WEST NORRITON TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Subject: Health Precaution		Policy # 5.1.40
Accreditation N/A		
Effective Date: January 1, 2008	Revised Date:	
By Authority Of: Chief A. Dale Mabry	Signature: ADMabry	

5.1.40 HEALTH PRECAUTIONS

A. POLICY

It is the policy of the West Norriton Township Police Department to establish procedures that will protect our personnel from infection and contamination by persons or items they may come in contact with while executing their sworn duties. All officers will follow these procedures when practicable.

B. PURPOSE

With the multitude of diseases and infections known in today's society, officers must take steps to protect themselves and, in turn, their families. Further, the popularity of narcotics and drugs being used illegally for recreation is increasing dramatically. Contact with some of these substances can be deadly because they can be readily absorbed through the skin.

Contact with an infected needle or other object breaking the skin may transfer the infection to the officer. Extreme care must be taken when searching prisoners, suspects, vehicles, houses, or other areas.

C. PROCEDURES

1. First Aid and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

   a. When rendering first aid or when doing CPR, it is recommended that limited physical contact occur between victims and officers. Bag masks or pocket masks should be used when doing CPR. Blood, saliva, mucus, urine, and fecal matter should not be touched or handled, if at all possible.
   b. All first aid equipment must be washed each time it is used with soap, water and disinfectant. This can be done at the hospital or at the station where supplies are provided.

2. Searching Suspects

   a. The department will provide, and all officers will wear, rubber surgical gloves when searching suspects, whenever practical.
   b. Search procedures will proceed as outlined in the arrest procedure policy.

c. Extreme care must be taken when reaching into pockets, purses, bags, headgear, shoes, or other places that might contain needles, drugs, or contaminated items.
d. If potentially contaminated items are located, they will not be handled unless the officer is protected. Further, these times will be secured in containers that will inhibit any further spread of diseases or contamination. The evidence tag will be appropriately marked, "DO NOT HANDLE, HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE."

3. Post-Incident Precautions

   a. Following an incident where the officer was in contact with a potential hazard, the officer should wash with water and a disinfectant soap.
   b. All contaminated clothing will be removed.
   c. Care should be taken not to touch any other person or other parts of the officer's body with contaminated items.
   d. If an officer is scratched with a needle, contaminated object, human fingernails, human bite, or any other potential contamination, he/she will immediately wash the entire area with soap and water. The officer will then proceed to a hospital emergency room. At the hospital, the officer will explain what or who caused the injury, so emergency room personnel can treat the situation accordingly.

4. Holding Potentially Contaminated Persons

   a. All procedures concerning the holding and security of prisoners will be followed. See Arrest Procedures.
   b. Persons who are diseased or potentially contaminated will not be held in the squad room. These persons will be placed in the processing/detention area only.
   c. All persons who may come in contact with these persons will be notified of their contamination.
   d. Steps will be taken to disinfect the area the contaminated person(s) occupied. See Aids Policy.

5. Fingerprinting Potentially Contaminated Persons

   a. All procedures concerning processing of prisoners will be followed.
   b. Surgical gloves will be provided and will be worn to fingerprint all potentially infectious suspects. It is recommended that these gloves be worn during all fingerprinting.

6. Decontamination of Vehicles and Equipment

   a. Materials and supplies used to decontaminate police vehicles and equipment will be kept in the supply cabinet in the patrol unit. It is the responsibility of the arresting officer to decontaminate areas possibly infected to protect other officers from contamination, or to sees that it is done immediately.
   b. The proper procedure for decontamination can be found in the "Aids Policy" section.