

# 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-ldmbl/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 with PHAC our activities involving human pathogens or toxins by September 21, 2009.
- The University must inform PHAC immediately if we have any smallpox. 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 do not have a current Biohazardous Agents Registry Form, please see the website: [www.uwo.ca/humanresources/biosafety](http://www.uwo.ca/humanresources/biosafety)
- If you have questions, please contact the Western Biosafety Officer, Jennifer Stanley, at extension 81135.

### **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.