



## SARS-CoV-2 – the virus causing COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

### Cleaning guidance for accommodations hosting critical workers and/or individuals self-isolating

#### 1. What is SARS-CoV-2?

SARS-CoV-2 is the name of a newly discovered virus. It is a type of coronavirus, named for the crown-like spikes on its surface, and causes the illness known as COVID-19. Coronaviruses cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome

Coronaviruses are zoonotic, meaning they are transmitted between animals and people and cannot be treated using antibiotics. They cannot grow outside the body but can live in the environment for long periods of time.

#### 2. Symptoms of COVID-19 illness

SARS-CoV-2 has an incubation period of 1-14 days. The incubation period refers to the time that the virus will be in the body before any symptoms of COVID-19 illness are experienced.

The symptoms of COVID-19 illness that you should be aware of are:

- New and severe fatigue (tiredness)
- New muscle ache for no obvious reason
- Headache (sinus pain, pain around the eyes)
- Loss of smell or taste
- Sore throat
- Fever (high temperature, rigors, chills, can't get warm)
- Shortness of breath, chest tightness
- Continuous new cough
- Children and over 80s – loose stool, mild fever, not feeling themselves with a cough presenting later

If any staff or visitors start to experience **any** symptoms, no matter how mild, please contact the Clinical Helpline by calling 01481 756938 or 01481 756969.

#### 3. How SARS-CoV-2 is spread

The virus spreads in two ways:

- It is mainly transmitted via small respiratory droplets, through sneezing, coughing or when people interact with each other for some time in close proximity (usually less than one



metre apart). The droplets can be inhaled or land on surfaces that others come into contact with and then infect themselves when they touch their nose, mouth or eyes.

The virus can survive on some surfaces, such as copper and cardboard, for several hours and on other surfaces, such as plastic and stainless steel, for a few days.

#### **4. Preventing an Outbreak**

SARS-CoV-2 can spread very easily from person to person or via surfaces, causing outbreaks over a period of time if containment measures are not put in place.

It is advised that any critical workers and/or individuals self-isolating should be treated as a potential case of COVID-19 and appropriate cleaning of their accommodation be taken to prevent transmission of the virus.

The following issues are important in helping control the potential spread of the virus and should form the basis of the procedures that you devise and implement.

##### **i) Waste disposal (including disposable cloths and tissues):**

- Should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full.
- The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied.
- It should be put in a suitable and secure place and marked for storage until the individual's test results are known.
- Waste should be stored safely and kept away from children. You should not put your waste in communal waste areas until negative test results are known or the waste has been stored for at least 72 hours.
- If the individual tests negative, this can be put in with the normal waste
- If the individual tests positive, then store it for at least 72 hours and put in with the normal waste
- If storage for at least 72 hours is not appropriate, arrange for collection as a Category B infectious waste - please contact the Office of Environmental Health and Pollution Regulation for advice on 01481 711161 or envhealth@gov.gg.

##### **ii) Cleaning Procedures**

Before entering the room, wash your hands, then put on a disposable plastic apron and gloves. If a risk assessment indicates that a higher level of contamination may be present or there is visible contamination with body fluids, then the need for additional protective equipment such as a fluid resistant surgical mask, and eye protection should be considered.

- Collect all cleaning equipment and healthcare waste bags before entering the room;



- The person responsible for undertaking the cleaning with detergent and disinfectant should be trained in the process;
- Open windows and allow air to circulate for as long as possible before starting cleaning;
- Remove all waste and any other disposable items and disposed them off immediately as per guidance above;
- Do not shake linen and avoid all necessary agitation. Remove and put in red laundry bag immediately, don't leave it on the floor;
- Clean all surfaces, beds and bathrooms with a neutral detergent, followed by a standard strength chlorine-based disinfectant \*;
- Dedicated or disposable equipment (such as mop heads, cloths) must be used for environmental decontamination and disposed as clinical waste – in clinical waste bag (yellow);
- Reusable equipment (such as mop handles, buckets) must be decontaminated after use with a chlorine-based disinfectant \* as described above.

#### \* Bleach and Sterilising Liquids

There are many cleaning chemicals available which contain bleach (sodium hypochlorite). Choose one which is at least 4% sodium hypochlorite and dilute it as follows:

- Strong bleach solution: For surfaces visibly contaminated with body fluids a strong cleaning solution is needed (10,000 parts per million). Use 250ml bleach in one litre of water.
- Standard bleach solution: For all other cleaning 1000 parts per million is recommended. To achieve this add 25ml bleach to one litre of water.

Make up the solution immediately before you need to use it, and dispose of it after use as it becomes less effective after a few hours.

#### Materials and equipment needed

- |   |                           |                                    |
|---|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Goggles   | • Bleach                  | • Plastic scraper                  |
| • Mask  | • Clinical waste bags     | • Buckets                          |
| • Gloves (Disposable)   | • Small plastic bags      | • Mist Spray                       |
| • Disposable (single use) boiler suits, including shoe covers | • Disposable paper towels | • Cleaning clothes                 |
|   |                           | • Detergent (for general cleaning) |

Protective equipment must be put on before going into the affected area to clean. This is necessary not only to protect the wearer against the chemicals they are using, but also to protect them from the virus and to avoid getting it on their clothes from which it can be spread.

#### Hard surfaces



- Cover any visible bodily fluids with absorbent paper towels (on hard surfaces the paper towel can be soaked in the 10,000ppm chlorine solution or sterilising liquid). Envelop the solid material in the paper towel.
- Place the paper towels in small plastic bags and tie the neck to seal. Place the small plastic bags in yellow clinical waste bags, or sturdy plastic bags tied at the neck.
- Clean all surfaces in the affected location with hot water and detergent.
- Disinfect with undiluted bleach.

**For hard surfaces that have not been heavily soiled standard bleach solution may be used.**

**Leave to air-dry where possible otherwise leave for a contact time of at least 15 minutes before rinsing and drying thoroughly with clean paper towels.**

#### Soft furnishings

- Remove visible contamination with paper towels, and double bag as stated above. Clean with hot water and detergent.
- **Use a reliable steam cleaner on the surfaces, (i.e. one that produces steam at the outlet point) or where there is no concern about bleaching colours, use the bleach solution.**

Where there has been visible contamination with body fluids of difficult to clean items such as carpet, soft furnishings, cushions and mattresses, they should be disposed of. The steam cleaner must be properly cleaned out after use. Washable items should be laundered on as hot a cycle as possible and then tumble dried. These should be kept separately in bags in the laundry room/area until they are washed.

#### WCs and pipework

- Close the toilet lid and flush several times. Clean any visible contamination using hot water and detergent.
- Ensure all areas including lids, handles and bathroom accessories are thoroughly cleaned using undiluted bleach. Allow to air dry for at least 15 minutes before rinsing all contact areas.
- Dispose of paper towels as clinical waste, or securely double bagged.
- Remove any towels, bath mats etc. (in sealed plastic bags) and launder.

**For daily cleaning a standard bleach solution may be used.**



**Leave to air-dry where possible otherwise leave for a contact time of at least 15 minutes before rinsing and drying thoroughly with clean paper towels.**

#### Wash hand basins

- If appropriate, remove the plug from the plug hole.
- Cover any soiling with paper towels and gently turn on the cold tap to rinse away as much contamination as possible. Thoroughly clean the area with hot water and detergent.
- Wipe the surfaces with paper towels soaked in undiluted bleach or sterilising liquid. Leave to air dry for at least 15 minutes before rinsing.
- Dispose of used paper towels as clinical waste.
- Discard nailbrushes and bar soap. Clean the exterior of liquid soap dispensers and wall mounted hand dryers, if applicable.

**For daily cleaning a standard bleach solution may be used.**

**Leave to air-dry where possible otherwise leave for a contact time of at least 15 minutes before rinsing and drying thoroughly with clean paper towels.**

#### Kitchen

- Any open food or contaminated packaging must be thrown away and the area thoroughly washed with hot water and detergent then treated with bleach or sterilising liquid.
- All crockery, cutlery, salt and pepper dispensers must be put through the dishwasher immediately. They must not be left in the kitchen or in any area near to food preparation.
- Items used for cleaning, such as buckets, must not be taken into the kitchen. Staff must be reminded to remove and bag their over-clothing after cleaning an area that has been used by a critical workers and/or individuals self-isolating.
- All contact surfaces must also be cleaned, such as door handles, hand rails, lift buttons, light switches and remote controls.

**For daily cleaning a standard bleach solution may be used.**

#### Laundry (where applicable)

- Bedding, clothing and soft furnishings (such as curtains and cushion covers) which have been directly soiled or, could have been contaminated by airborne droplets where a visitor has been sick must be treated as contaminated material. Staff should wear suitable



protective clothing, including gloves, masks, boiler suits and foot covers when handling soiled laundry.

- Linen must be removed from the bed with care to avoid the creation of dust and placed in a disposable red laundry bag or bin bag. Clothing must be treated similarly. The bag must be securely tied at the neck before being placed in the washable red laundry bag and must be transferred carefully to the laundry, avoiding any damage being caused to the bag. These bags should be kept separate from 'used' linen and clothing. Laundry chutes and storage areas must be regularly cleaned with a standard bleach solution to avoid the creation of a reservoir of infection.
- It is recommended that 'used' linen be laundered first, followed by the contaminated items contained within the bin bags. These should be transferred into the washer directly and the plastic bag carefully withdrawn and disposed of.
- The washer should be capable of maintaining a temperature within the load of 65°C (150°C) for not less than 10 minutes, or preferably at 71°C (160°F) for not less than 3 minutes. For conventional machines at least 4 minutes mixing time must be added to these times with up to 8 minutes if the machine is heavily loaded. The hottest available cycle is necessary for foul linen.
- The linen should be dried (preferably by tumble drying as the heat will help eliminate any viruses that remain) ironed and stored in a separate area from the washing facilities to avoid cross contamination. Staff should not handle dirty linen then go to iron clothes etc without first changing and washing their hands.

## **5. Miscellaneous advice**

- It is recommended that alcohol wipes, or a similar alcohol based hand cleaner, be placed at convenient locations around the premises, particularly at entrance and exit doors. Alcohol gel in the form of hand sanitizer, with a minimum concentration of 70% should also be made available in public areas (if available).
- Good personal hygiene, especially hand washing with soap and warm water and respiratory etiquette must be maintained throughout.
- Please note that alcohol based hand sanitizers and alcohol based wipes are not effective against gastrointestinal viruses such as norovirus (causes outbreaks of vomiting and diarrhoea, particularly in the winter months). Hand washing with water and soap and detergent wipes/bleach should be used in this case.



For further information on all aspects of the Coronavirus go to [www.gov.gg/coronavirus](http://www.gov.gg/coronavirus)

For general health concerns call the Coronavirus Helpline Tel 01481 756938 or 01481 756969 or your  
GP surgery