# **APPENDIX A - STANDARD PRECAUTIONS TO CONTROL THE RISK OF OCCUPATIONAL INFECTION**

Standard precautions outlined below are infection control principles that treat all human blood and other potentially infectious materials as being infectious. The risk of exposure to blood-borne viruses and other biological hazardous agents can be significantly reduced by following the guidance in this policy, and by adhering to the following recommendations:

1. Apply good hand washing practices, for example by adhering to the [HSE guidelines](https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html).
2. Wear protective clothing, proportionate to the level of risk. For laboratory-based staff, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) guidelines recommend the use of a (i) fully buttoned laboratory coat, (ii) laboratory glasses, (iii) full-length trousers, (iv) closed-toed shoes and (v) nitrile gloves, removed upon completion of the activity and prior to departing the laboratory (if latex, if deemed appropriate).
3. Cover all breaks in exposed skin with plasters.
4. Wear a full-face visor or safety spectacles (combined with a facemask) when there is a risk of splashing/direct contact when working with blood or bodily fluids.
5. Wear waterproof protective clothing (plastic aprons) where splashing or direct contact with clothing is a possibility.
6. Wear rubber boots or plastic disposable overshoes when the floor is likely to be contaminated.
7. Avoid contaminating surfaces with blood and bodily fluids.
8. Commence decontamination procedures immediately after contamination occurs or is observed.
9. Dispose of contaminated biological waste (e.g., solid, liquid, Genetically Modified, GM) in accordance with specified and documented local procedures. Here, individuals are referred to their local safety statements, which should issue clear guidelines pertinent to the proper disposal of hazardous waste.
10. Appropriate and multiple Biohazard waste disposal bins (for Biohazardous sharp material, such as syringes, glass etc.) must be provided in all locations where work with Biological Agents is to be undertaken. These individual units must be filled to the recommended level, as indicated on the container by a dashed line. Overfilling must be avoided at all times, and individuals should not attempt to reduce the height of accumulated waste by depressing, as this presents a high risk of receiving a needlestick injury / laceration.
11. Biohazard waste disposal bins should be secure and identifiable according to the second schedule of the Biological Agents Regulations, 2013. These bins should be replaced on a regular basis, and those members of staff required to handle these bins in a safe manner should receive adequate information, training and vaccination to ensure a Safe System of Work can be adhered to. Needles **must not** be re-sheathed.
12. All staff likely to be exposed to Biological Agents must be trained to work safely with Biological Agents, through attending SafeLab Module and Module BE550, coordinated through the School of Biotechnology.
13. No food or drink shall be consumed in any area where there may be a risk of exposure to blood-borne viruses and other hazardous Biological Agents.

**1.1** **Cleaning and Disinfection**

Spillages of blood or other bodily fluids must be properly managed, to reduce the risk of the individual – or other individuals working in proximity to the area – being exposed to a potential biohazard.

Biohazard spillages should be managed in accordance with specified and documented local procedures. Here, individuals are referred to their local safety statements, which should issue clear guidelines pertinent to the proper management of biological spillages (inclusive of blood and bodily fluids).

**1.2 Gloves and skin protection**

Guidelines on the correct use of gloves (which confer skin protection, if used correctly) should be managed in accordance with specified and documented local procedures. Here, individuals are referred to their local safety statements, which should issue clear guidelines pertinent to the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

# **Version Control**

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