

# THE HUMAN PATHOGENS & TOXINS ACT

Human Resources  
Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)



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Information Bulletin

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## **The Human Pathogens & Toxins Act is a new law passed June 23, 2009.**

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) website, this law “contains prohibitions and requirements relating to a full range of laboratory activities. A new program and regulatory framework will be based on requirements of the Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines”. These guidelines have existed for years and can be found at the website: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ols-bsl/lbg-ldmb/index-eng.php>

According to PHAC, before this law, there was “no inventory of who has what pathogen and in what quantity, nor knowledge of how safely they are being handled”.

**The Act will be implemented in three phases. The first phase has already begun.** Phases II and III will likely take years – they will require extensive consultations with stakeholders and detailed regulations. For more information on the Act, please see: [http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ols-bsl/pathogen/h-pat\\_toxin\\_bkg-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ols-bsl/pathogen/h-pat_toxin_bkg-eng.php)

### **For Phase I:**

- The University must register our activities involving human pathogens or toxins with PHAC by September 21, 2009.
- The University must inform PHAC if we have any small pox by July 24, 2009. It will need to be destroyed within 30 days.
- The University must take reasonable precautions to protect the health and safety of the public when dealing with human pathogens or toxins.

### **What does this mean to Researchers working on campus?**

- Individual researchers working on campus do not need to register. As long as you have a valid biohazard approval number for your research and have submitted a Biohazardous Agents Registry Form within the last three years, the University has the information it needs to register on your behalf. If you have questions about this, please visit the website: [www.uwo.ca/humanresources/biosafety](http://www.uwo.ca/humanresources/biosafety)

### **What does this mean to Researchers working off campus?**

- Individual researchers working off-campus should contact the Safety Officer for their institution to confirm their registration.