

**HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER  
TRANSPORT OF LAB SPECIMENS**

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**Effective Date: December 2001**  
**Cross Referenced: OSHA Guidelines**  
**Reviewed Date: 11/2013**  
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**Policy No: IC0017**  
**Origin: Infection Control**  
**Authority: Infection Prevention**  
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**SCOPE:** All employees, volunteers and students in HRMC

**PURPOSE**

In handling human specimens, the goal is to protect health care workers and ancillary staff such as transportation as well as the general public from exposures to blood and to other potentially infectious body fluids

**DEFINITIONS**

1. **Contaminated** means the presence or the reasonably anticipated presence of blood or other potentially infectious materials on an item or surface.
2. **Decontamination** means the use of physical or chemical means to remove, inactivate, or destroy bloodborne pathogens on a surface or item to the point where they are no longer capable of transmitting infectious particles and the surface or item is rendered safe for handling, use, or disposal.
3. **Universal Precautions** is an approach to infection control. According to the concept of Universal Precautions, all human blood and certain human body fluids are treated as if known to be infectious for HIV, HBV, and other bloodborne pathogens.
4. **Exposure Incident** means a specific eye, mouth, other mucous membrane, non-intact skin, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that results from the performance of an employee's duties
5. **Blood borne Pathogens:** means pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B virus (HBV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

**PROCEDURE**

- I. All laboratory specimens for transport will be labeled appropriately with patient identifier and placed in a clear zipper locked plastic bag.
- II. Bagged specimens will be placed in an impenetrable container that may be closed and secured from accidental opening.(Cover of container may be attached to the container or free of the container )
- III. Ensure that there is no leakage from or visible contamination outside the specimen container and that there are no needles or other sharps in the package that could cause injury or pathogenic exposure to anyone handling or opening the package and inner containers
- IV. The transport container/ cooler will be clearly labeled with a red-orange or florescent orange biohazard label.
- V. The biohazard label will be clearly visible and affixed to the container/ cooler in a manner that prevents its loss or unintentional removal.
- VI. In the event of a container/ coolers becoming contaminated, it will be cleaned with a ten-percent bleach solution or follow current hospital procedure for cleaning items that are potentially a biohazard.

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- VII. Routine cleaning of the containers/ coolers will be performed monthly with either a ten percent bleach solution or follow current hospital procedures for cleaning items that are potentially a biohazard.
- VIII. The cleaning will be recorded on a chart with the date and initials of person performing the cleaning. Cleaning log: S drive- forms-lab
- IX. The containers/ coolers will be checked monthly for cracks and/or damage.
- X. If any container/ cooler is damaged or deemed unsafe for specimen transport, it will be replaced.
- XI. The containers/ coolers will be used for transporting of any and all laboratory specimens outside of the laboratory. NEVER transport food or beverages in cooler.
- XII. In the event of an exposure, immediately wash site, notify your manager or supervisor fill out an incident report and seek prompt medical attention.

**REFERENCES**

OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1030 Bloodborne Pathogens Standard

Federal Register DOL-OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1030