

CLEANING MEDICAL OFFICES IN THE ERA OF COVID-19

Advice for Environmental Service Workers



Cleaning and disinfection are important for stopping the spread of COVID-19. This is especially true in clinics and medical offices where at-risk patients may be exposed to the virus. *These guidelines are meant for environmental service (EVS) workers who will be cleaning clinics and medical offices.*

HOW SHOULD OFFICES AND MEDICAL EQUIPMENT BE CLEANED?

- Offices and equipment should be cleaned on a **regular schedule**.
- Follow **all the cleaning and disinfection procedures** that were used before COVID-19.
 - **Pre-clean** frequently touched and visibly dirty surfaces with **soap and water**.
 - **Read the label** of all cleaners and disinfectants to find out how long the surface should be **visibly wet** in order to kill any viruses or bacteria.
 - Disinfect reusable medical equipment according to **manufacturer guidelines**.

WHAT SHOULD BE USED TO CLEAN OFFICES?

The EPA has a **list of disinfectants** that can kill SARS-CoV-2, the virus causing COVID-19. EVS workers can check to see if their cleaning agents are on this list.

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

WHAT TYPE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) SHOULD EVS WORKERS WEAR?

When cleaning a clinic or medical office:

- Workers should **wear gloves** while cleaning.
 - **Disposable gloves** should be changed after each cleaning.
 - Workers using **reusable gloves** should have one pair for cleaning areas exposed to COVID-19 and a **different pair** for everything else.
- Workers should **always wash their hands** after taking off their gloves.

When cleaning after a COVID-19 patient leaves:

- Workers should **wait at least 70 minutes** (1 hour and 10 minutes) after the patient leaves before entering the room. This allows the virus to settle out of the air.
- Workers should then wear a **gown, gloves, and facemask** while in the room. They should add eye protection if they might be splashed while cleaning.

*When cleaning the same room as a COVID-19 patient**:*

- Workers should **speak with their supervisor** before going into the same room as a COVID-19 patient to decide if it's really necessary.
- Workers should wear **the same PPE as a doctor or nurse** if they need to go into the room.

The CDC says hospitals and clinics should **limit the number of people who go into the room of a COVID-19 patient.

The NC AHEC Program would like to acknowledge the valuable contributions of Kaitlyn Rogers, Sarah Brnich, Mary Shell, Madison Malfitano, Rachel Swier.