



Term	Description
Absorption	The process of an agent being taken in by a surface (e.g., clothing, fabrics, wood) much like a sponge with water
Aerobe	A microorganism that lives and grows in the presence of oxygen
Aerosol	Fine liquid or solid particles suspended in air (e.g., fog or smoke)
Agent dosage	Refers to the lethal dose, 50 percent (LD ₅₀), a measure of the dose or quantity of a given agent that will be lethal to 50 percent of the target group. The lower the LD ₅₀ , the less amount of agent is required and the more potent the agent.
Anaerobe	A microorganism that lives and grows in the complete or nearly complete absence of oxygen (e.g., <i>Clostridium botulinum</i>)
Antibiotic	A chemical substance that inhibits the growth of or kills microorganisms. Antibiotics can be taken before or after exposure.
Antidote	A substance that neutralizes toxic agents or their effects
Antiserum	The liquid part of blood containing antibodies
Bacteria	Single-celled organisms that multiply by cell division and can cause disease in humans, plants, or animals
Biochemicals	The chemicals that make up or are produced by living things
Biological weapons	The intentional use of biological agents as weapons to kill or injure humans, animals, or plants, or to damage equipment
Biological weapons agents	Living organisms or the chemical compounds derived from them that cause disease or disrupt physiological activity in humans, animals, or plants, or cause deterioration of material. Biological agents may be used as liquid droplets, aerosols, or dry powders.
Bioregulators	Biochemicals that regulate bodily functions. Bioregulators that are produced by the body are termed "endogenous." Some of these bioregulators can be chemically synthesized.
Causative agent	The organism or toxin responsible for causing a specific disease or harmful effect
Ceiling exposure value	The maximum airborne concentration of a biological or chemical agent to which a worker may be exposed at any time
CNS	Central nervous system
CNS depressants	Compounds with the predominant effect of depressing or blocking the activity of the CNS. The primary mental effects include disruption of the ability to think, sedation, and lack of motivation.
CNS stimulants	Compounds with the predominant effect of flooding the brain with too much information. The primary mental effect is loss of concentration, which causes indecisiveness and the inability to act in a sustained, purposeful manner.
Conjunctivitis	An inflammation of the conjunctiva, usually caused by viruses, bacteria, or an allergy
Consequence management	Measures to alleviate the damage, loss, hardship, or suffering caused by emergencies. It includes measures to restore essential government service, protect public health and safety, and provide emergency relief to affected governments, businesses, and individuals.
Contagious	The ability of a biological agent to be transmitted from one person to another or from a living disease vector to humans



Term	Description
Crisis management	Measures to resolve the hostile situation, investigate, and prepare a criminal case for prosecution under Federal law
Culture	A population of microorganisms grown in a medium
Cutaneous	Pertaining to the skin
Decontamination	The process of making any person, object, or area safe by absorbing, destroying, neutralizing, making harmless, or removing the hazardous material
Endotoxin	A toxin contained in the cell walls of some microorganisms, especially Gram-positive bacteria, that is released when the bacterium dies and is broken down in the body
Eubacterium	A genus of Gram-positive anaerobic rod-shaped bacteria normally found in soil and water. The organisms are also found in the skin and body cavities of humans and other mammals, where they may cause soft-tissue infections.
Exotoxin	A toxin secreted or excreted by a living microorganism
Fungi	Any group of plants mainly characterized by the absence of chlorophyll, the green-colored compound found in other plants. Fungi range from microscopic single-celled plant (e.g., mold and mildews) to large plants (e.g., mushrooms).
Gram stain	The method of staining microorganisms using a violet stain, followed by an iodine solution; decolorizing with an alcohol or acetone solution; and counterstaining with safranin. The retention of either the violet color of the stain or the pink color of the counterstain is a primary means of identifying and classifying bacteria. Gram-positive organisms retain the stain and are penicillin sensitive.
Host	An animal or plant that harbors or nourishes another organism
IDLH	Concentrations immediately dangerous to life and health
Incubation period	The time between exposure and the appearance of symptoms. This time period is governed by a range of factors, including the initial dose, virulence, route of entry, rate of replication, and immunological variables.
Infectious agents	Biological agents capable of reproducing in an infected host
Infectivity	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The ability of an organism to spread2. The number of organisms required to cause and infection to secondary hosts3. The capability of an organism to spread out from the site of infection and cause disease in the host organism Infectivity can also be viewed as the number of organisms required to cause an infection.
Level A protection	The level of protective equipment in situations where the material is considered acutely vapor toxic to the skin and hazards are unknown. Full encapsulation, airtight chemical suit with self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) or supplied-air breathing apparatus (SABA)
Level B protection	The level of protective equipment in situations where the environment is not considered acutely vapor toxic to skin but may cause respiratory effects. Chemical splash suit or full coverage, nonairtight chemical suit with SCBA or SABA
Level C protection	The level of protective equipment required to prevent respiratory exposure but not to exclude possible skin contact. Chemical splash suit with cartridge respirator



Term	Description
Level D protection	The level of protective equipment required when the atmosphere contains no known hazard, when splashes, immersions, inhalation, or contact with hazardous levels of any chemical are precluded. Work uniform such as coveralls, boots, leather gloves, and hard hat
Methods of dissemination	Refers to the range of technologies and platforms that are available or that can be produced to deliver biological agents into the atmosphere
Microorganism	Any organism—such as bacteria, rickettsia, virii, and some fungi—that can be seen only with a microscope
Mycotoxin	A nonprotein toxin produced by fungi
Organism	Any individual living thing, whether animal or plant
PAPR	Powered air-purifying respirator
Parasite	Any organism that lives in or on another organism without providing benefit in return
Pathogen	Any organism (usually living) capable of producing serious disease or death such as bacteria, fungi, rickettsia, and viruses
Pathogenic agent	Biological agents capable of causing serious diseases
Pathogenicity	Reflects the ability of an infectious agent to cause disease in a host once the requisite number of microorganisms penetrates the body to initiate infection. An infectious agent must then multiply to cause disease.
Percutaneous agent	Agents able to be absorbed through the body
Reconnaissance	A primary survey to gather information
Rhinorrhea	A runny nose
Rickettsia	Any of a family (<i>Rickettsiaceae</i>) of pleomorphic, rod-shaped, nonfilterable microorganisms that cause various diseases (e.g., Q fever, typhus, or Rocky Mountain spotted fever). Rickettsial agents are not infective and are usually transmitted from person to person via vectors (e.g., insects or infected rodents).
SABA	Supplied-air breathing apparatus
SCBA	Self-contained breathing apparatus
Spore	A reproductive form some microorganisms can take to become resistant to environmental conditions, such as extreme heat or cold, while in a “resting phase”
Stability	The ability of a biological agent to remain viable either in storage or when released into the atmosphere. A broad range of variables regulates agent stability. In particular, many biological agents are extremely sensitive to environmental pressures, including temperature, atmospheric pollution, humidity, moisture, and ultraviolet radiation. Meteorological factors such as diffusion constraints and wind speed and direction will also determine the success of a biological agent release.
Terrorism	A violent act or an act dangerous to human life, in violation of the criminal laws of the United States or any segment, to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives (U.S. Department of Justice)
Toxicity	A measure of the harmful effect produced by a given amount of toxin on a living organism. The relative toxicity of an agent can be expressed in milligrams of toxin needed per kilogram of body weight to kill experimental animals.
Transmissibility	The ability of a particular biological agent to be passed between organisms



Term	Description
Triage	Sorting; a technique of establishing rescues, decontamination, treatment, and transportation priorities in any event where the number of casualties overwhelm the resources of the emergency response organizations
Vaccine	A preparation of killed or weakened microorganism products used to artificially induce immunity against a disease
Virulence	The relative severity of the disease produced by a particular biological agent. Different microorganisms and strains of the same microorganism may cause diseases of varying severity.
Virus	An infectious microorganism that exists as a particle rather than as a complete cell. Particle sizes range from 200 to 400 nanometers (1 billionth of a meter). Viruses are not capable of reproducing outside a host cell.
Wheal	An acute swelling of the skin. This condition is common to a bee sting.