

Environmental Services Best Practices – General Cleaning Principles

Personal Care/Group/Residential Homes

Definitions

Cleaning: The physical removal of foreign material (e.g., dust, soil) and organic material (e.g., blood, secretions, excretions, microorganisms). Cleaning physically removes rather than kills microorganisms. It is accomplished with water, detergents and mechanical action.

Disinfecting: The inactivation of disease-producing microorganisms. Disinfection does not destroy bacterial spores. Medical equipment/devices must be cleaned thoroughly before effective disinfection can take place.

Cleaning Process

Proceed only after a visual preliminary site assessment to determine if:

- resident status could pose a challenge to safe cleaning
- there is any need for additional PPE or supplies (e.g., if there are any spills of blood/body fluids or if the resident is on additional precautions)
- there are any obstacles (e.g., clutter) or issues that could pose a challenge to safe cleaning
- there is any damaged or broken furniture or surfaces to be reported to supervisor/management

Proceed from Cleaner to Dirtier

Proceed **from cleaner to dirtier** areas to avoid spreading dirt and microorganisms.

Examples include:

- During cleaning, clean low-touch surfaces before high-touch surfaces
- Clean resident living areas (e.g., bed, chair) before toilets
- Clean general resident areas not under additional precautions before those areas under additional precautions

Proceed from High to Low (Top to Bottom)

Proceed from **high to low** to prevent dirt and microorganisms from dripping or falling and contaminating already cleaned areas. Examples include:

- cleaning bed rails before bed legs
- cleaning environmental surfaces before cleaning floors
- cleaning floors last to allow collection of dirt and microorganisms that may have fallen

Immediately Attend to Body Fluid Spills – see separate procedure