



COVID-19 Sanitation Guidelines and Cleaning Schedule for Child Care and Early Learning Settings

Purpose

This guidance provides recommendations on the cleaning and disinfection of rooms or areas used for Emergency Child Care and other Early Learning programs, and is based on CDC recommendations for rooms and areas used by individuals with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases. It is aimed at limiting the survival of novel coronavirus in key environments where it can spread. These recommendations will be updated if additional information becomes available.

How to Clean and Disinfect Surfaces

- Wear disposable gloves.
- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- Use [EPA-registered household disinfectant](#) and follow instructions on the label (e.g. concentration, application method, and contact time, etc.).
- Alternatively, diluted household bleach solutions should be effective.
- Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Do not mix bleach or other cleaning and disinfection products together. This can cause fumes that may be very dangerous to breathe. Keep all disinfectants out of the reach of children.
- Mix water with bleach using instructions on the bleach bottle. Leave diluted bleach mixture on the surface for at least one minute.
- For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes, remove visible contamination if present and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces. After cleaning:
 - If the items can be laundered, launder items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and then dry items completely.
 - Otherwise, use products that have been approved by the [EPA for use against SARS-CoV-2](#) that are suitable for porous surfaces.
- High touch surfaces, such as doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, should be disinfected or sanitized frequently. For more information on the appropriate approach see the table on page 5.

Linens, clothing, and other items that go in the laundry

- Wear disposable gloves.

- Do not shake dirty laundry.
- Launder items according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
- Dirty laundry from an ill person can be washed with other people's items.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to guidance above for surfaces.
- Wash items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely.
- Wash hands with soap and water as soon as you remove the gloves.

Electronics

- For electronics, such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls.
- Consider putting a wipeable cover on electronics.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfecting.
- If no guidance, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol. Dry surfaces thoroughly.

Toys

- Collect toys as they become dirty throughout the day.
- "Mouthed" toys – after each use by a child.
- All other toys – daily, or as needed.
- Sort toys into separate containers: one for cloth and stuffed toys and one for wood and plastic toys. Sorting the toys ahead of time will make it easier to wash and sanitize them.
- At the end of the day, or at a specified time (i.e. naptime), clean, rinse and sanitize toys.
- You can use a washing machine, dishwasher, or wash toys by hand.

Washing toys by hand

Step 1: Clean

- Wash and scrub toys thoroughly with soap or detergent and warm water to remove most of the dirt, grime, and saliva. ***This is the most important step in cleaning toys.***
- It is important to clean toys before sanitizing them because the sanitizer kills germs better on clean surfaces.

Step 2: Rinse

- Rinse toys with water to remove the dirt, soap residue, and germs to help make a clean surface.

Step 3: Sanitize

- Sanitizing reduces the germs from surfaces to levels that are considered safe.

- Dip or cover sufficiently with spray the toys in a solution of chlorine bleach; refer to “Method for Mixing Bleach” for the correct proportions. Protect your skin by wearing household rubber gloves.
- Allow toys to dry completely (i.e. overnight) or allow a 2-minute contact time before wiping toys dry with a paper towel.
- Chlorine from the sanitizing bleach solution evaporates off the toys so no residue remains, and further rinsing is not necessary.

Washing toys in a dishwasher

- Some HARD toys such as wood, plastic or metal may be washed in a dishwasher. Check instructions on toy.
- Use the proper amount of dishwasher detergent recommended by manufacturer.
- Run toys through the complete wash and dry cycle.
- Do not wash toys with dirty dishes, utensils, etc.

Washing toys in a washing machine

- Many SOFT toys made of fabric, such as stuffed animals, rattles, and dress-up clothes may be washed in a washing machine. Check instructions on toy.
- Use HOT water and detergent.
- Dry toys completely in a hot dryer when possible.

Specific Guidance for Registered Family and Certified Family homes

- Spaces should be cleaned between times when household members utilize the space and times when a group of children utilize the space.
- Wash items used for child care separate from items used by family or household members.

For more information, see “Recommended Cleaning Schedule” on pages 4-5.

Recommended Cleaning Schedule for Emergency Child Care Settings

Task	Sanitize	Disinfect	Daily	Weekly	Before & After Each Use	Comments:
Child Care Areas						
Door & cabinet handles		X	X			At the end of the day.
Drinking fountains		X	X*			Recommended not to use, instead use personal drinking cups or water bottles.
Mouthed toys	X				X*	Removed from use after it has been in contact with mouth, then cleaned and sanitized prior to reuse.
Pacifiers	X		X*			Should be cleaned with soap and water between uses by same child. Sanitized either by boiling in hot water or washing in dishwasher once daily. Pacifiers should never be shared.
Cloth toys & dress-up clothes	X		X			Sanitized with bleach according to equipment manufacturer's instructions or washed above 140°F.
Hats & helmets	X				X	After each child's use.
Infant & toddler toys	X		X*			
Preschool & school age toys	X		X*			Site specific cleaning schedule must be developed and followed.
Upholstered furniture			X*			Vacuum daily when children are not present. Clean as needed using a carpet shampoo machine, or steam cleaner. For infant rooms, clean at least once per month.
Garbage cans		X	X*			
Rugs & carpets			X*			Vacuum daily when children are not present. Clean as needed using a carpet shampoo machine or steam cleaner. For infant rooms, clean at least once per month.
Floors (tile, linoleum, etc.)	X*		X			Sweep or vacuum, then sanitize .
Floors, carpets, rugs, or surfaces with bodily fluid or spit-up		X	X*			Children should be moved from area contaminated prior to cleaning and disinfecting with either high heat or an EPA registered product. Children should not return to carpeted areas until dry.
Sleeping Areas						
Cribs, cots, mattresses, & mats	X		X*			Clean and sanitize before use by different child.
Laundry - Bedding: sheets, blankets, sleep sacks, etc.	X			X*		Should be done on-site or by a commercial service (i.e. not washed in a private home). Sanitized with bleach according to equipment manufacturer's instructions or washed above 140°F.

Task	Sanitize	Disinfect	Daily	Weekly	Before & After Each Use	Comments:
Toileting and Diaper Areas						
Handwashing sinks, counters, toilets, toilet handles, & floors		X	X*			Clean immediately if visibly soiled.
Changing tables		X			X	After each use.
Potty chairs		X			X	After each use.
Diaper trash cans		X	X			Emptied throughout the day.
Bathroom floors		X	X*			Disinfectant is not used on floors when children are present.
Food Areas						
Refrigerator/ freezer	X			X		
Eating utensils, bottles, & dishes	X				X	After each use.
Kitchen counters	X				X*	
Food preparation surfaces	X				X	
Food preparation sinks	X		X			
Kitchen equipment: blenders, can openers, pots & pans, cutting boards	X				X*	After each use.
Tables & high chair trays	X				X	
High chairs	X		X			
Kitchen floors	X		X			Swept, washed, rinsed and sanitized .
Other Cleaning Items						
Mops		X	X			Cleaned, rinsed and disinfected in utility sink. Air dried in an area with ventilation to the outside & inaccessible to children.
Laundry - Bibs & burp cloths	X				X	Sanitized with bleach according to equipment manufacturer's instructions or washed above 140°F.
Spray bottles of soap, rinse water & bleach solutions		X	X			See bleach solution preparation procedure above for where to clean bottles.

The 3-Step Method is 1. WASH, 2. RINSE, and 3. SANITIZE or DISINFECT

- **Sanitizing** solution is used to reduce germs from surfaces but not totally get rid of them. **Sanitizers** reduce the germs from surfaces to levels that are considered safe. The **sanitizing** 3- step method is most often used for food surfaces, kitchens, and classrooms.
- **Disinfecting** solution is used to destroy or inactivate germs and prevent them from growing. **Disinfectants** are regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The **disinfecting** 3- step method is most often used for body fluids and bathrooms/diapering areas.

***At times it may be necessary to clean, rinse, and sanitize/disinfect more frequently.**

****This guidance is adapted from [Cleaning Schedule](#), King County Health Department, 2019.**