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1.0 Purpose

To establish infection control guidelines for Pelzer Rescue Squad in an effort to ensure protection from the spread of communicable diseases in the workplace in accordance with regulations from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OHSA 29 CFR 1910.1030). This policy replaces all previous Exposure Control Plans for the Pelzer Rescue Squad.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This policy and procedure applies to all employees of the Pelzer Rescue Squad, all pre-hospital care students, and all approved third riders who may potentially come into contact with blood and other potentially infectious material while riding and engaging in pre-hospital care activities. The term "employee" for the purpose of this text, refers to (1) Pelzer Rescue Squad employees, (2) pre-hospital care students, and (3) approved third riders. The term "employee" is used for brevity and is not intended to create a contract of employment with an individual.

2.2 The sponsoring facility for all pre-hospital care students are responsible for providing that individual with the training, equipment/supplies, vaccinations, and post-exposure follow-up required by the standard.

2.3 All approved third riders are not permitted to participate in direct patient care activities. Their potential for exposure is limited. The third rider must complete an orientation to blood borne pathogens and methods to prevent exposure before being allowed to ride. The third rider is solely responsible for any medical assessment, treatment, and follow-up testing associated with an exposure.

2.4 The term "blood" refers to human blood or blood products and the term "other potentially infectious material" refers to the following: (1) semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid, peritoneal fluid, amniotic fluid, and body fluids that

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are visibly contaminated with blood; (2) any unfixed tissue or organ from a human (living or dead).

3.0 Responsibility

3.1 Administrative Responsibilities – It is the responsibility of the Pelzer Rescue Squad Administration to (1) identify (classify) employees considered at risk for the receipt and/or transmission of blood borne pathogens; (2) identify body fluids which pose a risk to Pelzer Rescue Squad employees; (3) formulate and offer a Hepatitis B program to each Pelzer Rescue Squad employee free of charge; (4) develop an Exposure Control Plan; (5) monitor for compliance and enforce the safety requirements as mandated by state and federal OSHA through the Pelzer Rescue Squad Personnel Policy; (6) provide free of charge to the employee equipment and supplies necessary to assist in the abatement of known or potentially hazards found in the workplace from blood borne pathogens; (7) maintain a training program as outlined in 29 CFR 1910.1030; (8) provide free of charge to employees medical treatment, post-exposure follow-up, and the necessary counseling to employees who have received an occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens and/or other diseases; (9) maintain training and medical records for each employee; (10) ensure the confidentiality of employee's medical records; and (11) conduct an annual review of the Exposure Control policy which allows for employee input into the safety which encompasses equipment, sharps safety, and other aspects of safe practices.

3.2 Employee Responsibilities – It is the responsibility of the Pelzer Rescue Squad employee to: (1) be informed regarding new information on blood borne diseases in medical literature; (2) use personal protective equipment (PPE) as outlined in this policy to reduce the spread of diseases; (3) use universal precautions to prevent the spread of diseases; (4) report any and all exposures and/or injuries as soon as possible; (5) attend

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mandatory training on blood borne pathogens offered by the employer;; (6) protect and maintain patient and employee medical information confidentially; and (7) maintain PPE supplies needed in the workplace and report damaged and/or missing PPE as soon as possible to the Administration.

4.0 Universal Precautions

Universal precautions is a concept utilizing body substance isolation and barrier protection as a form of protection for health care and public safety workers from blood borne pathogens and diseases which may be encountered during contact with blood and body fluids. Universal precautions apply to all blood and other potentially infectious material encountered by Pelzer Rescue Squad employees. It is possible to contract other diseases from body fluids not containing blood. Use Universal Precautions if the patient presents with signs and symptoms of any communicable disease (fever, rash, etc.) If in doubt, follow Universal Precautions and use barrier protection.

5.0 Job Categorization (Risk Classification)

S.1 All Pelzer Rescue Squad employees who respond to emergency medical, fire, or rescue calls as a part of their assigned duties have a risk of contracting and/or transmitting communicable diseases as the result of occupational exposure to blood and/or body fluids. Students and observers are also at risk of contracting and/or transmitting communicable diseases as the result of exposure to blood and/or other potentially infectious material.

5.2 OSHA requires that employees be classified into the following categories which represent occupational exposure risks:

CATEGORY 1 - employees with an exposure potential of equal to or greater than once per month.

CATEGORY 2 – employees with an exposure potential of less than once per month but job requirements may increase their exposure potential to a Category 1.

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CATEGORY 3 – employees who do not have an exposure risk

5.3 Employees with the following positions within the Pelzer Rescue Squad are classified as:

CATEGORY 1 – Drivers	Students
EMT's	Third Riders
EMT-Intermediates	Business Manager
Paramedics	Operations Manager
Training Officer	Shift Supervisor

CATEGORY 2 - No positions are classified as Category 2.

CATEGORY 3 - Administrator
Data entry clerk
Board of Directors

6.0 Work Practices

6.1 Sharps

6.1.1 The term “sharps” includes, but is not limited to, IV needles, medication needles, broken syringes, blood lances, razors, or drug paraphernalia found on the body or in the clothing of the patient on a call. It also includes sharp pieces of metal associated with industrial or auto accident calls.

6.1.2 Treat all used needles, syringes, and sharps as if they are contaminated and use extreme care to prevent needle and/or sharps sticks to yourself and others.

6.1.3 Needles are not to be recapped, bent or broken, and are not to be removed from any syringe or otherwise manipulated by hand.

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6.1.4 If a needleless port or safety needle is removed from a syringe, the needle must be placed in an approved sharps container immediately.

6.1.5 All syringes removed from packaging for use, whether used or not, shall be handled and disposed of as if contaminated.

6.1.6 Carefully place all needles, syringes, and sharps into a sharps container needle end first. Do not force sharps into containers.

6.1.7 Needles, syringes, or sharps are not to be placed into any trash can as a means of disposal at any location. Dispose of such items in containers designed only for that purpose.

6.1.8 It is the responsibility of Pelzer Rescue Squad employees to ensure that no sharps are left on the scene of a call. Do not ask, direct, or expect anyone else to search for, handle, or dispose of sharps produced by Pelzer Rescue Squad employees.

6.1.9 Treat and report all injuries from needles and/or other sharps as outlined in this policy.

6.2 Handwashing

6.2.1 Handwashing is the single most important means for preventing the spread of communicable diseases.

6.2.2 Washing with soap and water is the primary method of cleaning your hands. Use of an EPA approved antiseptic after washing with soap and water may be used as a chemical soil remover if the patient is known to have a communicable disease.

6.2.3 Alcohol based dispensers are present in all Pelzer Rescue Squad vehicles. Use the alcohol base cleaners if soap and water are not readily available. Any chemical cleaner is not intended to take the place of soap and water.

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6.2.4 Hands must be washed when coming on duty, when hands are soiled, after removing gloves, after removing any other barrier protection, after handling contaminated items, before eating, before going off duty, prior to handling contact lenses, or before applying make-up.

6.2.5 Skin or mucous membranes that come into contact with blood and/or other potentially infectious material should be washed with soap and water as soon as possible. Flush mucous membranes with copious amounts of water as soon as feasible if blood and/or other potentially infectious material are splashed or sprayed into the eyes, nose, or mouth.

6.3 Work Area and Exposure Potential

6.3.1 All Pelzer Rescue Squad employees must recognize the potential for the spread of communicable diseases from the work area to a health care or public safety worker. Work surfaces that have not been properly cleaned and/or disinfected pose a potential health risk after a call.

6.3.2 The term “work area” is defined as the patient care area of an ambulance.

6.3.3 Eating, drinking, smoking, applying cosmetics or lip balm, and handling contact lenses are prohibited in the work area at all times.

6.3.4 Food and beverages shall not be placed on surfaces in the work area.

6.3.5 Food and beverages for personal use shall not be carried, transported, or stored in a work area or in an outside storage compartment of a Pelzer Rescue Squad vehicle. These compartments are used to store and transport equipment that has a potential to be contaminated with blood and/or other potentially infectious material.

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7.0 Housekeeping

7.1 The term “contaminated,” for the purpose of this policy, is defined as the presence of blood and/or other potentially infectious material on work surfaces, medical and rescue equipment, personal protective equipment, and clothing. All Pelzer Rescue Squad employees must recognize that surfaces and equipment contaminated with blood and/or other potentially infectious material pose a potential health risk. Therefore, handle all contaminated and/or potentially contaminated equipment and waste as little as possible to minimize contact and exposure.

7.2 Equipment Transport and Cleaning

7.2.1 All employees must wear the appropriate personal protective equipment when handling, cleaning, or transporting contaminated or potentially contaminated equipment or work surfaces.

7.2.2 All contaminated or potentially contaminated equipment must be isolated during transport for cleaning. Isolation can be achieved by placing the equipment in an approved waste bag/cover which has been marked “BIOHAZARD” or displays a Biohazard symbol.

7.2.3 Properly clean and/or disinfect all contaminated or potentially contaminated work surfaces and equipment as soon as possible but prior to reuse.

7.2.4 Work surfaces and equipment will be cleaned and/or disinfected with either a hypochlorite solution or an EPA approved germicidal/virucidal agent. If a hypochlorite solution is used, it must be mixed by adding ¼ cup of chlorine bleach per gallon of fresh water and used in a well-ventilated area.

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7.2.5 Blood spills will be cleaned by first placing an absorbent cloth or towel on the spill to absorb as much of the excess fluid as possible. Place the contaminated cloth in the appropriate receptacle (trash or linen) and clean and/or disinfect as outlined in 7.2.4.

7.2.6 Uniforms that are contaminated with blood and/or or potentially infectious material are to be removed as soon as possible and placed in an appropriate waste bag. Soiled uniforms may be washed in Pelzer Rescue Squad owned washers using standard laundry detergent. Under no circumstances will contaminated clothing be washed at the employee's home.

7.2.7 Boots that are contaminated with blood and/or other potentially infectious material are to be removed as soon as possible and cleaned. Also, check floor areas where contamination may have occurred as the result of contact with the boots and clean/disinfect appropriately.

7.2.8 Use mechanical means to pick up pieces of broken or contaminated glass. Do not pick up contaminated glass or needles with your hands.

7.3 Waste Disposal and Transport

7.3.1 All contaminated waste and trash will be handled as little as possible and disposed of in an approved manner as outlined in this policy.

7.3.2 All waste containers including sharps containers and bags will be identified by either (1) the color orange-red, (2) the term "BIOHAZARD", or (3) the Biohazard Warning symbol. The term "BIOHAZARD" or the Biohazard Warning Symbol must be easily recognizable on the original container (separated by color).

7.3.3 All waste containing blood and/or potentially infectious material will be disposed of in an approved waste receptacle (Refer to 7.3.2).

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7.3.4 It is the responsibility of Pelzer Rescue Squad employees to properly dispose of contaminated waste materials generated by Pelzer Rescue Squad. Do not request or direct others to dispose of or secure contaminated waste. If the contaminated waste cannot be secured by the initial crew on the scene due to patient condition (need for rapid transport), then you should contact the shift supervisor or Operations Manager.

7.3.5 Waste containers will be cleaned weekly or when obviously soiled as outlined in 7.2.4.

7.3.6 When a waste container (excluding sharps container) becomes $\frac{3}{4}$ full, as noted on visual inspection, it will be closed in such a manner as to prevent leakage and/or spills of contaminated material during transport. The waste container is then to be disposed of, or transported to, an approved Biohazard receptacle for disposal (Biohazard box in supply or a designated biohazard receptacle at medical facilities). No bio hazardous waste is to be disposed of in a non-designated receptacle.

7.3.7 When a sharps container becomes $\frac{3}{4}$ full, as noted on visual inspection, it will be closed and transported to the supply office for disposal in the biohazard receptacle. Sharps containers are not to be disposed at any other site.

8.0 Engineering Controls

8.1 "Engineering Controls" is defined by OSHA as physical equipment used in addition to safe work practices to ensure body substance isolation and is considered part of Universal Precautions.

8.2 Sharps Containers

8.2.1 Approved sharps containers must be (1) puncture resistant, (2) have leak proof sides and bottom, and (3) identified by the term "BIOHAZARD" or the Biohazard

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Warning Symbol. You should only use approved sharps containers issued by Pelzer Rescue Squad supply or found in a medical facility.

8.2.2 All contaminated or potentially contaminated sharps will be properly disposed of in an approved sharps container.

8.2.3 Sharps containers must be readily accessible to employees. Sharps containers must accompany medical equipment at the location of a patient.

8.3 Personal Protective Equipment

8.3.1 All personal protective equipment used for barrier protection as part of Universal Precautions must be either (1) distributed by Pelzer Rescue Squad, or (2) approved by the Operations Manager.

8.3.2 Employees must remember that no personal protective equipment will offer 100% protection against receipt or transmission of disease.

8.3.3 Gloves – Disposable gloves must be worn for patient contacts and/or procedures in which blood and/or potentially infectious material may be contacted. Gloves must also be worn while cleaning or handling contaminated or potentially contaminated equipment, vehicles, waste, linen, uniforms, trash, or other materials. Gloves that are punctured, torn, cracked, or otherwise damaged must be replaced as soon as possible. Employees who are providing patient care or who are at risk of handling contaminated material or equipment must wear gloves if there are open wounds or otherwise non-intact skin on their hands. Sterile gloves must be worn for sterile procedures (i.e. sterile suctioning, childbirth, etc.). All contaminated or potentially contaminated gloves must be removed and properly disposed of prior to operating a vehicle.

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8.3.4 Protective Masks – Issued masks are to be worn when contamination of the mucous membranes of the nose or mouth is possible via splashes and/or sprays of blood or potentially infectious materials. Masks will be used during tracheal/esophageal intubation, suctioning, childbirth exam, and childbirth delivery. Employees with open or weeping circum-oral sores must wear a mask during all patient contacts.

8.3.5 Protective Eye Wear (Safety Glasses, goggles, or eye shield/mask combinations) – Must be worn when contamination of the eyes via splashes or sprays of blood or other potentially infectious material is possible. Protective eyewear will be used during tracheal/esophageal intubation, suctioning, childbirth exam, and childbirth delivery. The use of personal prescription glasses as a means of barrier protection is not encouraged but may be used if solid side pieces are attached to the glasses. Non-disposable eye wear must be properly cleaned as soon as possible if they come into contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.

8.3.6 Protective Gowns/Body Covers - Disposable gowns or coveralls must be worn when gross contamination (splashes or sprays of blood or other potentially infectious material) is possible.

8.3.7 – A chart of personal protective equipment REQUIRED for specific job tasks is located in Appendix A of this section.

9.0 Employee Exposures to Bloodborne Pathogens

9.1 Employee Contact Exposure with Injury

9.1.1 Although the term “employee” is defined in Section 2 as inclusive of student and approved third riders, this section ONLY applies to paid and volunteer personnel of the Pelzer Rescue Squad.

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9.1.2 The term “Employee Contact Exposure with Injury” for the purpose of this text is defined as contact between human blood and/or potentially infectious materials with the employee’s mucous membranes (eyes, nose, or mouth) or broken skin surfaces.

9.1.3 If contact does occurs with blood and/or other potentially infectious material then:

- (A) Render appropriate emergency care to the injured employee
- (B) If injury requires immediate medical care, proceed to the nearest emergency department for medical attention and notify the on-duty shift supervisor or Administration as soon as possible. The shift supervisor or administration will advise you as to the appropriate hospital information and paperwork to complete as a result of the occupational exposure to blood and/or other potentially infectious material.
- (C) If the injury is minor in nature, complete the task at hand if appropriate and then notify the shift supervisor or administration as soon as possible. They will direct you on medical attention needed. With their guidance, complete the appropriate paperwork to complete as the result of an occupational exposure to blood and/or potentially infectious material.
- (D) Route the appropriate forms and paperwork to the proper Pelzer Rescue Squad administrative personnel and follow all medical instruction issued by the attending physician or medical staff.

9.1.4 The employee has the right to refuse self-blood testing for HIV and/or HBV as a result of their occupational exposure. The employee may instead consent to baseline blood collection only, which will be retained for 90 days. If the employee later decides to have serological testing completed, then testing will be performed on either the

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previously collected sample (if still available) or with a new blood sample. The Pelzer Rescue Squad strongly suggest employee serological testing.

Appendix A

Personal Protective Equipment Requirements for Specific Job Tasks

Task or Activity	Disposable Gloves	Gown	Mask	Protective Eyewear
Bleeding control with spurting blood	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bleeding control with minimal bleeding	Yes	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
Emergency Childbirth	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Intubation	Yes	Sometimes	Yes	Yes
Handling and cleaning contaminated equipment	Yes	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
Starting an IV	Yes	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
Measuring blood pressure	Yes	No	No	No
Patient Exam	Yes	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
Suctioning	Yes	Sometimes	Yes	Yes

Legend

Yes – You must don the personal protective equipment indicated for this procedure/task as minimum protection.

Sometimes – You must wear the personal protective equipment indicated for this procedure/task if splashes and/or sprays of blood and/or body fluids are likely to occur during this procedure/task.

No – You do not have to wear the indicated personal protective equipment during this procedure/task.

Appendix B

Employee Blood/Body Fluid Exposure Report Form

Name of Exposed Employee: _____ Phone Number: _____

Date of Exposure: _____ Time of Exposure: _____

Name of Supervisor or Administrator Notified: _____

Witness to Exposure: _____

Source Patient's Name (if known): _____

Patient's Date of Birth: _____ Patient's Age: _____ Patient's Sex: _____

Patient's Address: _____

Type of Incident (auto accident, trauma, etc.): _____

What were you exposed to: _____ Blood _____ Feces _____ Urine _____ Saliva _____ Vomit
_____ Sputum _____ Other (explain): _____

Protection Used to Avoid Exposure: _____ Gloves _____ Mask _____ Eyewear _____ Gown

PLEASE PLACE A CHECK MARK BESIDE THE DESCRIPTION(S) THAT APPLY TO YOUR EXPOSURE.

_____ A puncture or a cut from any sharp object previously contaminated with blood/body fluids. (Example: accidental needle stick, scalpel cut, glass, cuts from wreckage where blood contamination might exist).

_____ Contamination with blood/body fluid on any exposed area of the body with broken or nonintact skin. (Example: Blood contamination of hands or arms where cuts, nicks, open wounds, severe chapping, or open hangnails exist).

_____ Contamination with blood/body fluids to any mucous membrane surface. (Example: A splash or splatter which introduces blood/body fluids onto the mucous membrane of eye, nose, or mouth).

Note: Contamination of unbroken intact skin by blood or body fluids does NOT constitute an exposure.

Exposed Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor/Administrator Signature: _____ Date: _____