

CDC Guidelines for Sanitizing Areas Affected by COVID-19

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides the following recommendations for most non-healthcare businesses that have suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases:

- It is recommended to close off areas used by the ill persons and wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
- Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
- To clean and disinfect:
 - If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection (Note: “cleaning” will remove some germs, but “disinfection” is also necessary).
 - For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
 - Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer’s instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
 - Cleaning staff should wear disposable gloves and gowns for all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash.
 - Gloves and gowns should be compatible with the disinfectant products being used.
 - Additional PPE might be required based on the cleaning/disinfectant products being used and whether there is a risk of splash. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions regarding other protective measures recommended on the product labeling.
 - Gloves and gowns should be removed carefully to avoid contamination of the wearer and the surrounding area. Be sure to clean hands after removing gloves.
 - Employers should develop policies for worker protection and provide training to all cleaning staff on site prior to providing cleaning tasks. Training should include when to use PPE, what PPE is necessary, how to properly don (put on), use, and doff (take off) PPE, and how to properly dispose of PPE.
 - If you require gloves or masks or other PPE, prepare a simple half-page Job Safety Analysis (JSA): list the hazards and the PPE (gloves, masks, etc., as needed), and the person who drafts the JSA should sign and date it.

If employers are using cleaners other than household cleaners with more frequency than an employee would use at home, employers must also ensure workers are trained on the hazards of the cleaning chemicals used in the workplace and maintain a written program in accordance with OSHA's Hazard Communication standard (29 CFR 1910.1200). Simply download the manufacturer's Safety Data Sheet (SDS) and share with employees as needed, and make sure the cleaners used are on your list of workplace chemicals used as part of the Hazard Communication Program (which almost all employees maintain).

For more information from the CDC regarding how employers can plan, prepare, and respond to the COVID-19 virus, please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html>