



Ithaca Police Department

120 East Clinton Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

General Order Number: 334

Title: Biohazard Threats; Suspicious Mail/Parcels

Issuing Authority: Chief John Barber

Effective Date: 12/01/2015

Rescinds/Supersedes: All previously issued directives

Review Date: 12/2016

Applicable NYSLEA Standards: 3.1

Number of Pages: 10

I. Purpose

- A. Recent events have widely heightened the public and law enforcements awareness of the possibility of a biohazard or chemical agents by foreign and/or domestic terrorist organizations. This "heightened awareness" has created the need for the department to develop policies and procedures for the safe handling of potential biohazard threats both suspected and real as well as the need to train all City personnel in the appropriate response and handling of such threats.
- B. To establish the departments standardized methods and procedures for responding to a biohazard attack or the supposed threat thereof and the safe handling of suspicious mail and/or parcels. In addition to educate both sworn and civilian personnel in the safe handling, inspection and disposition of suspect envelopes, packages and/or parcels.

II. Definitions

A. Anthrax – Bacillus Anthraeis

- 1. Commonly occurs in wild and domestic hoofed animals, especially cattle, sheep, goats and antelope. Can also occur in humans when exposed to the bacteria.

a. Three forms:

- 1) Infectious coetaneous (skin)

- a) Spread through contact with contaminated animal
- b) Bacteria can be manufactured under laboratory conditions
- c) May be genetically altered
- d) Not in mass quantities
- e) Cannot be easily aerosolized
- f) Transmission occurs by spore exposure through open cuts or abrasions in skin
- g) Symptoms
 - 1. Persistent itching
 - 2. Large boil like sores
 - 3. Dark black colored scabs
 - 4. If not treated can effect lymph nodes and blood stream
- h) Easily treated with common antibiotics
- i) Not contagious unless open wounds come within contact
 - 1. Transmission via casual contact NOT possible
- j) Symptoms appear within one to seven days
 - 1. Symptoms appear within one to seven days

2) Inhalation (lungs or repertory system)

- a) Infection occurs via inhalation of bacteria spores
- b) Bacteria will grow within an exposed human lung
- c) Not easily aerosolized or manufactured under laboratory conditions in mass quantity
 - 1. May be genetically altered

- d) Symptoms
 1. Cold or flu like symptoms
 2. Increased difficulty breathing
 3. Cessation breathing
- e) Easily treated with common antibiotics if diagnosed early
- f) Not contagious
- g) Symptoms appear within one to seven days
 1. Prolonged periods (up to 60 days) are possible
- h) Easily treated with common antibiotics

3) Gastrointestinal (stomach and intestine)

- a) Occurs through ingestion of contaminated meat or meat products
- b) Can be manufactured under laboratory conditions
 1. Not in mass quantities
 2. May genetically altered
 3. Cannot be easily aerosolized
- c) Symptoms
 1. Appear within one to seven days
 2. Prolonged periods (up to 60 days) are possible
 3. Fever
 4. Abdominal cramps or pain
 5. Loose or watery stool
 6. Blood in vomit or bowel movements
- d) Easily treated with common antibiotics if diagnosed early
- e) Not contagious through casual contact
- f) Easily treated with common antibiotics

B. Botulism – Clostridium botulinum

i. An anaerobic gram-positive bacillus that produces a botulinum toxin that affects the central nervous system. Spores are present in soil and marine sediment throughout the world.

ii. Two forms

a. Food borne botulism

- 1) most common form
- 2) occurs through ingestion of toxin contaminated foods

b. Symptoms

1) Neurological in 12-36 hours after ingestion of tainted foods

- a) gastrointestinal
- b) nausea
- c) vomiting
- d) cramps
- e) diarrhea
- f) drooping eye lids
- g) difficulty speaking and/or swallowing
- h) blurred vision
- i) paralysis of arms, legs and respiratory muscles
- j) respiratory dysfunction

2) Not transmitted from person to person

c. Air Born Botulism

1) Aerosolization is possible

- a) May be a mechanism for bio-terrorism

2) Symptoms

- a) Same as food born
- b) Neurological symptoms begin within 24-72 hours of exposure

3) Not transmitted from person to person

C. Plague – Yersinia Pestis

i. An acute bacterial disease transmitted by infected fleas resulting in lymphatic and blood infections.

a. bubonic and septicemia plague

- ii. Aerosolization is possible
 - a. likely form for a Bio-terrorism attack
 - b. would cause a pulmonary form – pneumonic plague
- iii. Symptoms
 - a. fever, cough, chest pain
 - b. cough produces infectious particle droplets
 - c. x-ray evidence of bronchopneumonia
 - d. flea borne exposure- within 2 – 8 days
 - e. airborne – 1 – 3 days
- iv. Person to Person transmission is possible

D. Small Pox – Variola virus

- i. An acute viral illness caused by the variola virus. A bioterrorism threat due to its potential to cause severe morbidity in a non-immune population.
- ii. Easily transmitted via an airborne route
 - a. a single case is considered to be a public health emergency
- iii. Symptoms
 - a. skin lesions
 - b. flu-like symptoms
 - c. fever
 - d. cough
 - e. vomiting
 - f. Rash
 - 1) Most prominent on face and extremities
 - 2) Including palms of hands and soles of feet
 - 3) Rash scabs over in 1-2 weeks
 - g. Symptoms appear within 7 – 17 days.
 - h. Average = 12 days
- iv. Transmission
 - a. Person to person transmission is possible
 - 1) Via small and large
 - 2) By both airborne and droplet

III. Procedures

A. Contact Precautions for Infection Control

i. The following precautions are effective against any of the potential biological threats listed in this order

- a. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- b. Members and employees should be aware of their skin integrity
- c. No open cuts, abrasions etc.

- d. When handling any suspected package, parcel, envelope or substance all personnel should wear:
 - 1) Clean latex gloves
 - 2) N-95 rated particle respirator.
 - 3) Eye/face protection (splash guards)

B. Suspicious Mail/Package Handling

i. General

- a. Examine unopened envelopes for foreign bodies or powder
- b. Do not open letters with your hands
- c. Use a letter opener to open letters
- d. Open letters and packages with minimal movement
- e. Avoid spilling contents

C. Mail/Package Assessment

i. All incoming mail or suspect items that are brought to the attention of the department should be thoroughly assessed for any potential bio-hazards

- a. Potential suspect items may contain:
 - 1) Threatening or suspicious messages imprinted or written on exterior
 - 2) Oily stains
 - 3) Lopsided, rigid, bulky or discolored

- 4) Strange odors
- 5) No return address
- 6) No postage or non-cancelled postage
- 7) Improper spelling of common names

ii. Procedures for suspect articles – Non-Sworn Personnel

- a. DO NOT OPEN
- b. LEAVE the item and evacuate the room
- c. Keep others from entering the area
- d. Notify Police or call 911

iii. Procedures for suspect articles – Sworn Personnel

- a. Officer Safety FIRST
- b. Utilize personal protective equipment
- c. Prior to handling suspicious packages.
- d. Conduct assessment of item
- e. DO NOT OPEN
- f. Secure item as evidence
- g. Double bag item
- h. Mark outside of bag as "Bio-Hazard: using bio-hazard label
- i. Complete Property/Evidence Report as per current directives
 - 1) Notify Property/Evidence Custodian
- j. Secure an inner & outer perimeter
 - 1) Restrict access to inner perimeter to authorized personnel
 - 2) Treat the inner perimeter (Hot Zone) as a crime scene
 - 3) Restrict access of affected person(s) out the inner perimeter but within the outer perimeter
- k. Begin a crime scene log

l. Notify the Federal Bureau of Investigation Field office in Ithaca.

m. As soon as appropriate send or cause to be sent a File 25 via E-Justice.

1) Complete as much information as possible.

iv. Processing and Storage of Suspect Items

a. Suspect parcels may be stored in the Property Room

b. Suspect articles will be transported to an appropriate testing facility as soon as possible as directed by the FBI

c. Items found not to contain any bio-hazard materials shall be returned to the complainant or destroyed

d. Suspect articles that contain no biohazard substances; but do contain some type of threat, shall be referred to the Shift Commander for follow-up

v. Procedures for articles that are opened and which contain suspicious material

a. DO NOT PANIC

b. Notify Fire department Haz-Mat

c. Contain the exposure

1) Close doors and windows

2) Close the package or envelope to limit additional exposure

d. Apply personal protection precautions

e. Do not touch exposed persons eyes, nose or other body parts

1) Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water

a) 1:10 dilution of water and household bleach may be used AFTER soap & water decontamination

b) Rinse bleach solution thoroughly after 10 to 15 minutes

f. If clothing is heavily contaminated, do not brush vigorously

- g. Close off building heating & ventilations systems –if possible
- h. Document all personnel who had actual contact with the substance.

IV. Call Taking Procedures

- A. A call for a bio-terrorist act could possibly be received via one of the department's emergency or administrative lines.
- B. Personnel who receive a telephone report of a possible bio-attack should adhere to the following protocol:
 - i. Calm the caller – Ensure the caller that help is on the way
 - ii. Obtain the following information
 - a. What type of package or hazard is involved
 - b. Its current location
 - c. How was it delivered
 - d. How many people may have been exposed
- C. If a package or envelope is involved:
 - i. Advise the caller to close the package or limit any further exposure to the material
 - ii. Advise the caller to close all doors to the room where the package is located
 - iii. Isolate any and all persons who may have been exposed
 - a. Advise the caller that the key to successfully handling the situation is to limit the number of people exposed to the material
 - iv. Tell the caller NOT to pass the material around or involve anyone else until emergency services personnel arrive.
 - v. Advise the caller not to rub his/her face, eyes, mouth or nose.

18-10-18

1. The first part of the document is a letter from the author to the reader. It discusses the importance of the work and the author's hopes for its reception. The author expresses a deep sense of responsibility and a desire to contribute to the field.

2. The second part of the document is a detailed account of the author's research. It describes the methods used, the data collected, and the results obtained. The author provides a thorough analysis of the findings and discusses their implications for the field.

3. The third part of the document is a discussion of the author's conclusions. It summarizes the main findings and offers suggestions for further research. The author also reflects on the broader significance of the work and its potential impact on society.

4. The final part of the document is a list of references. It includes a comprehensive list of the sources cited in the work, providing a clear and accessible way for readers to locate the original materials.