



COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Decontamination guidance for businesses

1. Background and scope of guidance

The guidance describes the cleaning required, the appropriate disposal of materials, the disinfection of equipment and hard surfaces, and the personal protective equipment (PPE) that should be worn.

Previous experience of new coronaviruses (SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV) has been used to inform this guidance. The risk of infection transmission depends on numerous factors, including the type of surfaces contaminated, the amount of virus shed from the individual, the time the individual spent in the setting and the time since the individual was last in the setting.

The infection risk from environmental contamination will decrease over time, but it is still unclear at what point there is no risk of transmission from the environment; however, studies of SARS and MERS suggest that, in most circumstances, the risk is likely to be reduced significantly after 72 hours.

2. Information about the virus

A coronavirus is a type of enveloped virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. COVID-19 is caused by a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in December 2019.

The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 and 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, they are unlikely to develop symptoms.

3. Signs and symptoms of COVID-19

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has COVID-19 infection: cough, difficulty in breathing, fever, headaches, general tiredness and muscle aches.

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.

4. How COVID-19 is spread

From what we know about other coronaviruses, transmission of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within 2 meters) with a symptomatic individual. It is likely that the risk of transmission increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.

Respiratory secretions produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes containing the virus are most likely to be the main means of transmission.

There are two main routes by which COVID-19 can be transmitted:



- infection can be spread to people through close contact (within 2 meters) with infected individuals and respiratory droplets generated during coughing and sneezing
- it is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface, object or the hand of an infected person that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching a door knob or shaking hands then touching own face)

5. How long the virus can survive

How long any respiratory virus survives will depend on a number of factors, for example: the surface the virus is on, whether it is exposed to sunlight, environmental conditions such as temperature and humidity and exposure to cleaning products.

Under most circumstances, the amount of infectious virus on any contaminated surfaces is likely to have decreased significantly by 72 hours.

We know that similar viruses are transferred to and by people's hands. Therefore, regular hand hygiene and cleaning of frequently touched surfaces will help to reduce the risk of infection.

6. Principles of environmental decontamination

All surfaces that are likely to have become contaminated, such as objects/surfaces which are visibly contaminated with body fluids, all potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells, arms on chairs, pens, light switches, counters, chairs, must be thoroughly cleaned between each customer/patient.

Use disposable wipes – approved product effective against SARS-CoV-2, to clean and disinfect all surfaces, or follow one of the options below, using disposable cloths/paper roll:

- use either a combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine – follow manufacturer's instructions or a bleach dilution calculator such as: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/health-topics/environmental-occupational-health/water-quality/chlorine-dilution-calculator>
- a household detergent, such as Flash, followed by disinfection (1,000 ppm available chlorine*). Follow manufacturer's instructions for dilution, application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants
- if an alternative disinfectant, such as Dettol, that has been proved to be effective against SARS-CoV-2, observing the manufacturer's instructions, mainly with regards to concentration and contact times

Avoid creating splashes and spray when cleaning.

Any cloths used must be disposed of and should be put into the waste bags immediately.

If the floor is visibly dirty, cleaned it immediately before seeing the next client/patient, using a choice of cleaning products as described above. Mop heads must not be re-used before being washed at a high temperature. Have a number available to allow for this.



Spillages of blood and body fluids should be managed in accordance with the organizations spillage policy, before cleaning and disinfection. If any items are heavily contaminated with body fluids and cannot be appropriately cleaned, consider discarding.

At least twice a day, you must decontaminate all areas, including toilets, frequently touched surfaces and floors.

Environmental cleaning and decontamination must be performed using a minimum of PPE – disposable gloves and apron.

7. Laundry

Use single use items as much as possible. Any items that require laundry must be washed at least at 60 degrees on a long cycle, and if possible tumble dried and ironed.

Items heavily soiled with body fluids should be disposed of immediately.

8. Waste

All waste arising from your professional practice, should be bagged, tied up and kept for a minimum of 72 hours before being left out for collection. This also applies for recyclable items.

9. Registers

In the event a positive COVID-19 is identified and linked to your business, you will be required to provide a full list of people visiting your premises, including staff, clients, delivery personnel, visitors and chaperones.

For further information on all aspects of the Coronavirus go to www.gov.gg/coronavirus

For health concerns call the Coronavirus helpline Tel 756938 or 756969