

INFECTIOUS, PATHOGENIC OR ZONOTIC ORGANISMS' PROCEDURE

Section	Health and Safety
Contact	Occupational Health & Safety, and Wellbeing Team
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Approval	Director Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing

Purpose:

To provide for safe and responsible work with infectious, pathogenic, or zoonotic organisms at Massey University in a way that protects the environment and the health and safety of people and communities.

Scope:

This procedure covers the use of organisms that are infectious, pathogenic, or zoonotic; or animals, animal specimens or other material that may contain such organisms.

For new organisms (including GMO's) also classified as infectious, pathogenic, or zoonotic or biological products which may harbour such organisms, the following procedures may apply:

- [Restricted Organisms and Biological Products Procedures](#)
- [Genetically Modified Organisms Procedure](#)

Procedure:

Risk Management

Principle Investigators and Laboratory/Collection managers are responsible for assessing the risks associated with the hazards from infectious, pathogenic, or zoonotic organisms used at Massey University.

Laboratory managers must ensure the risks are minimized in accordance with the Australian/New Zealand Standard (AS/NZS) 2243.3 Safety in laboratories: Microbiological aspects and containment facilities.

AS/NZS 2243.3 prescribes the risk groupings, conditions for facilities, day to day operation and quality management systems required to control the risks associated with infectious, pathogenic, or zoonotic organisms.

Veterinary and Farm managers are required to assess associated hazards and implement best practice to reduce the risk from zoonotic organisms to staff and students and to reduce the risk of disease spreading to other animals.

This may include (but is not limited to) veterinary standard precautions for animal handling or diagnostic specimens, protective actions during veterinary procedures, environmental infection control, including a written infection control plan and appropriate facility design standards.

Any inability to implement to requirement containment and hazard control requirements must be advised to Head of School or equivalent and alternative arrangements made for adequate complaint controls or facilities.

Hazard controls

All human or animal blood, bodily fluids or tissues is to be regarded as infectious or pathogenic, even if screening processes are applied in the collection.

All work with potentially infectious or pathogenic samples must follow standard precautions¹ or equivalent infection control measures to minimize risk to staff, students, and laboratory organisms.

Principle investigators and/or laboratory /collection managers are to ensure an updated record of the infectious, pathogenic, zoonotic organisms is maintained and users of the facility are made aware of the risks and associated procedures.

All work with animals shall be treated as potentially hazardous, hazard control measures must be applied reflective of the particular hazards associated with the animal, the procedure, environmental conditions, and the facilities involved.

Controls may also be applied by resource management act 2003, animal welfare act 1999 or the Biosecurity act 1993. Acquisition of a condition caused by an infectious, pathogenic, or zoonotic organism at work must be documented using accident report forms. An investigation must be completed where an infection occurs as a result of work activities. Other statutory notifications may be required depending on the disease.

Review

Hazard controls, procedures and school procedures must be reviewed at least annually and/or with any addition of hazards or change to facilities or equipment.

Facilities

Laboratory facilities that house infectious, pathogenic, or zoonotic organisms must apply the physical and operational containment measures listed in the AS/NZS 2243.3 to ensure the containment of such organisms and provide for safe work practices. Laboratory design and specifications must be fit for purpose and include basic measures such as (but not limited to) appropriate handwashing and change facilities and the necessary personal protection equipment (PPE) and equipment required to achieve safe practice.

Facilities containing materials with controls applied under the HSNO and biosecurity acts (MPI approved transitional and containment facilities) often meet the requirements for containment of infectious, pathogenic, or zoonotic organisms. However, the MPI/EPA standards for biosecurity or containment laboratories may vary from the requirements to those set out in joint AS/NZ 2243.3.

Veterinary or farm facilities must be designed in such a way as to provide for hygiene and infection control best practice as and where required along with the animal welfare act 1999. Provisions for mobile veterinary services to provide for hygiene and infection control best practice must be provided (e.g., work vehicle PPE, hygiene and first aid kits) to mitigate infection risk where possible.

Leased or shared facilities

Where facilities are leased or shared, the owner/operator of the facility is responsible for the control, maintenance and work occurring in the facility. Where a facility is shared by schools or indeed colleges, one school or college must be nominated as “owner” and take responsibility for control of the activities involving infectious, pathogenic, or zoonotic organisms in the facility, training of users and facility maintenance and any shared responsibilities clearly documented and agreed between the respective parties.

Human Resources Protocols and Internal Notification

¹ Standard precautions refer to standard precautions undertaken when working with blood/body fluids as reference by Ministry of Health and overseas organisations such as the CDC.

There are human resource protocols regarding work or task restrictions for personnel with infectious diseases status. For further information, check with the [Massey Health and Safety team](#).

Definitions:

An infectious organism is: An organism that is capable of invading a susceptible host and multiplying in it, which may or may not cause disease.

A pathogenic organism is: An organism that is capable of causing disease in a host.

Organism:

- a) does not include a human being.
- b) includes a human cell.
- c) includes a micro-organism.
- d) includes a genetic structure, other than a human cell, that is capable of replicating itself, whether that structure comprises all or only part of an entity, and whether it comprises all or only part of the total genetic structure of an entity.
- e) includes an entity (other than a human being) declared to be an organism for the purposes of the Biosecurity Act 1993
- f) includes a reproductive cell or development stage of an organism.
- g) includes a prion.

Audience:

All staff.

Relevant Legislation:

Biosecurity Act 1993

Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996

Resource Management Act 2003

Animal Welfare Act 1999

New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament, and Arms Controls Act 1987

Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992

Health (infectious and notifiable diseases) notification regulations 2016

Legal Compliance:

SS:8, New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament, And Arms Controls Act 1987 prohibits manufacture, storage, acquiring or possessing, or controlling any biological weapon.

Related Policies and Procedures:

[Restricted Organisms and Biological Products Procedure](#)

[Genetically Modified Organisms Procedure](#)

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