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US Hospitality, Food Service, and Retail Response Guidance for facilities that had individuals with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases

Below is a collection of considerations and guidance from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) for US based Hospitality, Food Service, and Retail businesses and employers as it relates to the COVID-19 outbreak. Interim recommendations for US retail, institutional and manufactured food facilities with suspected/confirmed COVID-19 can be found at [\[1\]](#).

Actions immediately after notification

All areas used by the ill person(s) should be cleaned and disinfected with special attention to the frequently touched surfaces such as light switches, doorknobs, keyboards, equipment screens and controls, etc.

- If possible, close off the area(s) used by the individual with COVID-19 as long as possible before cleaning and disinfecting. The virus that causes COVID-19 only lives for a limited time on surfaces (up to 4-5 days). This delay will allow the virus to inactivate on its own and will help keep staff safe during disinfection.
 - If possible, wait at least 24 hours before initiating the disinfection process.
- If possible, open outside windows and/or increase HVAC output to increase air exchange with outside air.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and recommendations for workers cleaning and disinfecting under these conditions

- Wear gloves compatible with cleaning chemicals.
- Wear disposable or launderable gowns, coats, or smocks with sleeves
 - Don any additional PPE required for the chemicals being used to clean and disinfect.
- Consult the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for the chemical to be sure that the proper PPE to handle the chemical is being used. This is particularly important if a concentrated chemical is being diluted by hand rather than through a closed loop dispensing system.
- Cleaning/Disinfection staff should wash hands often while cleaning.
- Staff should wash their hands after removing their gloves and especially after they are done cleaning the areas where the infected individual had been.

Disinfection process for hard non-food contact surfaces

If surfaces are not visibly dirty, start at step 3.

1. Wash with degreaser or detergent cleaner.
2. Rinse with potable water.
3. Apply disinfectant. Note: Disinfectant must remain wet for the entire contact time listed on the product label. Check the product as contact times differ. It may be necessary to re-apply the disinfectant, especially for longer contact times. Common contact times are 1, 5, and 10 minutes.

Reminder: Never clean with chlorine and ammonia containing products at the same time. The resulting vapor can be harmful to health.

Disinfection process for food contact surfaces

Not all food contact surfaces need to be disinfected. Identify those surfaces used or likely used by the suspected/confirmed COVID-19 employee for disinfection. The process for disinfection of these surfaces is as follows:

1. Pre-clean to remove gross soil, if needed; otherwise, start at step 4.
2. Wash with degreaser or detergent cleaner
3. Rinse with potable water.
4. Apply disinfectant. Note: Disinfectant must remain wet for the entire contact time listed on the product label. Check the product as contact times differ per product. It may be necessary to re-apply the disinfectant, especially for longer contact times. Common contact times are 1, 5, and 10 minutes.
5. Rinse with potable water.
6. Apply sanitizer.
7. Allow surface to drain and air dry.

Disinfection of launderable soft surfaces

Launderable items (for example linens or towels) should be washed at the highest temperature available for those items according manufacturer's instructions. Handling guidance is as follows:

- Avoid shaking linen to minimize dispersing virus through the air.
- Dirty linen that has been in contact with people positive for COVID-19 can be laundered with other linen.
- Clean and disinfect hampers or other linen containers as described in the process for hard non-food contact surfaces.
- Reminder: Cleaning/Disinfection staff should wash hands often while cleaning.
- Reminder: Staff should wash their hands after removing their gloves and especially after they are done cleaning the areas where the infected individual had been.

Decontamination of soft, porous, non-launderable surfaces (carpet, furniture, coats, etc.)

Contamination of soft, porous surfaces due to viruses must be controlled with a disinfectant. However, there are no EPA-registered disinfectants approved for disinfecting soft, porous surfaces. Currently, the EPA only allows soft surface sanitizing claims against vegetative bacteria. Below are recommendations from OSHA to use when dealing with viral contamination related to human norovirus, a tougher virus to inactivate compared to SARS-CoV-2 which causes COVID-19 [2].

1. Remove gross soils, if needed; otherwise start at step 3.

2. Clean using appropriate carpet or furniture cleaners.
3. Surfaces should be heated to 70°C (145° F) for 5 minutes or 100°C (212°F) for 1 minute. Hot water extraction or steam cleaning are common tools used to achieve these temperatures for non-launderable items.

If high temperature treatment is not an option, consider storing smaller objects for 2 weeks until the risk of virus viability has passed.

The EPA released a revised list of EPA-registered disinfectants effective against SARS-CoV-2 on March 13, 2020. Those products can be found here: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

The EPA still encourages use of products with an emerging viral pathogen claim. However, if those are not available or backordered, other products with a human coronavirus claim can be used in an emerging viral pathogen claim product's absence. Please note not all products are easily found on EPA's List N. Ask your chemical supplier for a list of all SKUs available from EPA's List N.

References:

1. US Centers for Disease Control Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>
2. OSHA Fact sheet: noroviruses <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/norovirus-factsheet.html>