

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION GUIDELINE FOLLOWING COVID-19 CASE(S) IN VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Version 2: 31 July 2020

This guideline aims to provide advice on cleaning and disinfection when a confirmed case of COVID-19 has been identified in a Victorian Government School.

HOW COVID-19 IS TRANSMITTED

COVID-19 spreads through close contact with an infected person and is typically transmitted via respiratory droplets (produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes).

It may also be possible for a person to acquire the disease by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way that the virus is spreading in this pandemic.

CLEANING OF SCHOOLS IMPACTED BY COVID-19

If a school is directly impacted by a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19), the Department of Education and Training (the Department) will work with the school and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to undertake a process of cleaning and disinfection at the school, referred to as an Infectious Clean.

The cleaning service provider is required to commence the Infectious Clean of the school as soon as directed by the Department. The school will be made operational as soon as possible.

Once an Infectious Clean has been completed, the cleaning service provider will need to inform the Department and the school in writing.

INFECTIOUS CLEAN

As a general guideline, an Infectious Clean involves cleaning of all *high touch surfaces, furniture, equipment and items below 2 metres* that have come in contact with a person/person with a confirmed case of COVID-19, with a neutral detergent followed by wiping with a disinfectant. On a case-by-case basis, the Department of Health and Human Services may include other areas following an investigation which identifies them as a risk to the health and wellbeing of the school community including students and staff.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

Cleaning means physically removing germs, dirt and organic matter from surfaces. Cleaning alone does not kill germs, but by reducing the numbers of germs on surfaces, cleaning helps to reduce the risk of spreading infection.

Disinfection means using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs that remain on surfaces after cleaning, disinfection further reduces the risk of spreading infection. Cleaning before disinfection is very important as organic matter and dirt can reduce the ability of disinfectants to kill germs.

Germs is used as a catch all phrase in this instance to cover bacteria, viruses and other microscopic particles that cause illness in humans.

IDENTIFYING THE AREA(S) REQUIRING CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

After a confirmed case is identified, as soon as practical, the VSBA and DHHS will meet with the school representative to identify and agree which areas are to be included in the Infectious Clean.

The VSBA may be able to commence with the Infectious Clean prior to this meeting occurring if a decision is made to clean the entire school area. Alternatively, the VSBA may also arrange for the Infectious Clean to commence in known areas and expand as required following the meeting with DHHS and the school.

In general, an Infectious Clean will focus on areas of the school where the person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 was mainly located. This will include classrooms, bathrooms and other high use areas. Expansion of the cleaning zone may be considered on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of DHHS and VSBA, as needed.

Administration areas of a school may be required to be cleaned if the person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 has been in the administration area for a period of 15 minutes or longer.

All high touch surfaces, furniture, equipment and items below 2 metres (as is practical and reasonable), should be cleaned and disinfected. This includes those listed in the below table, but not limited to.

High touch refers to surfaces touched multiple times each day, regardless of whether it is touched by the same person or different people.

TABLE 1: HIGH TOUCH SURFACES/AREAS

Surfaces/furniture/equipment
Shared use chairs, desks and tables (including legs and areas under the items)
Cupboards (including handles)
Doors (including door handles, handrails, guardrails, frames & glass panels)
Drinking troughs and fountains
Entry and exit points (door handles, push plates, lift buttons, access control buttons)
Electrical fixtures and appliances with special attention provided to all shared use items (including computers, keyboards, mouse, printers, photocopiers, TVs)
Internal windows (including glass surfaces, handles, blinds/curtains, frames)
Kitchens/Kitchenettes (including sinks, shared appliances like microwaves, fridges, kettles, toasters, dishwashers, microwaves)
Lockers (including locks and handles)
Sinks/washbasins (including taps, countertop)
Stairwells and all handrails
Switches (including lights, power points)
Bathroom and fixtures (including toilets, urinal flush buttons, toilet seats, roll holders, washbasins, soap dispensers, hand towel dispensers, hand dryers, showers, mirrors, doors, sanitary disposal units, walls below two meters, handles, floors, cubicle doors). Replenish consumables where required.
Waste bins (both internal and external bins). Remove waste and replace liners where required
Walls and floors (any high touch surfaces)
Hand sanitising units and or bottles
Bike shed (including doors and bike rails)
External gates

Indoor and outdoor eating areas (including furniture and equipment)

Hard, high touch areas in playgrounds

Items of a 'non-permanent nature on top of benches, desks and shelves should be moved to allow cleaning and disinfecting of all surfaces. However, items of a 'permanent' nature are not required to be moved. The surfaces under these items are not considered 'high touch' areas and therefore do not require cleaning and disinfection.

Infectious Clean must not be interpreted as a 'Spring Clean'. An Infectious Clean does not involve, for example moving every book off every shelf, every folder off every desk or pulling filing cabinets away from walls to clean and vacuum behind them. It is a specialised clean of the high touch surfaces that are most likely to have had contact with the person with a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Further information on specific items/areas and their cleaning requirements is outlined below.

Paper:

Paper cannot be cleaned or disinfected. Pack away paper to allow cleaning of high touch surfaces or leave in situ if surfaces would not be touched (for example, posters on the wall). Paper should not be disturbed, unless wearing PPE, for 72 hours. Ensure hand hygiene is attended to after handling paper.

Paper towel, tissues and toilet paper:

These items are not likely to be carriers of the virus. However, they are likely to get cleaning product residue on them as part of the Infectious Clean process. Sealed tissue boxes that have come in contact with the person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 should be cleaned and disinfected where possible and do not need to be disposed of. Exposed products can undergo a clean and disinfection and where this is not appropriate, should be disposed of at the discretion of the school and DHHS.

Equipment:

High touch equipment includes items such as whiteboards, computers, keyboards, mice, TVs, photocopiers/printers, remote controls and music equipment.

Only those items located in the cleaning zone will be cleaned and disinfected. Equipment in storage and not in use while the person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 was present at the school is not included in the scope. On a case by case basis, equipment in storage that is able to be identified as potentially having contact with the person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 must be cleaned and disinfected.

Walls:

Only high touch areas on walls are required to be cleaned. In a school setting, it is not practical, reasonable or necessary to remove all items (such as artwork, posters and picture frames) off walls and these items can be left in situ. The wall surfaces behind these items are not considered high touch surfaces (as they are normally covered by said items).

Hard-surface floors:

All hard floors within the identified cleaning zone should be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the surface type.

Carpets:

All carpets within an Infectious Clean area must be vacuumed with a vacuum cleaner that is equipped with HEPA filtration.

Carpets should be steam cleaned if the person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 had likely cause to sit on the classroom floor.

Situations where a steam clean may be required:

- in a primary school setting, and where it is likely that students/teachers have sat on the floor
- in libraries or other specialist class learning areas where it is normal to sit on the floor.

Situations where a steam clean may not be required:

- staff rooms areas
- administration and office areas

a secondary school setting.

Soft furnishings (chairs and couches)

Soft furnishings, such as chairs and couches, in the rooms that were occupied by the person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 should be steam cleaned where appropriate. Soft furnishing in areas that the person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 may have come into contact with should be cleaned at the direction of the school and DHHS.

Cushions and beanbags

Cushions and beanbags in rooms that were occupied by the person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 should be laundered or steam cleaned.

If the item is not able to be laundered or steam cleaned, such as a cushion with sequins, the school should consider disposal of the item.

Toys: soft and hard

All toys in areas designated for an Infectious Clean should be cleaned and disinfected.

- Soft toys should be cleaned by either being laundered or steam cleaned.
- Hard toys can be cleaned with a neutral detergent and water and then disinfected (or use a 2-in-1 detergent/disinfectant).

Toys that may be mouthed should be rinsed or wiped over with water after disinfection to ensure any residual chemicals are removed.

Curtains

Curtains are not usually considered a high touch surface and, therefore, are not required to be included in the Infectious Clean scope. If, however, there is reason to believe that the curtains in a particular room have had cause to be touched by the person with a confirmed case of COVID-19, then the curtains should be cleaned by either being laundered or steam cleaned.

Linen (e.g. in sick bay)

If there is reason to believe any linen (such as that on a sick bay bed) may have come in contact with a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19, where possible the Service Provider will organise for the linen to be laundered. Schools should already have in place measures to ensure these items are being laundered between uses as part of standard infection prevention and control precautions.

Clothing

Some examples of clothing located on the premises that may need to be considered as part of the Infectious Clean process include:

- aprons used in food technology or technical classes;
- laboratory jackets used in science classes;
- high vis vests used for excursions in primary schools;
- costumes; and
- lost property (either located in a designated area, or loose around school).

If there is reason to believe any of the above items may have been worn or touched by the person with a confirmed case of COVID-19, where possible the Service Provider will organise for the clothing to be laundered. Schools should already have in place measures to ensure these items are being laundered on a regular basis as part of standard infection prevention and control precautions.

Laundering of these items should consider the necessity of using the items and the material of the item. Synthetic materials may not be able to be appropriately laundered and as such may need to be disposed.

Cutlery, crockery and food preparation equipment

Crockery and cutlery that has been left out or touched by a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 should be washed in a dishwasher on the hottest setting possible. If a dishwasher is not available, hand wash with hot soapy water and allow to air dry. These items may include personal cutlery and crockery such as drink bottles, lunch boxes and coffee mugs.

External areas:

All high touch surfaces, furniture, equipment and items below 2 metres (as practical and reasonable), should be cleaned and disinfected with detergent and disinfectant (examples: bench seats, handrails).

CLEANING TECHNIQUES

Hard surfaces

All hard surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected with detergent and disinfectant. Further information on the strength of disinfectant can be found on page 6.

A two-step process should be applied, whereby the surface is cleaned to remove dirt and grime and then disinfected to further decontaminate the surface. This should be left on the surface as per the manufacturer's instructions before wiping over with a damp cloth to remove the disinfectant and any other residue on the surface.

A 2 in 1 product may also be used for cleaning and disinfection. If a 2 in 1 product is being used, the following procedure must be applied.

- Step 1 – Apply the 2 in 1 solution onto a cloth (not directly to the surface being cleaned). Manually clean all surfaces to remove dirt/grime. Leave surfaces wet to allow the disinfectant component to work effectively (by ensuring it makes contact with all parts of the surface).
- Step 2 – Waiting the specified time period as per the manufacturer's instructions before wiping over with a damp cloth to remove the disinfectant and any other residue on the surface.

Soft and porous surfaces

If soft and porous surfaces are identified as requiring cleaning, they should be steam cleaned at a temperature of 70 degrees Celsius or higher or follow the two-step cleaning and disinfection method as required.

Examples of soft and porous surfaces:

- Carpet
- Pin boards
- Acoustic wall surface

Some porous surfaces, such as pin boards and acoustic walls, will not be able to withstand steam cleaning or use of a detergent/disinfectant. These items should be spot cleaned.

Laundering

Laundering should be done in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions using the hottest setting possible. Items should be dried completely. Dirty laundry should not be shaken as this may disperse the virus through the air.

DISINFECTANTS

In the first instance, a Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) listed disinfectant with antiviral activity is required. As an alternative, bleach solution or chlorine-based products such as sodium hypochlorite can also be used if TGA disinfectant are not available.

TGA-listed Disinfectants (preference)

TGA-listed hospital-grade disinfectants can be found via this link:

<https://www.tga.gov.au/disinfectants-use-against-covid-19-artg-legal-supply-australia>

The Department recommends two methods of cleaning:

1. Physical clean with detergent followed by disinfection with a TGA-listed hospital grade disinfectant with antiviral activity or a chlorine-based product such as sodium hypochlorite.
2. Physical clean and disinfection in one step using a combined detergent and TGA-listed disinfectant or a chlorine-based product such as sodium hypochlorite.

Bleach Solution

Bleach solutions should be made up daily and used only on hard, non-porous surfaces.

In order for bleach to be effective at a concentration of 1000 ppm (0.1%) it needs:

- sufficient time to kill the virus – at least 10 minutes contact time
- environmental surfaces to be free of vomit or faeces or any other organic matter
- dilution of bleach to be made up fresh, just before using.

General guidelines:

- Gloves should be worn when handling and preparing bleach solutions.
- Protective eyewear should also be worn to protect from splashing.
- Disinfection with bleach should be preceded with a neutral detergent clean (unless a two-in-one detergent/bleach product is used).
- Neutral pH detergents are best for environmental cleaning because they are less likely than acid or alkali detergents to damage metals such as stainless steel or to cause skin irritation.

TABLE 1: RECIPE TO ACHIEVE A 1000 PPM (0.1%) BLEACH SOLUTION

Original strength of bleach		Disinfectant recipe		Volume in standard 10L bucket
%	Parts per million	Parts of bleach	Parts of water	
1	10,000	1	9	1000 ml
2	20,000	1	19	500 ml
3	30,000	1	29	333 ml
4	40,000	1	39	250 ml
5	50,000	1	49	200 ml

When bleach is used, please ensure concentrations are in line with the bleach calculator that can be located at this link: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/infection-control-guidelines/chlorine-dilutions-calculator>

WASTE DISPOSAL

During an Infectious Clean, all used cloths, consumables, waste and absorbent materials that are used to complete the clean are considered as a biohazardous waste. This includes the disposal of PPE such as, but not limited to gloves, masks, gowns and safety glasses.

All other items needed to be disposed of during an Infectious Clean such as used uniform, costumes, are also considered as a biohazardous waste.

All biohazardous waste must be placed and secured in the appropriate biohazard waste bags which must be removed from school facility each day and disposed of accordingly.

SITE INDUCTION AND TRAINING

The Department expects all personnel to be appropriately inducted at the school site, prior to cleaning and that the Service provider will undertake that induction on site following the initial meeting with the School and Department.

The Department expects all personnel to be appropriately trained in the conduct and practice of Infectious Cleans prior to the commencement of cleaning. Appropriate training should include training and other guidance material in the cleaner's first language particularly also around the requirements concerning personal protective equipment.

ADMINISTRATION AND DOCUMENTATION

At the start of an Infectious Clean, as a minimum, the service provider must provide the Department with the following:

- Attend a start-up meeting with the Department, school or DHHS if required. This may be conducted on-site or via a virtual meeting platform.
- Infectious Clean methodology
- Relevant Material Safety Data Sheets for all chemicals to be used
- Equipment List use
- Evidence of daily sign in to the school's sign in book or equivalent
- Evidence of the induction of staff
- Detailed contact list including escalation.

- List of employee names including their:
 - Full Names
 - Evidence that Training on Infectious Clean was completed
 - Working with Children's Check

At the completion of an Infectious Clean, as a minimum, the service provider must provide the Department with the following:

- Quality Assurance report including photographs
- A Certificate that the Infectious Clean was completed in the relevant areas to the requirements of this guideline
- Any other supporting documents i.e. incident reports etc as required by the Department
- Attend a handover meeting with the Department, school or DHHS if required

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

In outbreak settings, appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) must be used, in each area/room that has potentially been contaminated, to minimise the risk of infection. Hand hygiene should be carried out frequently, particularly before and after removing PPE to minimise the spread of the virus.

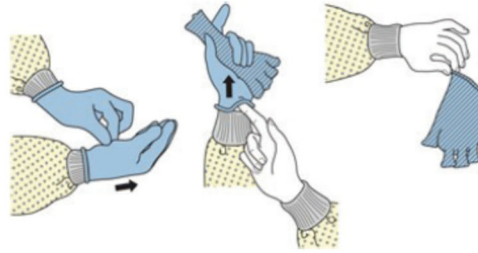
Cleaning service providers will need to train their cleaners on appropriate donning and doffing procedures. Donning and doffing of PPE should be in accordance with DHHS guidelines, which should be done as per the below diagram:

SEQUENCE FOR REMOVING PPE

Begin PPE removal at the doorway or in the anteroom

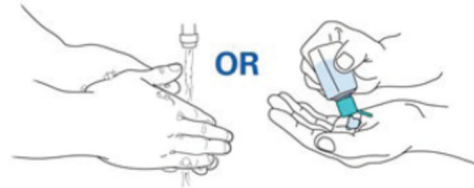
1. REMOVE GLOVES

- Outside of gloves is contaminated!
- Grasp outside of glove with opposite gloved hand; peel off.
- Hold removed glove in gloved hand.
- Slide fingers of ungloved hand under remaining glove at wrist.
- Peel glove off over first glove.
- Discard gloves in waste container.



2. PERFORM HAND HYGIENE

- Wash hands or use an alcohol based hand rub.



3. REMOVE GOWN

- Gown front and sleeves are contaminated!
- Unfasten ties.
- Pull away from neck and shoulders, touching inside of gown only.
- Turn gown inside out.
- Fold or roll into a bundle and discard.



Alternatively gloves and gown can be removed as one step. Then perform hand hygiene.
At a minimum, perform hand hygiene if the removed PPE is contaminated.

4. REMOVE PROTECTIVE EYEWEAR OR FACE SHIELD

- Outside of eye protection or face shield is contaminated!
- To remove, handle by head band or ear pieces.
- Place in designated receptacle for reprocessing or in waste container.



At a minimum, perform hand hygiene if the removed PPE is contaminated.

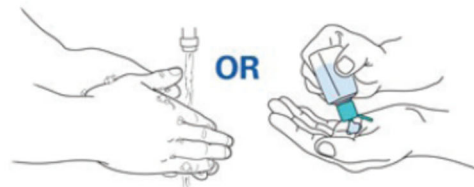
5. REMOVE MASK

- Front of mask is contaminated—DO NOT TOUCH!
- Grasp bottom, then top ties or elastics and remove.
- Discard in waste container.



6. PERFORM HAND HYGIENE

- Wash hands or use an alcohol based hand rub immediately after removing all PPE.



Adapted from CDC Guideline for Isolation Precautions^[213].

Cleaning staff should be advised to refrain from touching their face, mouth, nose, and eyes when wearing PPE and cleaning.

In line with the World Health Organisation recommendations, cleaners cleaning isolation areas should wear a mask, gown, heavy-duty gloves and closed work shoes/boots.

Masks

A surgical mask should be worn to minimise the risk of droplet transmission and to prevent staff from touching their face with contaminated hands.

Some general guidelines when using a mask:

- Perform hand hygiene:
 - prior to putting on a mask
 - prior to taking off a mask
 - after removing and disposing of mask
- Make sure masks cover the nose and mouth at all times
- Do not touch the mask while you have it on. If you do perform hand hygiene afterwards.
- Do not pull masks down and up to talk, eat or drink
- Masks can be worn for up to four hours but must be changed if they become damp, dirty or damaged
- Throw out disposable surgical masks and disposable gloves after use

Gowns

Ideally, single-use gown or aprons should be used although some gowns are able to be reused once they have undergone the appropriate laundering activities.

Gloves

Impermeable disposable gloves must be used when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. If reusable gloves are to be used, they should remain dedicated to cleaning and disinfecting surfaces for COVID-19 and not for any other purposes. They should be cleaned with hot water and detergent and dried between uses.

General guidelines

- Wash hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub prior to and after using gloves
- Use clean, non-sterile gloves upon entry into the isolation area
- Change gloves if they become torn or heavily contaminated
- Remove and discard gloves when leaving the isolation area and immediately perform hand hygiene.

Closed Work Shoes

Cleaners should wear closed work shoes to prevent accidents or contact with chemicals.

Protective Eyewear

Protective eyewear should be used to prevent the splashing of chemical solutions and minimise the risk of touching eyes with contaminated hands.

If single-use, then eye wear must be disposed of after use. If reusable, clean and disinfect before and after reusing.

Hand Hygiene

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) does not replace the need for appropriate hand hygiene. Washing hands with soap is the best way to achieve hand hygiene for COVID-19. Hands should be cleaned frequently and immediately after removing gloves. Alcohol-based hand rub or other hand sanitisers must not be applied to gloves.

For effective hand washing follow the steps below.

Protect yourself and your family

Wash your hands regularly



1

Wet your hands.

Put soap on
your hands.

2



3

Rub the soap over all
parts of your hands for
at least 20 seconds.



Rinse your
hands under
running water.

4



5

Dry your hands thoroughly
with disposable paper towel
or hand dryer.



Stay germ free and healthy

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