

The Government of The Bahamas



A Reopening Guidance Document for Cleaning & Disinfection of Public Spaces, Work Places, Businesses, Schools & Homes

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (DEHS)
MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT & HOUSING

June 2020

Submitted by:
Anthony Ryan, Public Analyst II



Tel.: (242) 322-8037

Department of Environmental Health Services
Farrington Road
P.O. Box SS-19048
Nassau, The Bahamas

DEHS//11/1

31st. May, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

u.f.s. Mr. Cates

Permanent Secretary – Ministry of the Environment & Housing

u.f.s Ms. Melony Mckenzie

Director – Department of Environmental Health Services

RE: Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Work Places, Businesses, Schools and Homes

Please be advised that in concurrence with the findings of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and information relevant to our country with regard to the above captioned subject matter, this Guidance Document has been devised.

This Document is meant to guide the cleaning and disinfecting of Public Spaces, Work Places, Businesses, Schools and Homes in an effective, efficient, responsible and continuous manner. Note however as new information pertaining to SARS-COV-2 virus is obtained, this Document will be updated in kind.

See the following CDC website for more information on reopening Guidelines
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>

Sincerely,

Anthony Ryan (Mr.)
Public Analyst II

/ar

CONTENT

Key Abbreviations:

Key Definitions:

Available Cleaning & Disinfection Training:

Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Work Places, Businesses, Schools and Homes

- Development of a plan
- Implementation of that plan
- Maintenance and revision of the plan

Disinfectants

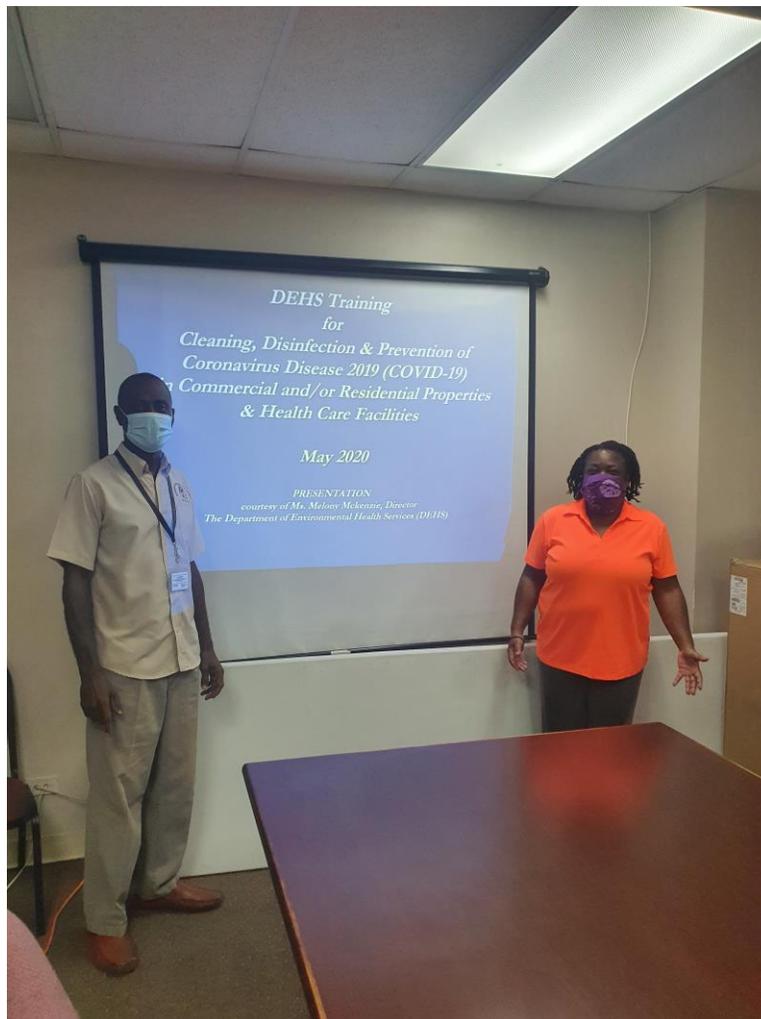
Acknowledgement

KEY ABBREVIATIONS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC – Centers for Disease Control & Prevention • COVID – 19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019 • DEHS – Department of Environmental Health Services • PPE – Personal Protective Equipment • SARS-COV-2 – Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 • USEPA – United States Environmental Protection Agency

KEY DEFINITIONS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. It does not kill germs but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection. • Disinfecting refers to use of chemicals, for example, EPA-registered disinfectants, to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection. • Hard Surfaces refer to a combination of porous and nonporous materials. Common hard-surface materials are stainless steel, solid surface, laminate, porcelain), some of the more common porous surfaces include laminate, granite, and various types of tile and plastic materials • Soft (porous) surfaces refers to carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes.

AVAILABLE CLEANING & DISINFECTION TRAINING

Available cleaning & disinfection Training:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Department of Environmental Health Services (DEHS) currently has in place a Cleaning & Disinfecting Training Program aimed at more stringent cleaning and disinfecting Practices• To date DEHS has trained more than twenty (20) local cleaning and disinfecting companies, in addition to holding training sessions at private schools and select government agencies.• If there is a need for training or re-training (eg. in-house cleaning staff) arrangements can be made by contacting the Department at (242) 3087
---	---



CLEANING AND DISINFECTING PUBLIC SPACES, WORK PLACES, BUSINESSES, SCHOOLS AND HOMES

Cleaning and disinfecting public spaces including your workplace, school, business and homes will require the following:

- Development of a plan
- Implementation of that plan
- Maintenance and revision



DEVELOPMENT OF A PLAN:

Step#1: Closure Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine whether your workplace, School or business has been unoccupied for 7 days or more. • If your facility(s) were closed for 7 days or more, there is no need to implement a special COVID-19 cleaning and disinfecting exercise as current evidence suggest that the SARS-COV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 disease do not survive on surfaces longer than this said period (7days or more). • While a special COVID-19 cleaning and disinfecting exercise is not necessary for facilities closed for the said period, normal routine cleaning is required prior to reopening. • <i>It is important to be mindful that there are many public health considerations (Mold, legionella Bacteria), not just COVID-19 related, when reopening public buildings and spaces that have been closed for extended periods.</i>
Step#2: Absence of closure time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a precautionary measure building owners may elect to utilized the services of competent COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfecting Companies for buildings not closed for 7 days or more
Step#3: Custodial Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Custodial staff should be re-engaged to carry out the required cleaning and disinfecting in preparation for occupancy • Evaluate custodial staff in order to determine whether refresher cleaning and disinfecting training is required • Conduct a needs assessment for these staff members
Step#4: Private Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private homes and dwellings closed for 7 days or more should undergo normal routine cleaning prior to occupancy
Step#5: Maintenance Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate maintenance staff to determine the need for training • Determine whether preventative maintenance plans and strategies are current and active • Conduct a needs assessment for staff members • Ensure that maintenance staff document Environmental/Health and safety concerns and employ corrective measures where possible
Step#6: Ensure that the law is adhered to	<p>Establishment of health and safety committees as outlined in the Health & Safety At Work Act 2002</p> <p style="background-color: yellow;">At every place of employment where twenty or more persons are employed, the employer shall cause a committee to be established to be known as a health and safety committee in accordance with regulations made under this Act.</p>

Step#7: Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For “challenging” Environmental/Health and safety concerns contact the Department of Environmental health Services and/or the Department of Labor
Step#8: Cleaning & Disinfecting & Maintenance Checklist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A checklist should be established for custodial staff inclusive of but not limited to what and where to clean and disinfect, frequency etc. (<i>see Maintenance and Revision Section for more information</i>) There should be a preventative maintenance checklist outlining Environmental/Health and safety concerns, possible corrective measures Place (and replenish) hand sanitizers in public spaces for public use upon entry
Step#9: Frequently touch Surfaces & Objects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify frequently touched surfaces & Objects (this includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, railings, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks) in all common/public spaces Attention should be afforded to surfaces & Objects in spaces where minimal number of persons traffic (eg. private office space) and those infrequently trafficked spaces (eg. storage spaces). Include such information on the checklist
Step#10: Non-Frequently touch Surfaces & Objects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify non - frequently touched surfaces & Objects Include such information on the checklist
Step#11: Cleaning & Disinfecting Surfaces & Objects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All identified frequently touch surfaces and objects and those in minimally and infrequently trafficked spaces should be cleaned and then disinfected with EPA recommended disinfectants (<i>see definition section</i>) 70% alcohol and bleach solutions are recommended (<i>see section on Implementation of the Plan</i>)
Step#12: Cleaning or disinfecting a hard and non-porous material or item like glass, metal, or plastic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the most appropriate disinfectant for the surface or object intended for disinfection Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface Custodial staff should pay special attention to the personal protective equipment (PPE) that may be needed to safely apply the disinfectant and the manufacturer’s recommendations concerning any additional hazards
Step#13: Cleaning or disinfecting a soft and porous material or items like carpet, rugs, or seating in areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soft and porous materials are generally not as easy to disinfect as hard and non-porous surfaces Soft and porous materials that are not frequently touched should only be cleaned or laundered, following the directions on the item’s label, using the warmest appropriate water setting

<p>Step#14: Availability of supplies & equipment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure availability of resources for sustained cleaning. Key resources include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PPE (masks, gloves etc.) ○ Soap for wash stations and/or hand sanitizers ○ Cleaning clothes ○ Availability of cleaning Product (eg. Bleach, alcohol, EPA approved hospital grade disinfectants etc.) ○ Spray bottles ○ Commercial sprayers and/or electrostatic sprayers ○ Pressure washers and/or commercial sprayers for outdoor cleaning and disinfecting application
<p>Step#15: water in pools, hot tubs or spas, or water play areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no evidence that the virus that causes COVID-19 can spread directly to humans from water in pools, hot tubs or spas, or water play areas. • Proper operation, maintenance, and disinfection (for example, with chlorine or bromine) of pools, hot tubs or spas, and water playgrounds should kill the virus that causes COVID-19 • Cleaning and disinfecting strategies should be designed with a view of fostering a level of sustainability
<p>Step#16: Outdoor cleaning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor areas generally require normal routine cleaning and do not require disinfection • Spraying disinfectant on sidewalks and in parks is not an efficient use of disinfectant supplies and has not been proven to reduce the risk of COVID-19 to the public. You should maintain existing cleaning and hygiene practices for outdoor areas.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THAT PLAN:

<p>Step#1: The mammoth task facing custodial Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preventing the spread of the virus through understanding how to clean & disinfect contaminated & non-contaminated environments that is using the best practices & proven strategies available• Helping to stop and/or reduce the spread of the virus through effective cleaning & disinfecting strategies and methodologies• Not contributing to viral spread through poor cleaning and disinfecting practices (eg. Improper use of PPEs, poor cleaning & disinfecting practices, not using recommended disinfectants (70% alcohol content) etc.)
<p>Step#2: Custodial Staff Safety</p>	<p>As much as possible custodial staff should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that they are healthy• Be knowledgeable about COVID-19 and other microorganisms which may result in health concerns• Be familiar with PPEs that is placement and removal (mainly gloves & masks)• Understand the difference between cleaning & disinfecting• Avoid close contact among each other during cleaning exercises (practice social distancing (6 feet apart))

<p>Step#3: PPE</p>	<p>Use of PPE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPE Include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Goggles – to protect the eyes ○ Mask – To protect nose & mouth ○ Gloves – to protect the hands ○ Coverall – To protect the skin ○ Enclosed shoe wear <p>Note not all listed PPE may be required for daily use however, gloves and masks are common in most settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPE should be properly disposed of following use by placing them securely into waste bag(s) • The order of removal and disposal is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Remove and dispose of gloves ○ Remove and dispose of gowns/coveralls ○ Wash hands vigorously with soap & water for 20 seconds before moving mask from face. The mechanical abrasion during handwashing is most effective for cleaning hands. ○ Mask should be removed by pulling on the string near the ear and dispose of ○ Wash hands with soap & water 20 seconds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step#4: What & Where to clean & disinfect & How Often 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean & Disinfect frequently touched surfaces & Objects (this includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, railings, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks) in all common/public spaces daily and for certain objects like phones after each use where possible • Attention should be afforded to surfaces & Objects in spaces where minimal number of persons traffic (eg. private office space) and those infrequently trafficked spaces (eg. storage spaces).

<p>Step#5: Cleaning & Disinfecting Surfaces & Objects</p>	<p>Cleaning & Disinfecting of frequently touch Surfaces & Objects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, clean the surface or object with soap and water. • Then, disinfect using an EPA-approved disinfectant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If an EPA-approved disinfectant is unavailable, you can use 1/3 cup of bleach added to 1 gallon of water, or 70% alcohol solutions to disinfect. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Diluting your household bleach. To make a bleach solution, mix:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water OR ○ 4 teaspoons of bleach per quart of water </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not mix bleach or other cleaning and disinfection products together. Bleach solutions will be effective for disinfection up to 24 hours.
<p>Step#6: Cleaning & disinfections steps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre - Cleaning of dirty surfaces before disinfecting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection • Clean & disinfect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces. (this includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks) • Disinfection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Most common Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered household disinfectants will work. Use disinfectants appropriate for the surfaces (read the label).
<p>Step#7: Non frequently touch surfaces & objects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surfaces and objects that are not frequently touched should be cleaned with soap and water and do not require additional disinfection.
<p>Step#8: Document</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document cleaning and disinfecting exercises as outlined on a checklist
<p>Step#9: Preventative Maintenance staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance staff should inspect their building and document (checklist) • Carry out corrective measures in a prompt manner
<p>Step#10: Health and safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have regular health and safety meetings, keep notes of critical issues during meetings

<p>Step#11: Disinfectants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use products that meet EPA disinfection criteria and that are appropriate for the surface. Allow the disinfectant to remain on the surface for the contact time recommended by the manufacturer. • Establish a disinfection routine and train staff on proper cleaning timing and procedures to ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants. • Store and use disinfectants in a responsible and appropriate manner according to the label. • Do not mix bleach or other cleaning and disinfection products together–this can cause fumes that may be very dangerous to breathe in. • Keep all disinfectants out of the reach of children. • Always read and follow the directions on the label to ensure safe and effective use. • Always wear gloves appropriate for the chemicals being used for routine cleaning and disinfecting • Disinfectants should typically not be applied on items used by children • (eg toys), especially any items that children might put in their mouths. • Use warm water and soap in these instances • Many disinfectants are toxic when swallowed
<p>Step#12: Cleaning Clothes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clothes containing excessive dirt or worn should be discarded • Clothes should be color coded and each color for specific tasks • Clothes intended to be reused should be package in labeled bags, thorough washed with warm/hot water and a disinfectant (eg. Bleach)

MAINTENANCE & REVISION:

<p>Step#1: Maintaining a cleaning and disinfecting strategy after reopening</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There must be complete accountability • A checklist should be established outlining cleaning strategies and timelines (daily weekly and monthly) • Daily cleaning and disinfection targets that is frequently touched surfaces • Frequently touched or shared objects should be cleaned and disinfected after each use • In conjunction with daily cleaning weekly or monthly cleaning and disinfecting should be expansive (covering a wide area) • Expansive cleaning should involve deep and thorough cleaning followed by disinfection • The accomplishments indicated on the checklist should be verified possible by a health and safety person(s) or committee • Cleaning and disinfecting strategies should be designed with a view of fostering a level of sustainability and reducing the virus spread by human contact • Always aim at putting practical measures in place
<p>Step#2: Maintenance Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There must be complete accountability • The maintenance staff should ensure the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ventilation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Taking measures to improve ventilation as it will help shorten the time it takes contaminated respiratory droplets to be removed from the air ✚ Note that research has shown that the SARS-COV-2 Virus can remain in the air for 8 to 14minutes. ○ Cross ventilation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Ensure windows can open in naturally ventilated buildings ✚ Keep windows open ○ Air conditioning systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Ensure systems are working properly, schedule cleaning and a fresh air intake is present

Step#3: Body temperature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible using infrared technology to monitor body temperature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Normal body temperature usually 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit ○ The CDC considers 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit a fever
Step#4: Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erect Signage in highly visible areas (eg. Wearing of masks)
Step#5: Use media Platforms where possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Zoom Technology for meeting • Teleconferencing
Step#6: Emphases should be placed on self-protection:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand Hygiene <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hands should be cleaned by washing with soap and water for 20 seconds. 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 ○ Follow normal preventive actions while at work and home including recommended hand hygiene and avoiding touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands. • Social Distancing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Avoid close contact with others (practice social distancing - 6 feet apart)
Step#7: Emphases should be on Protecting others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay at home: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you are sick stay at home • Cover coughs and sneeze: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Everyone should be encouraged to cover coughs and sneeze and rewash hands frequently • Wearing of face Mask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decreases viral spread • Surfaces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clean & disinfect surfaces often ○ Note current evidence suggests that SARS-COV-2 virus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. ○ Generally coronaviruses survive for shorter periods at higher temperatures and higher humidity than in cooler or dryer environments ○ Coronaviruses on surfaces and objects naturally die within hours to days. Warmer temperatures and exposure to sunlight will reduce the time the virus survives on surfaces and objects.
Step #8: COVID-19 Point of contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate a person to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns • This may be your health and safety person, team or committee

Step #9: A suspected case	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.• This waiting period minimized the risk to cleaning & disinfecting staff as the virus may die in that period

DISINFECTANT

1. Diluting your household bleach. To make a bleach solution, mix:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water OR
 - 4 teaspoons of bleach per quart of water
2. Alcohol solutions (cleaning products containing alcohol):
 - Ensure solutions has at least 70% alcohol.
 - Alcohol can kill the virus in 30 seconds (faster than bleach)
 - Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).
3. Peroxide
4. Vital Oxide
5. Sporocidin
6. Microban
7. Peridox RTU
8. Disinfectant wipes

Note the following:

For all cleaning products ensure the following:

- **Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date.**
- **Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.**
- **Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html>

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F20
[0](#)