

BULGARIA. Order No. 4 of 2 April 1992 of the Minister of Health on the conditions and procedures governing testing for infection by the immunodeficiency virus. (*Durzhaven Vestnik*, No. 34, 24 April 1992, pp. 13-15, as translated in *International Digest of Health Legislation*, Vol. 45, No. 2, 1994, pp. 169-170.)

Sec. 2 of this Order, which has been made by the Minister of Health in pursuance of the Law on public health promulgated by Decree No. 2431 of 2 November 1973 as amended, reads as follows:

“2.(1) The following are to undergo compulsory testing for the detection of HIV infection:

1. all blood units obtained from donations;
2. tissue and organ donors;
3. sperm donors;
4. milk donors;
5. children born from HIV-infected mothers; and
6. foreign nationals and stateless persons spending more than one month in Bulgaria for the purposes of study or for professional reasons, and immigrants, irrespective of the length of their stay.

(2) Blood shall be withdrawn for testing from the persons referred to in subsection 1:

1. before donation, in the cases referred to in items 2 and 4;
2. on the day of donation and 45 days after donation, in the case referred to in item 3;
3. within one month of birth, and thereafter at the ages of six months, one year, two years, and three years, in the case referred in item 5; and
4. within 72 hours of arrival, in the case referred to in item 6.”

Sec. 3 lays down that any citizen may request to undergo HIV testing in a clinic for sexually transmitted diseases within a dermato-venerology department. The identify of the person undergoing testing is confidential; such a person may opt for a personalized and alpha-numerical code. In this case, the patient’s personal details and the code are only to be known to the person concerned and the physician in charge of the clinic. Consultation and HIV testing may take place in complete anonymity when the patient is identifiable by a code known only to himself.

Sec. 4 requires health personnel providing care to pregnant women to inform the latter, in a comprehensible manner, of the risks run by their offspring if the mother is HIV-infected, and to advise them to undergo testing and, with their consent, to have the blood withdrawn subjected to a test for the detection of syphilis and HIV infection. Secs. 5-6 lay down, respectively, the conditions and procedures governing blood withdrawal and testing, according to the categories of persons concerned. Secs. 7-9 indicate the procedure to be implemented according to the results of tests. Sec. 11 requires clinics for sexually transmitted diseases to suggest to persons recognized as being HIV-infected that they undergo continuing medical observation in a dermato-venerology department of their choice. Sec. 12 lays down the penal and administrative procedures to be initiated against health personnel who contravene provisions concerning the confidentiality of the test results or the state of health of the persons referred to in Secs. 2-4.

Model forms are appended in an Annex.