

COVID-19 Disinfection Procedure

This document provides an overview of the procedure for disinfecting hard surfaces and common touch points during the COVID-19 pandemic. The University's centralized housekeeping service continues to provide regular sanitation services on campus; however, this centralized service is intended for general cleaning and will not necessarily cover common touch points, materials, or equipment located within a given faculty or service.

Touch points are surfaces that multiple people make contact with many times a day. They range from door and faucet handles to counter tops, accessibility buttons, elevator buttons, printers/photocopiers, laboratory equipment, kitchen appliances, etc. The COVID-19 pandemic requires everyone to pay more attention to these areas in order to minimize and mitigate the spread of the coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

Responsibilities

It is important to recognize that the disinfection of hard surfaces or touch points is not the responsibility of a single person, group, or service. Everyone is responsible for identifying and disinfecting touch points in order to minimize and mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus.

Where possible, use alternate means to activate or manipulate touch points. For example, consider using the tip of a pen or a key to activate an elevator or photocopier button. Where this is not possible, these points should receive more frequent cleaning and disinfection.

Virus viability

Studies have shown that the COVID-19 coronavirus can survive for up to 72 hours on plastic and stainless steel, less than 4 hours on copper, and less than 24 hours on cardboard.¹

Materials required

Any person may disinfect a touch point with basic materials and appropriate protective equipment, including:

- Spray bottle with disinfectant or bleach solution.
- Clean, dry micro-fibre cloth (changed daily).
- Gloves and protective eyewear suitable for the disinfectant or bleach solution.
- Checklist of touch points in the area.

Health Canada has provided [a non-exhaustive list of disinfectants](#). The list contains agents that evidence has demonstrated are likely to be effective and may be used against the coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

¹ [World Health Organization – COVID-19 FAQ](#)

Alternatively, a solution of 5% sodium hypochlorite bleach can be effective (5 mL bleach to 250 mL water). Use with caution: bleach is a corrosive material that can cause burns and damage materials, so users must wear protective equipment and surfaces should be tested before extensive use.

Additionally, 70% ethanol is also an effective disinfecting agent.

Disinfection procedure

1. Identify common touch point(s) in the work area.
2. Establish a disinfection frequency for the touch point(s). The recommended frequency is at least at the beginning and end of use, or more frequently, based on the number of people interacting with the touch point or who pass through the area.
3. Follow the manufacturer's directions for using the product.
4. Don gloves appropriate for the disinfecting agent (e.g. nitrile, rubber, etc.), as directed by the manufacturer.
5. Ensure the surface is visibly clean. The surface may be cleaned using soap and warm water prior to disinfection. It is important to remember that cleaning refers to removing dirt and other organic material from the surface, whereas disinfection refers to the process where viruses are killed or rendered inactive.
6. Apply the disinfectant to the cloth. Saturate the cloth with the selected disinfectant before treating the touch point. Reapply the cloth to the touch point, as needed, so that the disinfectant leaves a visible film on the touch point.
7. Follow manufacturer's instructions; allow the surface to air dry.
8. Repeat the procedure as often as necessary.
9. Contaminated cleaning items (e.g. disposable cloths) should be placed in a lined garbage bin and disposed of with regular waste.
10. Wash your hands (or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) once you have completed the disinfection procedure.

Disinfecting wipes may be used; however, use these wipes with caution since they dry out prior to their use and become ineffective.

It is strongly recommended that anyone disinfecting surfaces maintain a log of their disinfection activities. This log should include the touch points that were disinfected and the date and time this disinfection was conducted.

Disinfection kits

Facilities has provided cleaning kits to faculties and services to assist them in disinfecting and sanitizing common touch points. The cleaning kits include a cloth, a reusable mask, a container of small hand sanitizer, and a small surface sanitizer bottle.

Special requests

Service or faculty facility managers can submit a special request for cleaning by contacting the Facilities 2222 call centre.

Resources

[Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety – COVID-19 – Disinfection of Touch Points](#)

[Government of Canada – Hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers \(COVID-19\): List of disinfectants with evidence for use against COVID-19](#)

[Public Health Ontario – Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings](#)

[Government of Canada – Cleaning and Disinfecting of Public Spaces During COVID-19](#)