

3.2 REGULATIONS

Federal agencies have developed regulations for protecting laboratory workers and the general public from potential health hazards associated with the use of biological agents in laboratories. Some of these regulations, such as those from the OSHA, have the force of law while those from the NIH and CDC are recommended guidelines. The University requires adherence to both the suggested federal guidelines and the federally mandated requirements.

OSHA developed the Bloodborne Pathogens (BBP) Standard (29 CFR 1910.1030) to minimize occupational exposures to blood and other bodily fluids and to prevent developing the infectious diseases, such as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B virus (HBV), and hepatitis C virus (HCV), associated with them. All laboratories that work with human blood, other bodily fluids, or tissues must adhere to the OSHA BBP Standard (<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/bloodborne pathogens/index.html>). At the University, work with these materials must be reviewed and approved by the University Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) and work is conducted at BSL2.

The use of Universal Precautions is a key element of a BBP exposure control program and must be followed at all times in BSL2 laboratories. Universal Precautions involves treating all human blood (even HIV-seronegative control donors), tissue, or materials as potentially infectious. Training in Universal Precautions techniques is given at the time of orientation and on an annual basis. This training is offered through the University EH&S Office and ORRC. For more information, contact EH&S at (202) 806-1033 or ORRC at (202) 865-8597.

Safe practices for studies involving the use of rDNA are governed by the NIH Guidelines (http://oba.od.nih.gov/rdna/nih_guidelines_oba.html). The NIH places the responsibility for implementing its guidelines in the hands of an IBC. The IBC reviews all research at the University that involves the use of rDNA and infectious agents, and researchers must submit an application to the University IBC prior to beginning any new research involving the use of these agents.