



## SAFETY GUIDELINES

RN Services is committed to providing a safe environment for its employees. A safety committee of 4-8 rotating employees is established each year to meet quarterly with the goal of improving safety for the employees and the clients. The purpose of the safety committee is to create a high level of safety awareness among all employees. The safety committee will develop safety policies and recommend their adoption to the president. The safety committee will review current programs, procedures, and training programs, identify unsafe work practices and conditions, and suggest appropriate remedies. The safety committee will review workplace audits where the president and team leaders make annual client visits to check on the safety of the clients' residences. All employees are encouraged to bring recommendations or concerns to the safety committee. Members can be solicited but participation is voluntary. Attendance is mandatory at the meetings or conference calls – if the member cannot make it they must provide a substitute. The meeting will include a discussion on injuries / accidents during past year and open discussion / issues of concern.

The safety and security of our employees, our clients, and the general public is of great importance. Threats or acts of violence made by an employee against another person's life, health, family, or property will not be tolerated. Any act of intimidation, threat of violence, or act of violence committed against any person while on duty is prohibited. No person shall possess or have control of any firearm, deadly weapon, or prohibited knife, as legally defined, while on duty. It is a requirement that employees report to their team leader, upper management or the safety committee, any behavior that compromises RNS's ability to maintain a safe work environment. All reports will be investigated immediately and kept confidential, except where there is a legitimate need to know.

Employees must utilize the Client Refusal Letter when the client refuses to follow the direction of RN Services. By signing, the client accepts responsibility for their actions and holds RNS harmless. The letter can be found on the employee section of the company website.

### Employees should follow the safety guidelines listed below:

- Washing hands frequently protects you, our clients, and your team. Employees must wash their hands before each shift, after restroom use and after changing tasks.
- Keep work areas free from unnecessary combustible materials and be careful handling.
- Know the location of firefighting equipment in your client's residence.
- Know what you should do in the event of a fire, tornado, or client emergency.
- Information about what to do in the event of an emergency situation should be prepared by the team leader and kept in the client's white binder.
- Keep client's home free of clutter.

- For a needle stick or splash to skin, wash the area with soap and water. For eye splashes – rinse with water or normal saline. If either instance should occur, contact the safety committee and your team leader immediately to determine if medical attention is required.
- Work related accidents or injuries involving an employee or client must be reported to your team leader or the safety committee leader immediately. A client or employee incidence report must be completed and emailed to the safety committee and upper management. If necessary, an accident report will be completed by the employee and their team leader or upper management.
- Each residence will contain a safety kit to keep the employee free from potentially infectious materials. In conjunction with the family, each team leader will organize a disaster kit with enough water for 3 days, a working flashlight, and a radio with extra batteries.
- In the event of a power outage, our clients cannot be left alone. The team leader and family should be notified and you must stay with the client until relief from another caregiver or family member arrives.
- Each team leader should check with family members on a regular basis that fire alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are in good working order.
- For combative clients - protect yourself. Back away from the client, let them be, and try to help again 20-30 minutes later. If client continues to be combative, do not put yourself at risk. Get a family member or team member to help you. Report combative client episode to your team leader and upper management.
- Safe transfers - Do not transfer by yourself if it is unsafe for you or the client; wait for another team member at change of shift and transfer together; identify trip and slip hazards before lifting; wear appropriate closed toed slip-resistant footwear; bend at the knees instead of the waist; get close to the object to be lifted; keep your back straight; hold objects close to your body when lifting and carrying; don't twist at the waist; push, pull, or slide rather than lift whenever possible; pushing is better than pulling because you are using your whole body weight rather than just 1 or 2 muscle groups.
- If a client's residence is uncomfortably warm, open the windows, use fans, and if necessary, apply cool compresses. Drink plenty of water. If you believe the patient is at risk from the heat, ask your team leader or upper management to contact the client's family.
- If the client's pet is a threat to you or the client, immediately contact the team leader, upper management or the client's family. If you notice fleas or other pests, discuss this with your client, the team leader, and the client's family.
- Lockboxes should be used for medications at all residences. Lockboxes should be used for house keys as well. Medication or house keys should never be hidden. Notify your team leader if you need one.
- If you notice unlocked firearms at a residence, your team leader and upper management must be notified immediately.
- Notify management of any new physical or mental medical changes that could interfere with your work obligations. In some cases, an employee may be required to provide a physician release form in order to return to work.

# **BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS (BBP) AND OTHER POTENTIALLY INFECTIOUS MATERIALS (OPIM) EXPOSURE CONTROL PLAN**

## **OVERVIEW**

RNS is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all employees. Thus, this plan is designed to eliminate or minimize occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens. Employees can review this plan at any time by contacting the President, their team leader or the safety committee team leader.

## **WORK PRACTICE CONTROLS**

All employees shall always consider any blood or other potentially infectious materials to be infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source individual.

1. Gloves shall be worn when it can be reasonably anticipated that the employee may have hand contact with blood, other potentially infectious materials, mucous membranes, and non-intact skin. The client will provide latex gloves and latex free gloves when necessary.
2. Employees must wash their hands or other skin with antibacterial soap and water, or flush mucous membranes with water, as soon as possible following an exposure incident. They must also wash their hands immediately (or as soon as feasible) after removal of gloves or other personal protective equipment.
3. No eating, drinking, applying cosmetics or lip balm, or handling contact lenses is allowed in a work area where there is a reasonable likelihood of occupational exposure.
4. No food or drinks shall be kept in refrigerators, freezers, shelves, cabinets, or on counter tops or bench tops where blood or other potentially infectious materials are present.

## **CLEANUP & DECONTAMINATION**

1. Areas contaminated with blood or OPIM shall be cleaned as soon as possible. For areas contaminated with fresh blood larger than approximately a dollar should be assessed by the team leader or a member of the safety committee to determine if further cleaning efforts are needed.
2. Areas shall be cleaned with the use of proper protective equipment and with a solution that is effective against BBP and OPIM; decontaminated with an appropriate disinfectant immediately after a spill or leakage occurs. Decontamination will be accomplished by utilizing Chlorine bleach mixed with water. Minimum solution mixture is 10% chlorine bleach and 90% water.
3. All contaminated work surfaces, tools, objects, etc. will be decontaminated immediately or as soon as feasible after any spill of blood or other potentially

infectious materials. The bleach solution or disinfectant must be left in contact with contaminated work surfaces, tools, objects, or potentially infectious materials for at least 10 minutes before cleaning.

## **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:**

RNS will provide a safety kit at each client's residence that includes a CPR face shield, a mask, eye protection, a gown, gloves, and a lantern or flashlight. Likewise, RNS will replace the safety kit as necessary. Employees must notify their team leader when a new safety kit is needed. Employees must utilize protective equipment in occupational exposure situations. Remove garments that become penetrated by blood or other potentially infectious material immediately or as soon as feasible. Remove all personal protective equipment before leaving the client's residence. Place all garments in the appropriate designated area or container for storage, cleaning, decontamination, or disposal. RNS's clients provide employees with gloves, soap, and bleach when needed.