

## **First Question: Why comply with OSHA?**

When offering medical services, it will be necessary to research the applicability of federal regulations that require additional procedures and policies for the provision of medical care. Your Pregnancy Help Medical Clinic (PHMC) will need to become familiar with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

The [Medical Essentials](#) manual covers the planning, implementation, and principles important to pregnancy and women's well-being. The manual also includes the tools your center needs to navigate and comply with U.S. regulatory standards.

### **These regulations protect your clients, staff, and volunteers from the risk of exposure to bloodborne pathogens.**

Bloodborne pathogens can possibly be detected in urine, stool, and other body fluids. PHMCs that offer medical services need to abide by additional disposal procedures, spill response plans, and reporting requirements. Most states have their own OSHA programs that may have additional regulations to follow.

### ***Check federal and state regulations!***

Determine Applicable federal and state regulations: [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

## **Second Question: What responsibilities fall under OSHA for the PHMC?**

Three primary areas of responsibility under OSHA regulations are:

- Procedures must be developed to protect the worker from bloodborne pathogens, for example Universal Precautions.
- A material data safety sheet from the manufacturer or distributor must be developed for each product used in the office. Place that information on the List of Hazardous Materials in the Appendix.
- Medical personnel must be offered Hepatitis B vaccinations at no charge. Personnel may choose to waive the vaccinations.

*In addition to these responsibilities, employers with ten or more employees are required to comply with certain record-keeping requirements relating to occupational injuries or illnesses.*

## Procedures for Compliance with OSHA Regulations

- A copy of the applicable OSHA regulations will be kept at your PHMC. (You should be able to find a copy of your regulations by going online to your state's website.)
- All personnel at your PHMC will follow Universal Precautions.

## Disposal of Infectious Waste

- Any person handling or disposing of pregnancy tests, urine specimens, paper linens, or soiled diapers, or cleaning spills, or performing any other tasks that may involve exposure to potentially infectious material shall be required to wear protective gloves at all times while performing such tasks. After the removal of gloves, the hands are washed with soap and water.
- Any person who comes into contact with any potentially infectious materials shall immediately wash those areas of skin or membrane that have sustained such contact. Hands and skin shall be washed with soap and water. Flush mucous membranes with water.
- All tasks and procedures involving the handling of potentially infectious materials shall be performed in a manner to minimize splashing, spraying, spattering, or generating droplets of these materials. Protective masks and goggles will be worn when splashing is possible.
- Separate waste containers need not be used for the disposal of pregnancy tests, urine specimen containers, or vaginal probe covers. Urine that does not contain visible blood is not regarded as blood or potentially infectious. Therefore, containers used to collect urine would not meet the OSHA bloodborne pathogen standard of "regulated waste."
- Red bags containing infectious waste are removed by an agency recognized by the state as a hazardous waste hauler.

## Equipment

- Stethoscope earpieces shall be cleaned with alcohol before and after use.
- After each use, the paper linens on exam room tables are to be properly disposed of, and the exam tables and working areas are to be sprayed with a disinfectant and allowed to dry.
- Dopplers, abdominal transducers, and transvaginal transducers are to be cleaned according to the manufacturer's directions after each use.

- Regularly scheduled housekeeping measures will be implemented to ensure that surfaces and other items that may come into contact with potentially infectious materials are decontaminated.
- Cleaning shall be done with detergent, or disinfectant when warranted, and water. Gloves will be worn during cleaning.
- Sterilization procedures for equipment needing sterilization will either be provided on-site or sent out to an agency providing that service.

### **Personnel**

- Eating, drinking, applying cosmetics, and handling contact lenses shall be prohibited in areas where pregnancy tests, urine specimens, or soiled diapers are handled.
- Food and drinks shall not be kept in areas where potentially infectious materials are present.
- Personnel shall maintain a high standard of personal hygiene; for example, hands should be washed at the beginning and end of each shift, and before and after eating, drinking, and going to the toilet.
- The PHMC shall make available the Hepatitis B vaccine and vaccination series to all employees and volunteers who may have exposure to potentially infectious materials.
- In the event of a specific exposure incident, the PHMC will make available to any employee or volunteer an appropriate confidential medical evaluation and follow-up.
- The PHMC shall provide initial training and annual retraining for each employee or volunteer who may be exposed to potentially infectious materials.
- The PHMC shall maintain appropriate and confidential records for each employee or volunteer who may be exposed to potentially infectious materials.

**These guidelines are taken from the websites for the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) and for [OSHA](#).**