

MVLS Policy Manual



Section 2 – Administrative Policies 2.9

NY HERO Act Airborne Infective Disease

Exposure Prevention Plan

The purpose of this plan is to protect employees against exposure and disease during an airborne infectious disease outbreak. This plan goes into effect when an airborne infectious disease is designated by the New York State Commissioner of Health as a highly contagious communicable disease that presents a serious risk of harm to the public health. This plan is subject to any additional or greater requirements arising from a declaration of a state of emergency due to an airborne infectious disease, as well as any applicable federal standards. The plan applies to all individuals who work in MVLS facilities, regardless of their official employment status.

- I. **Responsibilities.** This plan applies to all individuals who work in MVLS facilities. This plan requires commitment to ensure compliance with all plan elements aimed at preventing the spread of infectious disease. The MVLS Executive Director or their designee has the responsibility to enforce compliance with the plan.
- II. **Exposure Controls During a Designated Outbreak**
 - A. **Minimum Controls During an Outbreak.** The following measures will be implemented whenever New York State declares an airborne infectious disease emergency.
 1. **General Awareness.** People may not realize they are an exposure risk, so all should maintain physical distancing, use PPE as recommended, wash hands frequently, and practice infection reducing etiquette.
 2. **Stay at home if symptomatic.** Anyone exhibiting symptoms of the relevant infectious disease should stay away from the workplace.
 3. **Health screening.** All staff and all visitors who will be in the building for more than 5 minutes must complete this Google form each day: <https://forms.gle/HuVZqeohHypxQNFD8>. The form will be monitored daily, and responses kept for 3 months.

4. Staff will maintain a minimum 6-foot distance and will wear appropriate PPE when that distance cannot be guaranteed. Employees are responsible for keeping their preferred face covering clean, in good repair and properly stored.
 5. Physical Distancing: Physical distancing will be followed as much as feasible. Avoid unnecessary gatherings and maintain a distance of at least six feet (or as recommended by the NYSDOH/CDC for the infectious agent) from each other. Use a face covering when physical distance cannot be maintained. All common areas will have maximum capacity numbers that can be exceeded only when all participants are wearing appropriate PPE. In addition, work from home permission will be increased as appropriate.
 6. Hand Hygiene: To prevent the spread of infection, employees should wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to clean hands BEFORE and AFTER:
 - Touching your eyes, nose, or mouth;
 - Touching your mask;
 - Entering and leaving a public place; and
 - Touching an item or surface that may be frequently touched by other people.
 7. Cleaning and Disinfection: See Section V of this plan.
 8. Respiratory Etiquette: Because infectious diseases can be spread by droplets expelled from the mouth and nose, employees should exercise appropriate respiratory etiquette by covering nose and mouth when sneezing, coughing or yawning.
 9. Special Accommodations for Individuals with Added Risk Factors: Some employees, due to age, underlying health condition, or other factors, may be at increased risk of severe illness if infected. Employees should discuss special accommodations with their supervisor.
- B. Advanced Controls During an Outbreak. For activities where the Minimum Controls alone will not provide sufficient protection for employees, additional controls from the following hierarchy may be necessary.
1. Elimination. Specific activities may be temporarily halted, for example, delivery services.
 2. Engineering Controls. Potential changes at MVLS include the following: increasing the fresh air intake in air handlers, more stringent air filters in air handlers, and increased natural ventilation.
 3. Administrative Controls. Potential changes at MVLS include the following: identifying and prioritizing tasks that need to be performed onsite, posting signage for capacity, etc., and reducing using shared workstations.
 4. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are devices like eye protection, face shields, respirators, and gloves that protect the wearer from infection. PPE will be provided, used and maintained in a sanitary and reliable condition at no cost to the employee. The PPE provided to an employee will be based on a hazard assessment for the workplace.

5. Exposure Control Readiness, Maintenance and Storage: The controls we have selected will be obtained, properly stored, and maintained so that they are ready for immediate use in the event of an infectious disease outbreak and any applicable expiration dates will be properly considered.

III. **Cleaning During a Designated Outbreak**

- A. Disinfection Methods and Schedules. Specific changes will be determined in consultation with MVLS staff and cleaning contractors, using guidance from New York State and the CDC as applicable.
- B. Adjustments to Normal Procedures will be made as appropriate. These may include employees washing hands and disinfecting surfaces when using any common equipment.
- C. If an employee develops symptoms of the infectious disease at work, it is ideal to isolate the area in accordance with guidance issued by NYSDOH or the CDC, before cleaning and disinfecting the sick employee's work area. This delay will allow contaminated droplets to settle out of the air and the space to be ventilated.
- D. As feasible, liners should be used in trash containers. Empty the containers often enough to prevent overfilling. Do not forcefully squeeze the air out of the trash bags before tying them closed. Trash containers may contain soiled tissue or face coverings.

IV. **Infection Response During a Designated Outbreak**

- A. If an actual, or suspected, infectious disease case occurs at work, take the following actions: Instruct the sick individual to wear a face covering and leave the worksite and follow NYSDOH/CDC guidance; Follow local and state authority guidance to inform impacted individuals.

V. **Training and Information During a Designated Outbreak**

- A. This plan and other official documents will be posted on the MVLS website and shared with all staff. MVLS will communicate with staff and stakeholders via web, email, social media and print.
- B. When this plan is activated, all personnel will receive training which will cover all elements of this plan and the following topics: 1. The infectious agent and the disease(s) it can cause; 2. The signs and symptoms of the disease; 3. How the disease can be spread; 4. An explanation of this Exposure Prevention Plan; 5. The activities and locations at our worksite that may involve exposure to the infectious agent; 6. The use and limitations of exposure controls 7. A review of the standard, including employee rights provided under Labor Law, Section 218-B.
- C. The training will be: 1. Provided at no cost to employees and take place during working hours. If training during normal work hours is not possible, employees will be compensated for the training time (with pay or time off); 2. Appropriate in content and vocabulary to your educational level, literacy, and preferred language; and 3. Verbally provided in person or through telephonic, electronic, or other means.

VI. Plan Evaluation During a Designated Outbreak

MVLS will review and revise the plan periodically, upon activation of the plan, and as often as needed to keep up-to-date with current requirements. Revisions will be posted on the MVLS website.

VII. RETALIATION PROTECTIONS AND REPORTING OF ANY VIOLATIONS.

No employer, or his or her agent, or person, acting as or on behalf of a hiring entity, or the officer or agent of any entity, business, corporation, partnership, or limited liability company, shall discriminate, threaten, retaliate against, or take adverse action against any employee for exercising their rights under this plan, including reporting conduct the employee reasonably believes in good faith violates the plan or airborne infectious disease concerns to their employer, government agencies or officials or for refusing to work where an employee reasonably believes in good faith that such work exposes him or her, other workers, or the public to an unreasonable risk of exposure, provided the employee, another employee, or representative has notified the employer verbally or in writing, including electronic communication, of the inconsistent working conditions and the employer's failure to cure or if the employer knew or should have known of the consistent working conditions. Notification of a violation by an employee may be made verbally or in writing, and without limitation to format including electronic communications. To the extent that communications between the employer and employee regarding a potential risk of exposure are in writing, they shall be maintained by the employer for two years after the conclusion of the designation of a high risk disease from the Commissioner of Health, or two years after the conclusion of the Governor's emergency declaration of a high risk disease. Employer should include contact information to report violations of this plan and retaliation during regular business hours and for weekends/other non-regular business hours when employees may be working.