

Cleaning and Disinfection in the School Setting

This guidance outlines infection control recommendations, in addition to strategies for all Maricopa County K - 12 schools¹ to respond to community spread of coronavirus disease-2019 (COVID-19).

CLEANING VS. DISINFECTING:

- **Cleaning** with soap (or detergent) and water reduces the number of germs, dirt, and impurities on surfaces. Clean visibly dirty surfaces with soap and water prior to disinfection.
- **Disinfecting** kills germs on surfaces.²

DEVELOP YOUR PLAN:

- **Determine what needs to be cleaned**
 - Areas unoccupied for 7 or more days need only routine cleaning according to your usual cleaning protocols. Maintain existing cleaning practices for outdoor areas.
- **Determine how areas will be disinfected**
 - Consider the type of surface and how often the surface is touched.
 - Prioritize disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.
- **Determine how often** surfaces and areas need to be cleaned and/or disinfected.
- **Clearly state who** will be responsible for different areas needing cleaning and disinfecting.
- **Consider the resources and equipment needed.**
 - Keep in mind the availability of cleaning and disinfectant products and personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate for individuals performing the cleaning.

IMPLEMENT YOUR PLAN:

- **Clean visibly dirty surfaces** with soap (or detergent) and water prior to disinfection.
- **Use the appropriate cleaning or disinfectant product.**
 - Use **EPA-approved disinfectant products** shown to be effective against COVID-19.
- Always **follow** the directions on the label.
 - The label will include safety information and application instructions.
 - Keep disinfectants out of the reach of children and in a well-ventilated area.
- Periodically **review and revise** your plan as needed.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING OUTDOOR AREAS:

- Outdoor areas, like playgrounds in schools and parks generally require normal routine cleaning, but do not require disinfection.
 - **Do not spray disinfectant on outdoor playgrounds-** it is not an efficient use of supplies and is not proven to reduce risk of COVID-19 to the public.
 - **High-touch surfaces made of plastic or metal**, such as grab bars and railings, should be cleaned routinely.

¹ Preschools associated with K-12 schools should follow the guidance for Child Care Centers

² CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/clean-disinfect-hygiene.html>



- **Cleaning and disinfection of wooden surfaces** (play structures, benches, tables) or groundcovers (mulch, sand) is not recommended.
- Sidewalks and roads should not be disinfected.
 - Spread of COVID-19 from these surfaces is very low and disinfection is not effective.

WHEN CLEANING:

- Regular cleaning staff can clean and disinfect community spaces.
 - Ensure they are trained on appropriate use of cleaning and disinfection chemicals.
- Wear disposable gloves and gowns for all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash.
 - Additional personal protective equipment (PPE) might be required based on the cleaning/disinfectant products being used and whether there is a risk of splash.
 - Gloves and gowns should be removed carefully to avoid contamination of the wearer and the surrounding area.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds.
 - Always wash immediately after removing gloves and after contact with a person who is sick.
- Hand sanitizer: If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol may be used. However, if hands are visibly dirty, always wash hands with soap and water.

WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE IS SYMPTOMATIC:

If a person **develops any symptoms consistent with COVID-19** that are **not known** to be a part of a chronic condition (e.g., asthma, allergies), **school staff should:**

- **Immediately separate** the person(s) who appear to have symptoms upon arrival to school or who become sick during the day. Symptomatic individuals should be sent home.
- Have a procedure in place for the **safe transport** of a student or staff member who becomes sick while at school. The individual may need to be taken home or to a healthcare provider.
- **Conduct cleaning and disinfection procedures.**
 - If it has been less than 7 days since the sick employee has been in the facility, close off any areas used for prolonged periods of time by the sick person.
 - Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting to minimize potential for other employees being exposed to respiratory droplets.
- If waiting 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.

Symptoms consistent with COVID-19:

- Fever (>100.4°F)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- New loss of taste or smell



EXAMPLES OF FREQUENTLY TOUCHED SURFACES IN SCHOOLS:

- Classroom desks and chairs
- Lunchroom tables and chairs
- Door handles and push plates
- Handrails
- Kitchen and bathroom faucets
- Light switches
- Handles on equipment (e.g., athletic equipment)
- Buttons on vending machines and elevators
- Shared telephones
- Shared desktops
- Shared computer keyboards and mice
- Bus seats and handrails

Note: Computer keyboards are difficult to clean due to the spaces between keys and the sensitivity of its hardware to liquids. When shared, they may contribute to indirect transmission.

- Locations with community-use computers should post signs regarding proper hand hygiene and make hand sanitizer readily available before and after using the computers to minimize disease transmission.
- Consider using keyboard covers to protect the hardware against spills and to facilitate cleaning.