plastic sheeting-wraps-foil) used to isolate contaminated items. Bins, cans, & buckets inspected, emptied and decontaminated on a regular schedule. Broken glass is picked up

The Employee Health & Safety exposures and loss prevention efforts are the responsibility of your company. These services are intended to assist you and your management in evaluating potential exposures to loss and methods to minimize exposure. These services do not necessarily include every possible loss potential, code violation, or exception to good management practice.

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- Soiled laundry should be handled with gloves or better PPE. Laundry bags should be color coded and closed and removed when 2/3 full. Wet laundry should be placed in plastic lined bags. Soiled laundry accidentally taken should be washed separately in water no less than 160F.
- Training and signage to indicate the importance of cleanliness and hand-washing.
- Instruction on the importance of maintaining clean, dry, and uncluttered workspaces and animal areas.
- Posting readily visible list of emergency contact numbers, and actions to be taken in case of an accident, spill, or exposure incident.
- Record keeping. Employee training records should be kept for minimum of three years. All injuries involving contaminated or potentially contaminated sharps need to be reported on the OSHA 300 log.

Personal Protection Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is intended to protect employees from any residual risk of zoonotic disease exposure after all available engineering and work practice controls have been implemented. Employees must be trained in the proper use, care, and limitations of PPE. Examples of PPE applicable in veterinary practice include:

- Safety eye wear or goggles
- Face shields when protection from splashes is needed
- Gloves
- Footwear
- Hearing protection
- Respiratory protection
- Protective outerwear

Questions for Discussion

Question: What actions should be taken in case of potential transfer of disease?

Answer: Immediate flushing of wound with soap and water, followed by immediate medical attention.

Question: What are the best handling practices for animals suspected of being sick or infected?

Answer: Isolate sick or infected animals. Handle and care for these animals last. Rapid disposal of animal products, waste, bedding, linens, and other used equipment is essential.

Questions?

Please complete the Sign-In sheet.

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Attendance Record

Date _____ Trainer _____

Print Name Signature

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Employee Handout

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