

WS Directive 2.635 04/29/09

ZOONOTIC DISEASES AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

1. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for health, safety, and personal protection for Wildlife Services (WS) personnel from zoonotic diseases in the conduct of official duties and to prescribe standard training requirements.

2. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Directive, zoonotic diseases are defined as diseases that are caused by infectious agents that can be transmitted between *(or are shared by)* animals and humans. This Directive covers infectious pathogens transmitted through direct contact with animals and contaminated objects, ingestion, inhalation, and vectors.

WS personnel are considered to be all personnel employed by WS or under the supervision of WS including State employees and official volunteers.

3. BACKGROUND

WS recognizes that zoonotic diseases are an inherent threat to employees who work with wildlife, work in areas where wildlife frequent, or have contact with equipment and/or supplies that have been in contact with wildlife or their environment.

Zoonotic diseases (including bacterial, viral, parasitic, and prional) are a hazard and constitute a work-related injury when contracted during execution of official duties. WS further recognizes that exposure to zoonotic pathogens can result from contact with biological tissues or fluids from infected animals and vectors (e.g., insects, parasites) and equipment having had contact with wildlife and the environment. Exposure to zoonotic diseases can be inadvertent and not recognized by the employee, so the employee may not be able to identify the contact time or place.

4. POLICY

WS employees will be provided with a Physicians Alert Card (APHIS Form 260 or APHIS Form 260A) which identifies a number of the more significant zoonotic diseases personnel are likely to encounter. Personnel will use the Physician's

Alert Card when conferring with their physician about any illnesses or suspicious symptoms. The form is not meant to imply a specific diagnosis or limit the diseases to be considered by the physician.

Physical injury events such as animal scratches or bites (including imbedded ticks) should be reported to your supervisor as soon as possible and documented within 30 days on a U.S. Department of Labor Form CA-1 "Federal Employees Notice of Traumatic Injury." Appropriate medical treatment for injuries should be sought as needed. First aid injuries, which do not require medical attention, should still be reported and documented on a CA-1, but will not be filed as a claim unless a medical condition arises. If an employee experiences signs or symptoms of a suspected work related illness, zoonotic disease, or parasitic infection/infestation, the employee should notify their supervisor as soon as possible and seek medical attention for a diagnosis and confirmation from a physician that the condition is in fact work related. Once medical documentation and confirmation has been received, the employee should complete a U.S. Department of Labor Form CA-2 "Notice of Occupational Disease." WS employees who suffer from work related injuries and illnesses are covered by the Office of Workers' Compensation Program (OWCP) for payment of medical bills, lost wages, and disability, as long as those injuries or illnesses were sustained in the performance of official duty, supported by medical evidence, and the claim is filed in a timely manner. Reporting injuries and illnesses to your supervisor, and completing the appropriate CA form is strongly encouraged.

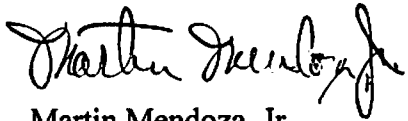
5. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

All WS personnel who handle or are exposed to wildlife, biological samples, or equipment used to handle or process animals or biological materials will be provided disease safety, biosecurity, and PPE training as prescribed in the WS Biological Risk Management Training Manual. Specific PPE requirements will vary among positions and the specific duties of personnel. All PPE supplies (e.g. gloves, safety glasses, DEET) will be routinely monitored and supplemented or replaced as necessary. Training will be documented using an SF-182, Request, Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training, or similar training documentation document.

6. REFERENCES

Physicians Alert Card (APHIS Forms 260 & 260A)
MRP Drug Free Workplace Program Handbook, MRP 4792.1 (April 2001).
WS Directive 2.601, Safety (10/07/05).
APHIS Form CA-2, Notice of Occupational Disease and Claim for Compensation
(<http://www.dol.gov/esa/owcp/regs/compliance/ca-2.pdf>)
APHIS Form CA-1, Federal Employee's Notice of Traumatic Injury and Claim or Continuation of Pay/Compensation
(<http://www.dol.gov/esa/owcp/regs/compliance/ca-1.pdf>)

APHIS Form 29, OMMP Occupational Exposures
(<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/library/forms/pdf/aphis29.pdf>).
APHIS Safety and Health Manual – APHIS 4790
(<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/library/manuals/>).
Biological Risk Management Training Manual

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martin Mendoza, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Martin Mendoza, Jr.
Acting Deputy Administrator