



Cleaning and Disinfecting

Viruses can remain on objects for a few hours to days depending on the type of surface and environmental conditions. This document is intended to provide guidance to employers and workers when establishing cleaning and disinfecting procedures in their workplace to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. This information should be reviewed with any [industry-specific tip sheets](#) where available.

In all cases, guidance from local public health authorities must be followed and general COVID-19 prevention practices should be implemented, as outlined in: www.ccohs.ca/pdfs/covid-general.pdf

Develop a Cleaning and Disinfection Program

- Create a schedule and checklists for cleaning and disinfecting before, after, and during the workday.
- Include shared areas such as kitchens and washrooms, break rooms, congregate housing, and vehicles.
- Frequently touched (high touch) surfaces such as light switches, door handles, and elevator buttons are the most likely to be contaminated. Make sure to clean and disinfect these objects along with counters, chairs, railings, lounge chairs, tabletops, debit machines, ATMs, touchscreens, phones, faucets, taps, sanitizer dispensers, water bottle refill stations, and protective barriers.
- Clean and disinfect work areas before and after external contractors complete their work.
- Remove soft furnishings and objects (e.g., cushions, magazines, newspapers) that cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected.
- In the event an employee or client becomes sick in the workplace, make sure you have a specific cleaning and disinfecting protocol for any surfaces or objects they may have come in contact with.

Provide Supplies

- Provide adequate cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) as needed. Workers should wear appropriate gloves, eye protection such as goggles or face shield, apron, and footwear. Make sure supplies are easy to find.
- Replace garbage bins with no-touch or foot activated receptacles, or remove lids that require contact to open.
- Line garbage cans for safe and convenient disposal of contaminated items, such as used PPE, tissues, and cleaning materials.

Train and Educate

- Provide training and education on:
 - Properly using personal protective equipment (PPE). Wash hands before and after cleaning or using PPE.
 - Cleaning and disinfecting procedures.
 - The Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS), and the hazardous products in your workplace following the occupational health and safety training requirements for your jurisdiction.
- Always follow the product manufacturer's safe use instructions
 - Use the proper quantity and dilution.
 - Use in well-ventilated areas.
 - Store safely away from ignition sources and incompatible chemicals.

Clean Before Disinfecting

- Clean visibly dirty surfaces before disinfecting.
- Damp cleaning methods (damp clean cloths and wet mops) are more effective than dry methods (dusting and sweeping). Damp methods are less likely to distribute virus particles into the air.
- Use dedicated cleaning materials (towels, sponges, mops, etc.) that can be washed and dried completely after each use.



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- Wash reusable cleaning items with regular laundry soap and hot water (60-90°C).
- Put used disposable cleaning items and PPE (e.g., paper towels, gloves) in a lined garbage bin. Seal liner bags before disposing of them with regular waste.

Disinfect

- Use household or commercial disinfectants to destroy or inactivate viruses and bacteria.
- Use a disinfectant with a drug identification number (DIN). This number means that it has been approved for use in Canada. Health Canada has published a [list of hard surface disinfectants](#) that are likely to be effective against COVID-19.
- Follow the cleaning product label instructions. Many cleaners require contact with the surface for a specified amount of time to be effective.
- Clean so that when the surface is wiped, the surface still appears wet.
- Allow the surface to air dry or wipe down after the recommended contact time.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning high touch electronics (e.g., touch screens, pin pads, keyboards, tablets). If liquids can be withstood, disinfect with alcohol or disinfectant wipes containing 70% alcohol.
- Empty garbage at least daily. Use disposable gloves when handling garbage.
- If household or commercial disinfectant cleaning products are unavailable, hard surfaces can be disinfected using a mixture of 5 mL (one teaspoon) of bleach (5% sodium hypochlorite) and 250 mL of water; or 20 mL (4 teaspoons) bleach and 1000 mL of water (4 cups).
- Always add bleach to water, not water to bleach.
- Bleach solutions should be prepared daily. After 24 hours they lose their disinfectant properties.
- Do not mix bleach with any other solutions. Mixing bleach with vinegar, glass cleaners, ammonia, alcohol, and other chemicals can produce toxic gasses or products.
- Bleach is corrosive. To prevent damage test surfaces before using a bleach solution.
- Never use bleach or diluted bleach on yourself or others.
- After cleaning and disinfecting, wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds to remove any chemical residue or virus particles that may have contacted the skin. Follow up with alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, please contact your local hospital, call 911 immediately, or contact a Crisis Centre in your area.

<https://suicideprevention.ca/need-help/>



For further information on COVID-19, refer to the Public Health Agency of Canada

<https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus>

Note that this guidance is just some of the adjustments organizations can make during a pandemic. Adapt this list by adding your own good practices and policies to meet your organization's specific needs.

Disclaimer: As public and occupational health and safety information is changing rapidly, local public health authorities should be consulted for specific, regional guidance. This information is not intended to replace medical advice or legislated health and safety obligations. Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy, currency and completeness of the information, CCOHS does not guarantee, warrant, represent or undertake that the information provided is correct, accurate or current. CCOHS is not liable for any loss, claim, or demand arising directly or indirectly from any use or reliance upon the information.