

Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19): Guidance on Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19

Cleaning and disinfection is a best practice measure to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in community settings. **This cleaning and disinfection guidance is intended for non-healthcare community facilities that do not house persons overnight (e.g., schools, daycare centers, businesses, community centers, and offices).** Employers in these settings may refer to the cleaning and disinfection recommendations below if a person in their building is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19. For more information, see coronavirus.dc.gov.

What is Cleaning and Disinfection

- **Cleaning** is the removal of germs and dirt from surfaces. Normal routine cleaning with soap and water decreases the amount of germs on surfaces and objects, which lowers the risk of spreading infection.
- **Disinfection** is the use of chemicals to kill germs on surfaces. Disinfection, when performed properly, kills most germs on a surface and further reduces the risk of spreading infection.
- **First you clean, then you disinfect.** Cleaning and disinfection is a two-step process.

Employer Considerations

- Ensure cleaning and disinfection supplies are readily available for use within the facility.
- Provide staff with the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) (e.g., gloves, gowns, facemasks, eye protection) that may be needed to perform cleaning and disinfection.
- Train staff about appropriate cleaning and disinfection procedures, chemical hazards, and the proper use of PPE (i.e., how to safely put on and remove PPE).
- Educate staff that perform cleaning, laundry, and trash pick-up activities about the symptoms of COVID-19 and provide instructions about what to do if they develop symptoms while at work (i.e., isolate, notify their supervisor, and leave the facility).
 - **Symptoms of COVID-19 may include:** fever (subjective or 100.4°F), chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or otherwise feeling unwell.
 - Additional setting specific guidance is available at coronavirus.dc.gov.
- For more information, see *Cleaning and Disinfection of Community Facilities* on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website: cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html.

Special Considerations When a Person Develops Symptoms in a Public Space

- Regular cleaning staff can perform the cleaning and disinfection of community spaces when a person develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at work.
- Perform the following steps if a person in your facility is identified to have had symptoms of COVID-19 while at work:
 - Close off areas that were visited by the person who developed symptoms.
 - Increase air circulation (e.g., open doors to the outside, open windows, use ventilating fans).
 - Wait 24 hours, or as long as practical, before cleaning and disinfecting closed areas.
 - Follow the instructions outlined below to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces **and** all areas and surfaces used by the person who had symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., office, restroom, electronics, etc.).

- If it has been more than 7 days since the person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 was in the facility, then additional cleaning and disinfection is not needed.
- The areas may be reopened once appropriate cleaning and disinfection has occurred.

How to Clean and Disinfect When a Person Develops Symptoms in a Public Space

General Reminders

- Wear the recommended PPE during cleaning and disinfection activities.
 - Staff should wear disposable gloves and gowns. If gowns are not available, aprons or work uniforms can be worn. Reusable clothing should be laundered afterwards.
 - Consider the use of face masks and eye protection (e.g., face shield or goggles) for activities with potential splash hazard.
- Remember that cleaning and disinfection is a two-step process.
- Follow the application instructions on the product label.
- Maintain good ventilation when using disinfectants.
- Clean hands often, including immediately after removing gloves.
 - Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty.

Material-Specific Considerations

- **Hard (Non-Porous) Surfaces**
 - Clean visibly dirty surfaces with soap and water.
 - Disinfect surfaces with an appropriate product.
 - **Refer to the list of disinfectants that are effective against the virus that causes COVID-19** on the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website: [epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19).
 - When EPA-approved disinfectants are not available, diluted household bleach can be used if appropriate for the surface.
 - Prepare bleach solution by mixing 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water **or** 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water.
 - Do not mix bleach or other chemical products together.
 - Bleach solutions will be effective for disinfection up to 24 hours.
 - Keep the surface wet with disinfectant **for the amount of time** recommended on the product label.
- **Soft Surfaces** (e.g., carpeted floor, rugs, drapes)
 - Remove visible contamination, if present, and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces.
 - After cleaning:
 - If items can be laundered, then launder the items using the warmest appropriate water setting and dry completely.
 - If items cannot be laundered, then use a product that is EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 and that is suitable for porous surfaces.
- **Electronics** (e.g., tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, ATM machines)
 - Remove visible contamination if present.
 - Follow manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
 - If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or sprays that contain at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly.

- Consider use of wipeable covers for electronics (e.g., computer screen protector).
- **Linens, Clothing, and Other Items That Go in the Laundry**
 - Do not shake dirty laundry or linens.
 - Wash items per manufacturer's instructions, using the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
 - Clean and disinfect hampers and carts that are used to transport laundry.

Additional Safety Considerations

- Always read and follow the directions on the product label.
- Avoid mixing chemical products.
- Label any diluted cleaning and disinfectant solutions.
- Store and use chemicals out of the reach of children and pets.
- See the following CDC website for special considerations for people with asthma: [cdc.gov/asthma/reduce_triggers.html](https://www.cdc.gov/asthma/reduce_triggers.html).
- See the EPA's one-page resource that outlines 6 steps for safe and effective disinfection: [epa.gov/pesticide-registration/six-steps-safe-effective-disinfectant-use](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/six-steps-safe-effective-disinfectant-use).

Additional Cleaning and Disinfection Resources

For additional information, see the following CDC websites:

- Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting (includes a cleaning and disinfecting decision tool): [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/cleaning-disinfecting-decision-tool.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/cleaning-disinfecting-decision-tool.html).
- Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility: Everyday Steps, Steps When Someone is Sick, and Considerations for Employers: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html).
- Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html).

The guidelines above will continue to be updated as the outbreak evolves. Please visit coronavirus.dc.gov regularly for the most current information.