

**AUSTRALIAN BASEBALL FEDERATION
INC.**

INFECTIOUS DISEASES POLICY

1. DEFINITIONS

In this policy:

- “ASMF”** means Australian Sports Medicine Federation
- “Club”** means any team competing in ABF-affiliated Leagues and Tournaments.
- "official"** - means an official, Baseball umpire, ABF director, coach, trainer, medical practitioner, sports scientist or psychologist or any other person associated with the sport of Baseball and recognised by the ABF in an official capacity other than as an athlete;
- "Player"** means a person who plays the game of Baseball under the jurisdiction of the ABF and/or its affiliated members; and is a registered member of the ABF and/or its affiliate
- "ABF"** - means Australian Baseball Federation Inc., being the national sporting organisation for the sport of Baseball in Australia as recognised by Australian Sports Commission, Australian Olympic Committee and the national governing body for the sport of Baseball as recognised by International Baseball Association;
- "Baseball"** - includes the sport of Baseball that is being conducted under the jurisdiction, control or sanctioning consent of the ABF or its affiliated State or Territory associations;

2. INTRODUCTION

- (a) As in most sports, there is a chance of physical contact and or collision in Baseball. A number of blood-borne infectious diseases can be transmitted during body contact during physical contact or collision. The more serious of these include Hepatitis and HIV (AIDS) infections. These diseases may be spread by contact between broken skin or mucous membranes and the infected agents such as:
- (i) Blood
 - (ii) Saliva (not for HIV)
 - (iii) Semen and vaginal fluids

NB. At this stage there is no evidence that sweat/urine, and tears will transmit Hepatitis or HIV.

3. OBJECT AND APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

- (a) The object of this policy is to:
- (ii) Set out the basis for procedures which must be adopted by players, teams and officials in order to prevent the spread of Infectious diseases, namely HIV (AIDS) and Hepatitis B & C within the sport of Baseball.
 - (i) detail the responsibilities of athletes, officials and ABF relating to the possible transmission of Infectious Diseases;

- (ii) educate athletes and officials on the subject of diseases transmitted through the exchange of blood or other bodily fluids;
 - (iii) provide the method for determining whether a breach of this policy has occurred;
- (b) This policy applies to:
 - (i) all Australian athletes involved in the sport of Baseball under the control or jurisdiction of the ABF, in Australia or overseas;
 - (ii) all officials involved in the sport of Baseball in any way and under the jurisdiction of the ABF;
 - (iii) all foreign athletes competing in Baseball competition in Australia.
- (c) This policy shall be binding on all players/officials/organising affiliates and members of the ABF.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ATHLETES

- (a) It is the participants responsibility to maintain strict personal hygiene as this is the best method of controlling the spread of these diseases.
- (b) It is strongly recommended that all participants, involved in baseball and playing under adult rules be vaccinated against Hepatitis B.
- (c) All participants with prior evidence of these diseases should obtain confidential advice and clearance to participate from a doctor prior to participation in baseball.
- (d) No Player shall participate in any Baseball game or continue to participate in any game for so long as such Player:
 - (i) is bleeding; or
 - (ii) has blood on any part of his person or uniform
- (e) A Player shall immediately upon a direction by an umpire leave the playing arena where such umpire is of the opinion that the Player is bleeding or has blood on any part of his person or uniform. Upon being directed to leave the playing arena, a Player shall not return or take any further part in any Baseball game until and unless:
 - (i) the cause of any such bleeding has been abated and the bleeding has stopped;
 - (ii) the injury is securely covered to the extent that no blood shall emanate there from;
 - (iii) any blood stained article of uniform has been removed and replaced; and
 - (iv) any blood on any part of a Player's person has been thoroughly cleansed and removed.

5. RESPONSIBILITY OF CLUBS

- (a) Those handling bleeding players must wear disposable rubber or plastic gloves. Resuscitation bags or disposable mouth to mouth devices must be available.
- (b) It is the Club's responsibility to ensure that the dressing rooms be clean and tidy. Particular attention should be paid to hand-basins, toilets and showers. Adequate soap, paper hand-towels, brooms, refuse disposal bins and disinfectants, must be available at all times.
- (c) Communal bathing areas (eg. Spas) within the clubs, should be strongly discouraged.
- (d) The practices of spitting and urinating in team areas is not permitted

- (e) All clothing, equipment and surfaces contaminated by blood must be treated as potentially infectious. Household bleach in a 1:10 solution may be used to wash contaminated areas and white clothing should be soaked in 1:10 solution bleach for 30 minutes before washing. Bleach should be rinsed off after use. Coloured clothing should be soaked in disinfectant for 30 minutes then washed at high temperature on a long cycle.
- (f) Sharing of towels, shaving razors, face washers and drink containers must not occur.
- (g) All personnel working within baseball areas should be vaccinated against Hepatitis B.
- (h) In all training areas, open cuts and abrasions must be reported to the coach/official and be treated immediately.
- (i) Clubs should undertake education programs to advise players and officials of this policy.
- (j) No Club shall allow any Player to participate in any Baseball game or continue to participate in any game for so long as such Player:
 - (i) is bleeding; or
 - (ii) has blood on any part of his person or uniform

6. RESPONSIBILITY OF UMPIRES

- (a) Those who officiate in baseball should be vaccinated against Hepatitis B.
- (b) When an umpire notices that a player is bleeding or has blood on any part of his person or uniform, he is to direct the Player to leave the playing field.
- (c) Where a Player is directed by an umpire to leave the field under this Rule the umpire shall wait a reasonable period to allow the bleeding to be attended to. The amount of time is entirely at the discretion of the umpire. If, when this time has elapsed, the player is unable to take his place in the team, he must be replaced in the usual manner of substitution.
- (d) A player who refuses to promptly obey a direction of an umpire given in accordance with this paragraph (6b) shall be reported by the umpire to the relevant body of baseball at that level.
- (e) Such Player shall be dealt with by that body as it deems fit.
- (f) Umpires have power to eject a player/official if they refuse to obey the rule.

7. AMENDMENT OF THIS POLICY

- (a) This Policy will be reviewed regularly and updated accordingly. ABF may amend this policy at any time, such amendment to take effect upon notification to the affiliated State and Territory association.
- (b) It is strongly recommended that all team physicians, other sports medicine staff, coaches, referees, team managers, administrators, players and their parents be informed of this policy and adopt and implement its commonsense recommendations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

You may contact: **The Australian Baseball Federation**
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Alternatively: **The Australian Sports Medicine Federation**
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The Australian Sports Medicine Federation has further information on Infectious Diseases Policy in Australia and Guidelines which must be followed.