

## ***El Paso - Ambulatory Clinic Policy and Procedure***

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| Title: <b>DISPOSAL OF BIO HAZARDOUS/INFECTIOUS WASTE</b>                          | Policy Number: <b>EP 7.18</b> |
| Regulation Reference: Joint Commission, Texas Department of State Health Services | Effective Date: <b>9/2014</b> |

### **Policy Statement:**

It is the policy of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) to dispose of bio hazardous/Infectious waste in accordance with state and local ordinances. This policy provides for the safe handling and disposal of such waste.

### **Scope and Distribution:**

This policy applies and will be distributed to all TTUHSC El Paso ambulatory clinics.

### **Procedure:**

Waste disposal procedures at TTUHSC are dictated by the Texas Department of State Health Services and 25 TAC §§1.131-1.137, "Definition, Treatment & Disposal of Special Waste from Healthcare Related

1. Special Waste in ambulatory clinics includes the following:
  - a. Microbial waste: discarded live and attenuated vaccines.
  - b. Pathological waste:
    - i. Human materials removed during procedures.
    - ii. Laboratory specimens of blood and tissue after completion of laboratory examination.
    - iii. Foreign body implantable material (surgically implanted devices, prosthesis, and medication dispensing devices).
    - iv. Sharps (any object that can penetrate the skin):
      1. Hypodermic needles and syringes with attached needles
      2. Contaminated (known or reasonably anticipated presence of blood or other body fluids) scalpel blades, razor blades, disposable surgery scissors, and intravenous stylets and rigid inducers
      3. Contaminated/broken glass pipettes, specimen tubes, blood culture bottles, and microscope slides
  - v. Bulk blood, human blood products, and bulk human body fluids (OPIM)
    1. Free-flowing waste, human blood, serum, plasma, and body fluids identified under universal precautions as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including disposable items saturated with blood or body fluids
    2. Bulk is defined as a containerized, aggregate volume of 100 mL or greater
    3. Saturated is defined as thoroughly wet such that liquid or fluid flows freely from an item or surface without compression
    4. Other Potentially Infectious Materials (OPIM) is defined as any unfixed tissue or organ (other than intact skin) from a human (living or dead), such as HIV-containing cell or tissue cultures, organ cultures, and HIV- or HBV-contained culture medium, and the following human body fluids:

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semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid (joint fluid), pleural fluid (lung fluid), pericardial fluid (around the heart), peritoneal fluid (fluid that fills body cavity), saliva during dental procedures, amniotic fluid (uterine fluid), any body fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood, and all body fluids in situations where it is difficult or impossible to differentiate between body fluids.

2. Procedure for Disposal of Special Waste: All Special Wastes must be handled in a proper way to prevent the transmission of infectious disease.
  - a. Place vaccine vials in a clear plastic bag and call safety services for special pickup.
  - b. Place all other Special Waste in designated bio hazardous containers with lids for pickup.
  - c. Place all needles/sharps in approved puncture resistant sharps container and place in biohazard container for pickup.
  - d. Unless saturated with blood or body fluids or known to be infectious, waste items that fall outside the above definition do not require special disposal and can be placed in the regular trash containers.
  - e. If a healthcare provider believes that an item, which, by definition, does not have to be treated as special waste, represents a real and substantial risk of exposure to infectious disease to themselves, a patient or an employee, he/she should place it in the biohazard container.

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| Signatory approval on file by: Michael J. Romano, M.D.<br>Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs<br>Clinic Operations Committee, Chair<br>Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso |                                       |