

TO: All Department of Social Services Employees

FROM: Jeanne Anderson
Director, Human Resources

DATE: March 1, 2012

SUBJECT: Worker Health & Safety

We believe in the best interest of our workers that it is beneficial to set forth the information below, which relates to a group of infections know as “staph infection”. Additionally, due to the prevalence of these bacteria in society, some of our workers may work within or visit such places that “staph infections” are present. In an effort to educate our workers we believe this information will be most helpful.

Staph infections are commonly carried on the skin or in ones nose. Individuals carrying such infections are often otherwise healthy individuals. Staph infections are found on roughly 25% to 30% of the general population within the United States. When the skin is broken, Staph may invade the underlying tissue leading to an infection. Most of these infections manifest in the form of pustules or boils and can be treated without antibiotics. Methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) is a type of staph infection which is resistant to antibiotics methicillin and are often resistant to other antibiotics as well. Only 1% of staph infections colonize with MRSA.

Staph infections including MRSA occur most frequently among people in hospitals, health care facilities, nursing homes, schools, dormitories, day care facilities, or other crowded areas.

Staph or MRSA infections may appear red, swollen, and have pus or other drainage. They may also be painful. MRSA is transmitted by direct skin to skin contact with shared items or surfaces that have contact with someone else’s active infection.

In order to provide information on maintaining the health of our workforce, I would like you to keep in mind the following if you are a person who visits such areas that are crowded or where there may be contact with others:

- Cover any cuts or abrasions
- Keep hands and surfaces clean by washing with warm water and soap or an antibacterial solution
- Minimize skin to skin contact as much as possible
- Do not touch the bandage area of any person
- Seek your physician’s advice if you have any concerns regarding contact

I hope this information is helpful and assures that workers are equipped with the preventative information they may need to carry out their work. Feel free to contact your assigned HR Officer with any questions.