

# Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Laundry and Linen Handling Procedures

This SOP details **laundry and linen handling procedures**, covering the proper collection, sorting, washing, drying, folding, and storage of linens to maintain hygiene and prevent contamination. It includes guidelines for handling soiled linens, using appropriate cleaning agents and temperatures, ensuring staff safety with personal protective equipment, and maintaining compliance with health and safety standards. The goal is to ensure clean, sanitary linens are consistently provided while minimizing the risk of infection and damage to fabrics.

## 1. Purpose

To outline standardized procedures for the safe and hygienic handling, processing, and storage of laundry and linens within the facility.

## 2. Scope

This procedure applies to all staff responsible for the collection, sorting, washing, drying, folding, and storage of linens, including but not limited to towels, sheets, gowns, and uniforms.

## 3. Responsibilities

- **Laundry Staff:** Follow SOP procedures, report issues, wear appropriate PPE.
- **Supervisors:** Ensure staff adherence, monitor supplies, arrange training.
- **Management:** Provide resources, maintain equipment, review procedures for updates.

## 4. Procedure

1. **Collection of Linens**
  - Use designated carts/bags for soiled linens; label as "Soiled".
  - Handle with gloves and, if necessary, masks and gowns.
  - Do not shake linens to avoid release of contaminants.
2. **Sorting**
  - Sort linens in a designated area away from clean linens.
  - Separate heavily soiled or contaminated items for special processing.
  - Sort by type (sheets, towels, uniforms, etc.) and fabric care requirements.
3. **Washing**
  - Load linens according to machine capacity.
  - Use approved detergents/disinfectants and water temperatures per fabric and infection control guidelines (see table below).
  - Ensure full wash and rinse cycles are completed.
4. **Drying**
  - Transfer washed linens promptly to dryers.
  - Use appropriate temperature settings for fabric type.
  - Allow items to dry completely to avoid mildew and bacterial growth.
5. **Folding and Storage**
  - Fold and stack clean linens on sanitized surfaces.
  - Store linens in clean, dry, designated storage areas.
  - Do not store clean and soiled items together.
6. **Distribution**
  - Use clean carts or bags for distribution.
  - Deliver to appropriate departments, avoiding contact with contaminated items.

## 5. Safety and Compliance

- All staff must wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when handling soiled linens.
- Ensure safe handling and storage of cleaning agents. Follow MSDS guidelines.
- Comply with local health, safety, and infection control regulations at all times.
- Report any incidents, injuries, or contamination to supervisors immediately.

## 6. Cleaning Agents & Temperature Guidelines

Linen Type	Recommended Agent	Wash Temperature
Standard linens	Detergent + Disinfectant	60°C (140°F) minimum
Delicates	Mild Detergent	30–40°C (86–104°F)
Heavily soiled/infected	Detergent + High-level Disinfectant	≥ 71°C (160°F)

## 7. Record Keeping

- Maintain logs of washing cycles, temperatures, and chemical usage.
- Record incidents, equipment maintenance, and staff training sessions.

## 8. Review and Training

- Review SOP annually or following any incident.
- Conduct training for new staff and refresher sessions annually.

## 9. References

1. Local health authority guidelines for linen hygiene
2. Equipment manufacturer's operation manuals
3. Occupational health and safety regulations

## 10. Approval & Revision History

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Review date: \_\_\_\_\_

Revision Date	Description of Change	Approved By
YYYY-MM-DD	Initial release	_____