



LAWS OF ALASKA

2004

Source

HCS CSSB 309(JUD)

Chapter No.

AN ACT

Relating to testing the blood of prisoners and those in custody for bloodborne pathogens.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

THE ACT FOLLOWS ON PAGE 1

AN ACT

1 Relating to testing the blood of prisoners and those in custody for bloodborne pathogens.

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3 * **Section 1.** AS 18.15 is amended by adding new sections to read:

4 **Article 6B. Blood Testing of Prisoners for Bloodborne Pathogens.**

5 **Sec. 18.15.400. Bloodborne pathogen testing of prisoners and correctional**
6 **officers; required disclosures to and consent of prisoners and correctional**
7 **officers.** (a) When requested by a correctional officer who may have received a
8 significant exposure from a prisoner, the department shall follow the testing
9 procedures of AS 18.15.400 - 18.15.450 if

10 (1) a physician licensed under AS 08 determines that a significant
11 exposure to the correctional officer has occurred;

12 (2) the physician for the correctional officer needs the prisoner's
13 bloodborne pathogens test results to begin, continue, modify, or discontinue treatment

1 in accordance with the most current guidelines of the United States Public Health
2 Service, because of possible exposure to a bloodborne pathogen; and

3 (3) the correctional officer consents to providing a blood sample for
4 testing for a bloodborne pathogen.

5 (b) Before employing the testing procedures of AS 18.15.400 - 18.15.450 or
6 disclosing any information about the prisoner or correctional officer, the department
7 shall inform the

8 (1) prisoner that

9 (A) the prisoner's bloodborne pathogens test results, without
10 the prisoner's name or other uniquely identifying information, shall be reported
11 to the correctional officer if requested and that test results collected are for
12 medical purposes and may not be used as evidence in any criminal proceedings
13 or civil proceedings;

14 (B) the prisoner may refuse to provide a blood sample and that
15 the prisoner's refusal may result in a request for a court order to require the
16 prisoner to provide a blood sample; and

17 (C) the department will advise the correctional officer of the
18 confidentiality requirements and penalties before the officer's health care
19 provider discloses any test results;

20 (2) correctional officer of the confidentiality requirements of
21 AS 18.15.440 and that the correctional officer may be subject to penalties for
22 unauthorized release of test results about the prisoner.

23 (c) If the disclosures have been made, the department shall ask the prisoner if
24 the prisoner has ever had a positive test for a bloodborne pathogen. The department
25 shall disclose the prisoner's existing bloodborne pathogens test results to the
26 correctional officer without the prisoner's name or other uniquely identifying
27 information.

28 **Sec. 18.15.410. Consent for testing; court order for testing; exception.** (a)
29 When a correctional officer has made a request under AS 18.15.400, except as
30 provided in (b) or (c) of this section or in AS 18.15.420, before collecting and testing
31 the blood of a prisoner, the department must first obtain the consent of the prisoner or

1 the prisoner's representative if the prisoner is unable to provide the consent.

2 (b) Consent of a prisoner's representative is not required if the department has
3 made reasonable efforts to locate the prisoner's representative and the representative
4 cannot be found within 24 hours after a significant exposure. If testing of available
5 blood occurs without consent because the prisoner is unconscious or unable to provide
6 consent, and a representative cannot be located, the department shall provide the
7 information required in AS 18.15.400 to the prisoner or representative whenever it is
8 possible to do so.

9 (c) If a prisoner dies before an opportunity to consent to blood collection or
10 testing, consent is not required, and the prisoner's blood may be collected and tested.

11 (d) If the prisoner or the prisoner's representative, if appropriate, consents and
12 a sample of the prisoner's blood

13 (1) is available, the department shall have the blood tested for
14 bloodborne pathogens;

15 (2) is not available, the department shall collect a sample and have the
16 blood sample tested for bloodborne pathogens.

17 (e) The department may not withhold care or treatment on the requirement that
18 the prisoner consent to testing for bloodborne pathogens.

19 **Sec. 18.15.420. Testing without consent.** (a) When a correctional officer
20 has made a request under AS 18.15.400, the department shall file a petition in the
21 superior court for a court order requiring the prisoner to provide a blood sample for
22 testing for bloodborne pathogens. The department shall serve the petition on the
23 prisoner at least 48 hours before a hearing on the petition. The petition must include
24 the following information supported by affidavit:

25 (1) a statement that the department followed the procedures in
26 AS 18.15.400 - 18.15.450 and attempted to obtain bloodborne pathogens test results
27 according to those sections;

28 (2) a statement that

29 (A) the correctional officer and department have documented
30 the officer's exposure to blood or body fluids during performance of the
31 officer's work duties;

1 (B) the department has asked the prisoner to consent under
2 AS 18.15.410, and the prisoner does not consent;

3 (C) the department has provided the correctional officer and the
4 prisoner with the disclosures required under AS 18.15.400; and

5 (D) the department has informed the correctional officer of the
6 confidentiality requirements of AS 18.15.440 and the penalties for
7 unauthorized release of prisoner information;

8 (3) a statement that a physician licensed under AS 08 and
9 knowledgeable about the most current recommendations of the United States Public
10 Health Service has determined that a significant exposure has occurred to the
11 correctional officer; and

12 (4) a statement that a physician has documented that the correctional
13 officer has provided a blood sample and consented to testing for bloodborne
14 pathogens, and bloodborne pathogens test results are needed for beginning,
15 continuing, modifying, or discontinuing medical treatment for the correctional officer.

16 (b) A court shall order a prisoner to provide a blood sample for bloodborne
17 pathogen testing if the court finds that

18 (1) there is probable cause to believe that a significant exposure to the
19 correctional officer from the prisoner has occurred;

20 (2) a licensed physician for the correctional officer needs the test
21 results for beginning, continuing, modifying, or discontinuing medical treatment for
22 the correctional officer; or

23 (3) a compelling need for the testing and test results exists; in making
24 this finding, the court shall consider the need for the test against the privacy or other
25 interests of the prisoner.

26 (c) The court may impose appropriate safeguards against unauthorized
27 disclosure by specifically identifying the persons to have access to the test results and
28 the uses of the test results when ordering a test under (b) of this section.

29 (d) After testing is completed under this section, the department shall inform
30 the prisoner whose blood was tested of the results. The department shall inform the
31 correctional officer's physician of the prisoner's test results without the prisoner's name

1 or other uniquely identifying information.

2 **Sec. 18.15.440. Confidentiality; penalties for unauthorized disclosure;**
3 **immunity.** (a) Bloodborne pathogens test results of a prisoner are confidential and
4 may not be disclosed except as provided in AS 18.15.400 - 18.15.450 and as needed
5 for the treatment or medical care of a prisoner specific to a bloodborne pathogen-
6 related illness.

7 (b) A prisoner may bring a civil action against a person who knowingly, in
8 violation of AS 18.15.400 - 18.15.450, releases the prisoner's name or other uniquely
9 identifying information with the test results or otherwise releases the test results.

10 (c) The department, a physician, and designated health care personnel are
11 immune from liability in any civil, administrative, or criminal action relating to the
12 disclosure of test results of a prisoner to a correctional officer and the testing of a
13 blood sample from a prisoner for bloodborne pathogens if a good faith effort has been
14 made to comply with AS 18.15.400 - 18.15.450.

15 **Sec. 18.15.450. Definitions for AS 18.15.400 - 18.15.450.** In AS 18.15.400 -
16 18.15.450,

17 (1) "bloodborne pathogens" means pathogenic microorganisms that are
18 present in human blood and can cause disease in humans; these pathogens include
19 hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and human immunodeficiency virus
20 (HIV);

21 (2) "correctional officer" means an employee of the Department of
22 Corrections or of an agent or contractor of the department working in a correctional
23 facility;

24 (3) "department" means the Department of Corrections;

25 (4) "prisoner" has the meaning given in AS 33.30.901;

26 (5) "significant exposure" means contact likely to transmit a
27 bloodborne pathogen, in a manner supported by the most current guidelines and
28 recommendations of the United States Public Health Service at the time an evaluation
29 takes place, that includes

30 (A) percutaneous injury, contact of mucous membrane or
31 nonintact skin, or prolonged contact of intact skin; and

1 (B) contact, in a manner that may transmit a bloodborne
2 pathogen, with blood, tissue, or potentially infectious body fluids.