

RESOURCE 4: CLEANING

EFFECTIVE CLEANING AND DECONTAMINATION

Always keep up to date with the latest public health advice and adjust your cleaning procedures in line with that advice. It is essential that you read Resource 5 (Use of PPE) in conjunction with this resource.

Surfaces do not just need to be cleaned, they also need to be disinfected / decontaminated. Due to the potential survival of the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) virus in the environment for several days, the premises and areas potentially contaminated should be cleaned and disinfected before their re-use, using products containing antimicrobial agents known to be effective against coronaviruses.

DISINFECTION / DECONTAMINATION

Due to the relatively recent appearance of the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) virus, there is no exhaustive overview of the disinfectant (Biocidal) products which may be effective against the virus. Any information provided here should be checked against information which is constantly being updated on the websites of the ECDC and the EPA.⁴

To avoid damage, the decontamination of equipment should always be carried out in accordance with the equipment manufacturer's instructions.

TIMING AND CLEANING TIPS

- ✓ Ideally, the area should be left for 1 hour after the last person leaves before cleaning begins. This will reduce the virus load by about 75%. If cleaning is done too early, virus that is in the air (disturbed by the movement of people leaving) will settle on areas after you have cleaned them defeating the purpose.
- ✓ Cleaning with warm water and household detergents (warm soapy water) and use of common disinfectant products should be sufficient for general precautionary cleaning.
- ✓ Diluted household bleach is suggested for decontamination purposes. (Standard household bleach has an initial concentration of approx. 5% of sodium hypochlorite and can be diluted using 50 measures of water to 1 measure of bleach).
- ✓ For surfaces that could be damaged by household bleach, 70% concentration of ethanol (found in some fluid or gel preparations and in some wipes) is needed for decontamination after cleaning with a neutral detergent.
- ✓ When other chemical products are used, the manufacturer's recommendation should be followed and the products prepared and applied according to them.
- ✓ Use a bottle plus a microfiber cloth, disposable paper towel, or disinfectant-saturated wipe to apply the disinfectant. Avoid creating splashes and spray when cleaning if possible.
- ✓ Disinfectants need time to kill germs. You should actively rub the disinfectant into the surface, so that all parts of it (including scratches and dents) get wet. The same is true for the rinsing process.
- ✓ Put a system in place for the disposal of cleaning cloths and used wipes in a no-touch bin containing a rubbish bag which overhangs the edge of the bin. Current HSE guidance recommends waste such as cleaning waste, tissues etc. from a person suspected of having COVID-19 should be double bagged and stored in a secure area for 72 hours before being presented for general waste collection.
- ✓ Ensure that items such as buckets are emptied and cleaned with a fresh solution of disinfectant before re-use.

PERSONAL SAFETY

You must use the appropriate PPE. A risk assessment must be undertaken to determine the protective clothing required. For most tasks gloves and aprons are sufficient. If there is the potential of splash to the mouth, eyes or nose, face-protection such as a mask and visor or goggles must be worn. (See Resource 5)

- ✓ Non-single use PPE should be decontaminated using the available products (e.g. diluted household bleach as above or 70% ethanol).
- ✓ When using chemical products for cleaning, it is important to keep the facility ventilated (e.g. by opening the windows) in order to protect the health of cleaning personnel.

ITEMS REQUIRED

- ✓ Appropriate PPE for the cleaning team (See Resource 5)
- ✓ The use of disposable or dedicated cleaning equipment is recommended
- ✓ Cleaning and Disinfecting products
- ✓ No-touch bins, if possible
- ✓ For offices - provide workers with cleaning materials such as disinfectant or wipes to keep their own workspace clean

AREAS TO BE CLEANED AND DISINFECTED

A cleaning schedule for each area should be drawn up and a daily cleaning checklist should be kept for recording purposes. Depending on the location, frequently touched areas to be cleaned include:

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| ✓ Porch and Entrance Areas | ✓ Table-tops and desks |
| ✓ Pews/Benches | ✓ Toilets and toilet doors, taps |
| ✓ Door handles and Doorknobs | ✓ Windowsills or ledges |
| ✓ Shrine/candle areas | ✓ Stairways and bannisters |
| ✓ Base of statues and pictures | ✓ Lifts |
| ✓ Light switches | ✓ Bins |
| ✓ Microphones | ✓ Telephones |
| ✓ Ambo/Lectern | ✓ Computer keyboard and mouse |
| ✓ Tabernacle door and key | ✓ Touchscreen tablets |
| ✓ Sanctuary Area | ✓ Kitchen appliances |
| ✓ Baptistry and Font | ✓ Kitchen surfaces and cupboard handles |

4. Currently, for most disinfectant products available in the European Union market for SARS-CoV-2 disinfection, the transitional measures of the BPR apply, as set out in Article 89 [7]. This means that most disinfectants are placed on the market subject to national legislation until the evaluation of the contained active substance(s) is finalised in the EU review programme. ECDC Disinfection of environments in healthcare and nonhealthcare settings potentially contaminated with SARS-CoV-2