

■ Bloodborne Diseases, Flu and Infection Control at Work

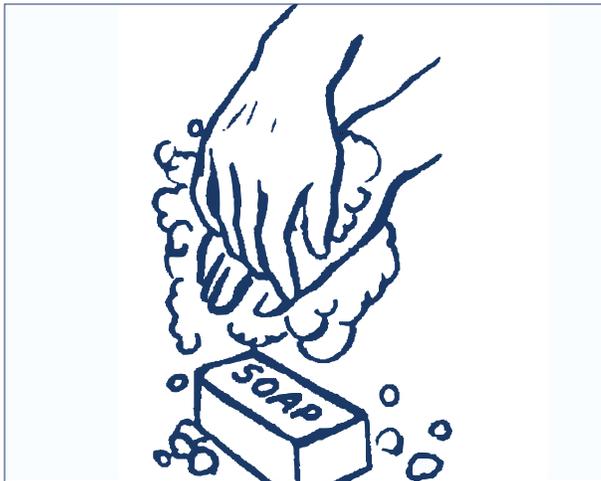


INFECTIOUS DISEASES can be spread several different ways. Some are spread through contact with blood or other body fluids; others are airborne and are spread by breathing them in.

In either case, there are some practices that employers must do to protect their workers from getting sick.

■ IDENTIFY WORKERS AT RISK OF EXPOSURE

Many Local 237 members work in high-risk workplaces, but not every job carries the same level of risk. Employers must assess their workplaces and ensure that each job title and task is evaluated to identify whether those workers are at risk.



■ IDENTIFY AND PUT INTO PLACE METHODS TO REDUCE EXPOSURE

In situations where workers are at risk, the employer must come up with a plan to reduce the level of risk. Some examples are making sure workers do not go into areas where there is a known risk or providing the proper protective gear if work is being done in a high risk area.

■ PROVIDE VACCINES, WHERE APPROPRIATE

Some infectious diseases, like Hepatitis B, have vaccines available to protect workers. If a worker is in a high risk job, and a vaccine is available, it should be made available to the workers.

■ PROVIDE HAND WASHING FACILITIES

Simple methods like hand washing can help stop the spread of certain diseases. Employers must make hand washing facilities available to workers.

■ TRAIN WORKERS ON IDENTIFYING HIGH-RISK SITUATIONS AND WHAT STEPS TO TAKE

- Develop written procedures for cleaning and decontamination.
- Provide personal protective equipment (gloves, masks, etc) where needed.
- Maintain recordkeeping.



PESH WHAT THE LAW REQUIRES

Several PESH standards (safety and health laws) are in place regarding infectious diseases. Bloodborne pathogens: 1910.1030

Respiratory protection: 1910.134
Sanitation/Housekeeping: 1910.141

In addition, PESH has several guidance documents available on pandemic flu, anthrax and other biological threats.

