

Your NJEA UniServ Office

Region 1 Vineland
856 696 2670 *Cape May, & Cumberland counties*

Region 2 Woodbury
856 628 8650 *Gloucester & Salem counties*

Region 3 Voorhees
856 782 1225 *Camden County East*

Region 4 Camden
856 964 2800 *Camden County West*

Region 5 Moorestown
856 234 2485 *Burlington County*

Region 6 Galloway Twp.
609 652 9200 *Atlantic County*

Region 7 Toms River
732 349 0280 *Ocean County*

Region 8 Lawrenceville
609 896 3422 *Mercer County*

Region 9 West Long Branch
732 403 8000 *Monmouth County*

Region 11 Edison
732 287 4700 *Middlesex County North*

Region 12 Monroe Twp.
609 860 0771 *Middlesex County South*

Region 13 Flemington
908 782 2168 *Somerset & Hunterdon counties*

Region 15 Cranford
908 709 9440 *Union County*

Region 17 Parsippany
973 515 0101 *Morris County*

Region 19 West NY
201 861 1266 *Hudson County North*

Region 20 Jersey City
201 653 6634 *Hudson County South*

Region 21 South Orange
973 762 6866 *Essex County*

Region 23 Emerson
201 265 6200 *Bergen County East*

Region 25 Hasbrouck Heights
201 292 8093 *Bergen County West*

Region 27 Wayne
973 694 0154 *Passaic County*

Region 28 Stanhope
973 347 5717 *Sussex & Warren counties*

Region 29 Hamilton Square
609 689 9580 *Higher Education*

New Jersey Healthy School Facility Environments

www.state.nj.us/health/healthyschools
Access to the online resources of seven New Jersey state agencies and two federal agencies on such issues as indoor air quality, mold, hazardous substances, and construction dust and noise.

EPA Healthy School Environment Resources

<http://cfpub.epa.gov/schools/index.cfm>
Healthy School Environment is a gateway to online resources to help facility managers, school administrators, architects, design engineers, school nurses, parents, teachers, and other staff to address environmental health issues in schools.

New Jersey Education Association (NJEA)

180 West State Street, PO Box 1211
Trenton, New Jersey 08607-1211
609 599 4561
www.njea.org For Healthy & Safety, click on Issues

National Education Association (NEA)

1201 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036-3290
202 833 4000
www.nea.org
<http://www.neahin.org/> click on Health & Safety

PEOSH

NJ Dept of Health and Senior Services

(Health hazards complaints)
PO Box 360
Trenton, NJ 08625-0360
609-984-1863
www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/peoshweb/

PEOSH

NJ Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development

(Safety hazards and discrimination complaints)
PO Box 386
Trenton, NJ 08625-0386
609-633-3896/800-624-1644
http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/lss/employer/Public_Employees_osh.html

New Jersey Work Environment Council (WEC)

(Labor, community, environment coalition)
142 West State Street, Third Floor
Trenton, NJ 08608
609-695-7100
E-mail - info@njwec.org
www.njwec.org



For Paraeducators

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

Paraeducators often risk on-the-job contact with blood and other body fluids in their work with students. These materials may contain pathogens, organisms that can cause serious disease. The Bloodborne Pathogen Standard was created to protect employees with anticipated occupational exposure to these organisms.

What is the PEOSH Bloodborne Pathogen Standard?

In 1991, the federal OSHA adopted the *Bloodborne Pathogen Standard* that protects workers in the private sector who come in contact with blood or other body fluids that may cause serious disease. *The following are of major concern:*

- Hepatitis B virus (HBV)
- Hepatitis C virus (HCV)
- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), the cause of Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

In 1993, the federal OSHA Standard was adopted under the New Jersey Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health (PEOSH) Act to protect public employees in New Jersey.

How does the law protect you?

- The employer must provide an exposure control plan that includes:
 - Job classifications of those responsible for clean-ups.
 - Job classification task and procedures in which employees have occupational exposure.
 - Schedule and methods for implementing the requirements of the standard.
 - Procedures for documenting the circumstances surrounding exposure.
 - Accessibility to employees and updated at least annually.
- Methods to prevent exposure:
 - Universal precautions requiring the handling of all potentially infectious materials as if they were contaminated.
 - Engineering controls used to contain or remove hazardous materials, such as puncture resistant containers or splash guards.
 - Work practice procedures and the equipment to implement them.
- Hepatitis B vaccinations for all employees who have anticipated exposure to blood or other bodily fluids.
- Medical evaluation and follow-up for all employees who are exposed.
- Employee training for all employees with the potential for exposure.
- Confidential records about employee exposures must be kept for the length of employment plus 30 years.

What is the PEOSH Bloodborne Pathogen Standard?

INDOOR AIR QUALITY (IAQ)

Paraeducators spend most of their workdays in school buildings and offices. The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 30 percent of all buildings have an IAQ problem. Much research and attention has been focused on a whole host of indoor air contaminants and stressors in buildings. Formaldehyde, radon, bacteria, fungi, carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, particulates, nitrogen oxides, ozone, fiberglass, tobacco smoke, temperature, humidity and poor ventilation top the list, and may be a cause of IAQ problems. Employee symptoms associated with IAQ problems may include eye, nose, throat, and upper respiratory irritation, skin irritation or rashes, chills, fever, cough, chest tightness, congestion, sneezing, runny nose, muscle aches, and pneumonia. Illnesses associated with IAQ problems include asthma, hypersensitivity, pneumonitis, multiple chemical sensitivity, and Legionnaires' Disease.

How can IAQ Problems be corrected and/or prevented?

- Ensure an adequate outside air supply. The ventilation system should be operating at original design specifications.
- Eliminate or control known and potential sources of chemical and microbial air contamination.

What can be done if the air quality is unacceptable?

Through your local association:

- Conduct employee interviews to obtain pertinent information regarding what symptoms are being experienced, how many employees are affected, when they are affected, where they work, what they do, etc.
- Review building operations and maintenance procedures to determine when and what type of chemicals are being used during cleaning, floor waxing and stripping, painting, gluing, pesticide spraying, roofing operations, renovation and construction activities, etc. Also determine when deliveries occur since idling vehicles generate exhaust. New carpeting, upholstered furniture, partitions, etc. may give off chemical vapors for several months.
- Conduct a walk-through inspection to evaluate possible sources that may contribute to IAQ complaints.
- Inspect the heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system, window air conditioners, office dehumidifiers, etc., in order to determine if the systems are working properly and are in good condition.
- Check the schedule for cleaning any air filters present in the system.
- Review the building blueprints of the duct work and ventilation system to determine if the system is adequately designed.
- Conduct air sampling, if necessary, to determine if specific contaminants are present or if adequate fresh air is being supplied.
- Check compliance with the PEOSH Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Standard.

VIOLENCE

Paraeducators often work with students whose behavior puts them, other students and staff at risk of harm. Paraeducators share in the responsibility for the safety of children under their supervision. That responsibility extends to protecting or reducing the severity of potential student injuries, including those from fighting or assaults. Physical intervention is not required if it would create a physical danger to you. However, common sense and reasonableness require the use of steps such as:

- Calling for assistance; sending someone for help; or calling 911 if the altercation is out of control.
- Dispersing the crowd. By removing the audience, the motivation to fight may be reduced.
- Removing or pushing aside items from the area. This will reduce the risk of further injury due to falls. It will also keep students from using these objects as weapons.

You can protect yourself and minimize the risk of assault through your local association by:

- Ensuring that the child or children assigned to you have been properly classified.
- Seeking inservice training on topics such as:
 - Intervening safely in student fights and conflicts.
 - Reducing staff victimization.
 - Handling angry parents.
 - Weapons awareness.
- Joining or helping to form an association health and safety committee to work on these issues by:
 - Insisting the district follows procedures outlined in state law (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-2.1) – Assaults upon school employees and state law (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-2.2) – Assaults with weapons upon school employees.
 - Ensuring that any school safety plan puts the full responsibility on the district for protecting employees, and involves administration and law enforcement.

WHAT YOUR ASSOCIATION CAN DO

- Form a health and safety committee to monitor conditions in the workplace.
- Negotiate health and safety contract language.
- File grievances regarding unsafe conditions using existing contract language.
- See that training is provided through inservice days.
- In cases involving violence, insist that administration contact the police immediately.
- Assist you in filing the Vandalism, Violence and Substance Abuse reports, ensuring that the district accurately reports incidents to the Department of Education.
- File and keep accurate copies of incident reports. Review them annually and analyze how each incident was handled by the administration.
- Ensure that the district complies with the N.J. Public Employee Occupational Safety and Health Act (PEOSH).
- Ensure that all employees with potential exposure:
 - Are offered Hepatitis B vaccinations.
 - Are provided with medical evaluation and follow-up.
 - Receive training.
- Work with parent and community groups to eliminate and/or prevent hazardous conditions.

IF YOU ARE INJURED

- Contact your association representative immediately. Your local or the NJEA UniServ office can help you with Workers' Compensation. You are entitled under state law (N.J.S.A. 18A:30-2.1) “...to full salary without loss of sick days for up to one year...” and all medical treatment.
- Record the time of the incident and document the facts.
- Report all injuries to the school nurse and complete an accident report.
- Ask for medical diagnosis and treatment.
- Fill out an incident report, if appropriate.