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Information to At-Risk Employees Regarding Infectious Diseases

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS electronic library known as e-Li. This online library is maintained daily by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other e-Li material.

Sincerely,

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Information to At-Risk Employees Regarding Infectious Diseases

Reference Number: CTAS-1468

Where there has been a potential exposure to an infectious disease in a correctional facility, the institution is required to inform affected employees, contract employees and visitors. When an incident occurs that may have resulted in exposure to disease, the institution must test the inmate, with or without his or her consent, to determine if the inmate is infected with a blood-borne pathogen such as hepatitis B or HIV. The institution is required to disclose the results of the test to each employee, law enforcement officer or visitor who reasonably believes he or she was potentially exposed to a life-threatening disease or pathogen. However, confidential medical information is not to be released to the general public. T.C.A. § 41-51-102.

Similar provisions in T.C.A. § 39-13-112 apply in cases where a law enforcement officer, firefighter, correctional officer, youth services officer, probation and parole officer, employee of the Department of Correction or Department of Children's Services, emergency medical or rescue worker, EMT, or paramedic is the victim of an aggravated assault and comes into actual contact with blood or other body fluid of the arrestee. When that occurs, upon the request of the victim, the arrestee shall undergo HIV testing immediately. The test shall be performed by a licensed medical laboratory at the expense of the arrestee. Test results are not a public record and are available to only the victim and certain other people listed in the statute. If the arrestee is infected with HIV, that person shall be liable for the victim's medical bills and other expenses related to the victim's exposure to HIV upon a finding that such exposure was from the arrestee.

Protection Against Blood Borne Pathogens

Reference Number: CTAS-2137

The superintendent, director or warden of any correctional institution or county or municipal jail or workhouse shall provide training in universal precaution from blood borne pathogens for all employees at risk for potential occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens, including, but not limited to, hepatitis B or HIV (AIDS). Voluntary vaccinations shall be provided and strongly encouraged for all employees at risk. In order to increase the awareness of the need for practicing universal precaution, the superintendent, director or warden may periodically warn all employees at risk of potential exposure that a portion of the inmate population is likely to be infected with a blood borne pathogen. TCA 41-51-101

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