

# Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Personal Hygiene and Handwashing Procedures

## 1. Purpose

This SOP details **personal hygiene and handwashing procedures**, emphasizing the importance of maintaining cleanliness to prevent the spread of infections. It covers proper handwashing techniques, the use of soap and sanitizers, recommended handwashing frequency, guidelines for nail care, and hygiene practices to be followed before and after specific tasks. The goal is to promote a healthy environment by ensuring all personnel adhere to consistent and effective hygiene standards.

## 2. Scope

This SOP applies to all staff, students, and visitors within the facility who may come into contact with potentially contaminated surfaces or materials.

## 3. Responsibilities

- All personnel must follow the hygiene and handwashing procedures described in this SOP.
- Supervisors are responsible for ensuring compliance and providing training as necessary.

## 4. Procedure

### 1. When to Wash Hands

- Before beginning work or entering the facility.
- Before and after handling food, eating, or drinking.
- After using the restroom.
- After touching face, hair, or clothing.
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing nose.
- After handling waste or contaminated materials.
- Before and after caring for a sick person.
- After removing gloves or other personal protective equipment (PPE).

### 2. Handwashing Technique

- a. Wet hands and wrists with clean, running water.
- b. Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces.
- c. Rub hands palm to palm to build up lather.
- d. Rub the back of each hand with the palm of the other hand, interlacing fingers.
- e. Scrub between fingers, under fingernails, and around thumbs.
- f. Continue rubbing hands for at least 20 seconds.
- g. Rinse thoroughly under running water.
- h. Dry hands completely using a clean towel or air dryer.

### 3. Use of Hand Sanitizers

- If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Apply product to all surfaces of hands and rub together until dry (at least 20 seconds).

### 4. Nail Care Guidelines

- Keep fingernails clean and trimmed short.
- Avoid artificial nails and nail polish when involved in food handling or patient care.
- Clean under fingernails regularly.

### 5. Personal Hygiene Practices

- Wear clean clothing and appropriate PPE as required.
- Tie back long hair or cover with a cap.
- Avoid wearing jewelry on hands and wrists.
- Cover cuts or abrasions with waterproof bandages and gloves if necessary.

## 5. Training

All new personnel must receive training on this SOP during orientation and refresher training annually or as needed.

## 6. Records

Maintain a log of hand hygiene and personal hygiene training as part of personnel records.

## 7. Review

This SOP must be reviewed annually or as regulations and best practices change.

## 8. References

- World Health Organization (WHO) Guidelines on Hand Hygiene
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Hand Hygiene Recommendations
- Facility-specific hygiene policies