

SOP: Hand Hygiene and Infection Control Standards

This SOP details **hand hygiene and infection control standards**, emphasizing proper handwashing techniques, use of hand sanitizers, personal protective equipment (PPE) protocols, cleaning and disinfecting procedures, and guidelines to prevent the spread of infections in healthcare and workplace environments. The objective is to maintain a safe and sanitary setting by minimizing contamination risks and promoting consistent infection control practices among staff and visitors.

1. Purpose

To provide guidelines and procedures for effective hand hygiene and infection control to prevent the transmission of pathogens within the facility.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all employees, contractors, and visitors within the facility, including healthcare, administrative, and support staff.

3. Hand Hygiene Procedures

3.1 When to Perform Hand Hygiene

- Before and after direct patient or client contact
- After removing gloves or other PPE
- After contact with potentially contaminated surfaces or materials
- Before preparing or consuming food
- After using the restroom
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose

3.2 Handwashing Technique

1. Wet hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Lather hands by rubbing them together with the soap, including the backs of hands, between fingers, and under nails.
3. Scrub hands for at least 20 seconds.
4. Rinse hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry hands using a clean towel or air dryer.

3.3 Use of Hand Sanitizer

- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol when soap and water are not available.
- Apply the product to the palm of one hand and rub hands together, covering all surfaces until dry (about 20 seconds).

4. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Protocol

- Wear appropriate PPE (gloves, gowns, masks, eye protection) as required by task and risk level.
- Perform hand hygiene before donning and after removing PPE.
- Change PPE between patients or when visibly soiled.

5. Cleaning and Disinfection Procedures

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (doorknobs, light switches, workstations) at regular intervals and when visibly soiled.
- Use approved disinfectants and follow manufacturer's instructions for use and contact time.

- Properly dispose of cleaning materials and PPE after use.

6. Prevention Guidelines

- Encourage respiratory etiquette and use of tissues or elbows to cover coughs and sneezes.
- Promote vaccination and stay-home policies for symptomatic staff or visitors.
- Post hand hygiene signage at sinks and sanitizer stations as reminders.
- Provide adequate supplies of soap, sanitizer, PPE, and disinfectants.

7. Training and Compliance

- All staff must complete infection control and hand hygiene training annually.
- Supervisors will conduct periodic audits to ensure compliance with this SOP.
- Non-compliance will result in corrective actions as per facility policy.

8. Documentation

- Staff must record hand hygiene and cleaning activities as required by department logs.
- Incidents or breaches in infection control must be reported and documented immediately.

9. Review and Updates

- This SOP shall be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to remain compliant with local and national infection control guidelines.

Version	Date	Reviewed by	Changes
1.0	2024-06-08	Infection Control Officer	Initial release