

## PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING SUSPICIOUS ENVELOPES OR PACKAGES

*If you encounter a suspicious envelope or package, remain calm and follow these steps:*

1. Do not shake or empty the contents of any suspicious envelope or package. If contents are spilled, do not attempt to clean it up. Also, do not smell, taste or touch any suspicious material.

### **DO NOT REMOVE THE ENVELOPE OR PACKAGE FROM THE AFFECTED AREA!**

#### **DO NOT TOUCH YOUR EYES OR MOUTH.**

2. Try to note as many details about the envelope or package as you can. This information is vitally important to the investigation in order to determine the source and content of the letter or package.
3. **Using vinyl (non-latex) gloves and a mask**, gently place the envelope or package into a plastic bag or any other airtight container. If you do not have a bag or airtight container, then cover the envelope or package with anything (e.g. clothing, paper, trash can, etc.) Do not remove the cover once in place.
4. The entrance to the affected office area must be sealed off to prevent others from entering.
5. Immediately call **911** to report the incident.
6. Employees in contact with the envelope or package should wash their hands with anti-bacterial soap and water to prevent further spreading of suspicious material.
7. All potentially exposed employees and clients should meet in an isolated room on the floor where the incident occurred. **It is important to keep those individuals who have been exposed in an isolated area on the same floor as where the event occurred.**
8. Call the DPHHS Safety Coordinator at 444-3136 to report the incident.
9. Make a list of names and phone numbers of all employees who were exposed, or may have been exposed, to the envelope or package when it was opened or discovered.
10. Law Enforcement will determine further actions (i.e. evacuation of the affected floor or building). This will be performed in conjunction with the DPHHD Safety Coordinator.

**Characteristics of suspicious envelopes or packages include but may not be limited to the following:**

**Inappropriate or unusual labeling**

- Strange return addresses or no return address
- Excessive postage
- Handwritten or poorly typed addresses
- Misspelling of common words
- Incorrect titles without a name
- Not addressed to a specific person
- Marked as restrictions, such as “Personal”, or “Confidential”, or “Do not x-ray”
- Marked with any threatening language
- Postmarked from a city or state that does not match the return address

**Appearance**

- Powdery substance felt through or appearing on the package or envelope
- Oily stains, discoloration, or odor
- Lopsided or uneven envelope
- Excessive packaging material such as masking tape, string, etc.

**Other Signs**

- Excessive weight
- Ticking sound
- Protruding wires or aluminum foil

**Remember: If an envelope or package appears suspicious, do not open it or remove it from the location where it was discovered and immediately contact Law Enforcement by calling 911.**

**Additional information on mail handling safety can be found at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website:**

**<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/anthrax/index.asp>**