

Introduction

Adult Protective Services staff shall be educated in strategies and techniques to resolve potentially dangerous or hazardous circumstances and to avoid contracting contagious diseases.

Scope

To provide procedures and guidelines for staff to ensure their safety and/or well-being when they find themselves in escalating situations which may become dangerous or pose a health or safety hazard.

Policy

Procedures

A. Injury/Property Damage-During the Course of Employment

Staff may be eligible for compensation for medical expenses or property loss/damage in some job-related situations.

1. If an employee is assaulted, threatened, or incurs property damage/loss, the supervisor must be notified immediately and an [Incident Report](#) must be filed no later than twenty-four (24) hours after the incident per [Policy 2.03 Tennessee Department of Human Services Incident Reporting and Response](#).
2. If an employee is exposed to a serious communicable disease (or other health hazard) or injured they must:
 - a. immediately contact [Workers Compensation](#). See Process of Reporting section of [2.03 Tennessee Department of Human Services Incident Reporting and Response](#)
 - b. immediately contact his/her supervisor
 - c. submit an [incident report](#) within twenty-four (24) hours.
3. If a staff member is assaulted, they may, at their own discretion file a police report with the appropriate law enforcement agency. See [Health and Safety Procedures](#)

B. Physical Safety

Staff may encounter clients and others who, in a crisis situation, become hostile or physically violent. In these instances, staff should contact the appropriate law enforcement agency for assistance. For emergency situations, staff should call 911.

C. Suspicion of Methamphetamine Production and Use During Investigations

The production and use of methamphetamine (meth) poses serious risks for staff and clients. Steps must be taken to protect clients and also ensure the safety of staff. If a report is received in which there is reference to possible meth production or use, the investigative specialist (IS) should:

1. Immediately contact his/her supervisor for guidance.
2. Coordinate investigative efforts with law enforcement if advised by a supervisor.

See [Health and Safety Procedures](#)

D. Contagious Diseases

When the Adult Protective Services (APS) report contains information that the client has been exposed to, or has a communicable disease, the IS must contact:

1. the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) for guidance prior to interaction with the infected individual regarding the risk, safety factors, and protocols that should be followed by staff, and
2. his/her team coordinator (TC) for further direction after receipt of information from TDH.

If the IS was unaware of a communicable disease until after interaction with the infected person, the IS must contact TDH and his/her TC immediately.

Supporting Documents

[Incident Report](#)

[Health and Safety Procedures](#) (For internal use only)

[Policy 2.03 Tennessee Department of Human Services Incident Reporting and Response](#)

Definitions/Acronyms

Term	Definition
APS	Adult Protective Services
IS	Investigative Specialist
Serious Communicable Disease	An easily transmittable disease that is likely to result in serious injury or need immediate medical attention. Non-serious or short-term effect communicable diseases, such as a cold or the flu, are not included in this category.
TC	Team Coordinator
TDH	Tennessee Department of Health

Supersedes

8.05 APS Health and Safety Policy, eff. date 08/15/2022

Approval History

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Clarence H. Carter	Commissioner	09/17/2024	10/01/2024
Clarence H. Carter	Commissioner	07/29/2022	08/15/2022
Danielle Barnes	Commissioner	05/14/2019	06/01/2019

Revision History

Date	Version	Location of Change	Description/Reason for Change
09/17/2024	10/01/2024	Policy Section	This policy revision clarified language for contagious disease exposure.
07/19/2023	08/15/2022	Review conducted	No revisions required
07/29/2022	08/15/2022	Policy Section & Definition	Section D: 1. & 2. wording changes, updated incident report link; Serious Communicable Disease definition
05/14/2019	06/01/2019	N/A	New Policy

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