

Cleaning Work Areas Occupied by a Covid-19 Case

This document provides guidance for cleaning and disinfecting work spaces to be occupied after the department is notified of illness.

Guidance for cleaning and disinfecting

Routine cleaning and disinfecting is key to maintaining a safe environment for faculty, students, and staff.

Cleaning removes dirt and most germs and is usually done with soap and water.

Disinfecting kills germs if the product is used as directed on the label.

Routine cleaning and disinfecting

In public spaces, Facilities Management (FM) is performing [enhanced cleaning](#) in public spaces. For information, contact the FM call center at fmcc@umn.edu, or by phone at 4-2900, to be directed to your FM team manager.

In spaces that are not public, it is not necessary to routinely apply disinfectants to surfaces that are not high-touch or high-risk (e.g., floors, bookcases, tops of filing cabinets). Soft surfaces such as carpets, rugs, and drapes can be cleaned using soap and water or a cleaner appropriate for the material.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least daily. These may include:

- Door knobs and handles
- Stair rails
- Classroom desks and chairs
- Lunchroom tables and chairs
- Countertops
- Handrails
- Light switches
- Buttons on vending machines and elevators
- Shared remote controls
- Shared telephones
- Shared desktops
- Shared computer keyboards and mice

Note: Computer keyboards are difficult to clean. Shared computers should have signs posted instructing proper hand hygiene before and after using them to minimize disease transmission. To facilitate cleaning, consider using covers that protect the keys but enable use of the keys.



Cleaning Work Areas Occupied by a Covid-19 Case (cont.)

Guidance for cleaning and disinfecting work spaces to be occupied after a reported illness

1. If possible, leave the individual work area unoccupied for 7 days. After 7 days, the virus is no longer viable and regular cleaning is adequate.
2. If the area must be occupied within 7 days, leave it undisturbed for 1 day. After a day, clean all potentially soiled and high-touch surfaces and equipment with soap and water, and then disinfect them with an EPA-approved disinfectant or wipe. Allow for the contact time recommended by the manufacturer. The safety data sheet (SDS) and product label should indicate the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements and contact times. If there are questions about PPE contact UHS for consultation.
3. If there are multiple reports of illness in the same work area, or if the work area is difficult to clean, contact UHS for direction. For example, it is difficult to clean potentially infectious materials and body fluids – blood, vomit, feces, and urine. UHS will consult with the department and FM to arrange for comprehensive cleaning and disinfection.

Note

Respiratory protection for surface cleaning with wipes typically is not necessary. Other protective equipment may include nitrile gloves and eye protection such as use of a face shield or goggles.

Clothing worn while cleaning should be placed in a plastic bag until it can be laundered. Laundering should be done as soon as possible and can be done safely at home.

These guidelines are subject to change based on new information or direction from CDC, MDH, or the University

Additional Resources

[EPA Approved Disinfectant](#) - EPA

[Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection](#) - CDC

[Guidance on Preparing the Workplace for COVID-19](#) - OSHA

[COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidance for Institutes of Higher Education](#) - MDH

[U Market](#) - EPA-listed products available

[Facilities Management Custodial Services](#) - FM