

# Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID – 19)

## Background

There is much to learn about the novel coronavirus that causes coronavirus disease 2019. Based on what is currently known about the novel coronavirus and similar coronavirus that cause SARS and MERS, spread from person-to-person with these viruses happens most frequently among close contacts (within 6 feet). This type of transmission occurs via respiratory droplets.

On the other hand, transmission of novel coronavirus to persons from surfaces contaminated with the virus has not been documented. Current evidence suggests the novel coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practise measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in households and community settings.

## Purpose

This guidance provides recommendations on the cleaning and disinfection of households where persons under investigation (PUI) or those with confirmed COVID-19 reside or may be in self-isolation. It is aimed at limiting the survival of the virus in the environments. The recommendations will be updated if new additional information becomes available.

These guidelines are focused on household settings and are meant for the general public.

### **Cleaning refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces.**

Cleaning does not kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

### **Disinfecting refers to using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces.**

This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing the germs on a surface after cleaning, it can lower the risk of spreading infection.

## Cleaning Verification

While methods to clean and sanitize surfaces and equipment in healthcare, commercial, institutional and residential properties vary the need to measure the effectiveness of cleaning practices.

The detection of adenosine triphosphate (ATP), the universal unit of energy in all living cells, immediately determines if surfaces are truly clean.

## How to Clean and Disinfect:

### Surfaces

- A) All cleaning and disinfecting shall be done in a safe professional manner.
- B) ACCESS THE RISK of the exposure to the body substances or contaminated surfaces. Access all cleaning and disinfecting activities to determine the personal protective equipment needed.
- C) Proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) shall be worn to limit exposure to environmental hazards.
- D) Wear disposable gloves when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. Gloves shall be discarded after each cleaning. Consult the manufacture's instruction for cleaning and disinfection products used.
- E) Clean hands immediately after gloves are removed.
- F) If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- G) For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and most common EPA – registered household disinfectants should be effective.
- H) Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g. concentration, application, method and contact time)

### Clothing, Towels, Linens, and other items that go in the laundry

- A) Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry from an ill person and then discard after each use. Discard gloves after each use.
- B) Launder items as appropriate in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for these items and dry items completely.
- C) Clean and disinfect cloths hampers according to guidance above for surfaces.