



Safety Note

20 March 2020

Precautionary cleaning of workstations or shared work area to reduce the risk of transmission of viruses

Should a colleague's workstation be cleaned if they go home sick?

Environmental cleaning is a good practice and is an important way to reduce the risk of transmission of infectious organisms, including viruses. Viruses including coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2 that causes COVID-19) and influenza virus can be spread by touching an object or surface with virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose or eyes before washing your hands.

Who should clean the workstation?

If a staff member is comfortable to wipe down a person's workstation they can do this as long as the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn and the correct method used. Alternatively, P&F can be contacted through your HSW Managers or [AskHR](#) to organise this.

Is it safe to clean someone's workstation?

Yes, with the proper precautions. Remember that the main source of transmission is either through close contact with an infected person or through a contaminated surface. The Commonwealth Department of Health has advised that when cleaning, staff should minimise the risk of being infected with coronavirus by wearing gloves, disposing of paper towels immediately in general waste and using alcohol-based hand sanitiser or soap and water to clean hands before, and after, wearing gloves.

What resources are needed to clean the workstation?

- 70% isopropanol impregnated wipes (e.g. iso-wipes) and / or disinfectant liquid (e.g. 0.1% bleach, 0.1% sodium hypochlorite, hydrogen peroxide, 70% ethanol or 70% isopropanol);
- Paper towel;
- Rubbish bags; and
- Gloves.

Where do I obtain the resources needed?

The [UQ Science Store \(Chem Store\)](#) has materials required to clean workstations.

Are the P&F cleaners able to assist?

Yes - the P&F cleaning staff and P&F contract cleaners can visit and clean most workplaces. They are cleaning touch points and public refectories more frequently and foregoing vacuuming for a period of time in order to concentrate on horizontal surfaces. They will also complete a precautionary clean of an area in the following circumstances:

- If a person on campus has been confirmed with COVID-19;
- If a person has been directed by Public Health to self-isolate due to being considered a close contact of a confirmed case; or



- If a person has gone home sick with flu-like symptoms.

They will clean the desk surface, the phone, keyboard and mouse. They will then retrace their steps from the area and wipe-down the door handles to the lifts and wipe the lift buttons.

These precautionary clean requests must go through your local Health, Safety and Wellness (HSW) Manager or for Central Divisions contact [AskHR](#), not directly to P&F.

Who can I contact if I am unsure what to do?

Your local HSW Manager or local Work Health and Safety Contact (WHSC).

Steps for cleaning a workstation or work area

1. Protect Yourself

Clean your hands before commencing as well as after the task is completed. Have all your cleaning items with you and ready:

- Gloves;
- Disinfectant wipes (70% alcohol or above);
- 70% alcohol spray;
- Paper towels;
- Rubbish bags; and
- Alcohol hand sanitiser gel.

Put on gloves, keep them on during cleaning. Do NOT touch your face during or after the cleaning procedure without cleaning your hands first.

2. Disinfect the workstation

1. Wipe down any electrical equipment (e.g. computer screen, keyboard, mouse and phone) with 70% isopropanol impregnated wipes or paper towel sprayed with ethanol, hydrogen peroxide or bleach solution;
2. Spray the appropriate disinfectant on hard work surfaces only (e.g. 0.1% bleach, 0.1% sodium hypochlorite, hydrogen peroxide, 70% ethanol or 70% isopropanol) or wipe down hard surfaces with 70% isopropanol impregnated wipes. NOTE: bleach and hypochlorite are not compatible with all surfaces and may cause staining or damage; and
3. Wipe down the workstation with paper towel and allow surfaces to dry.

3. Clean up after decontamination

Before moving away from the area:

1. Place the used paper towel / wipes in a rubbish bag;
2. Remove gloves by peeling off one glove and then clutching it with your other gloved hand and using your free hand, peel off the second glove so that both gloves are together but inside out, then deposit in a rubbish bag;
3. Tie rubbish bag closed and deposit in second rubbish bag/bin;
4. Put on another pair of gloves;
5. Using a disinfectant wipe or alcohol sprayed onto a paper towel, wipe all the door handles on the way out of the area;



6. Remove gloves by peeling off one glove and then clutching it with your other gloved hand and using your free hand, peel off the second glove so that both gloves are together but inside out, then deposit in a rubbish bag;
7. Clean your hands thoroughly alcohol gel.
8. Once away from the work area, wash your hands with soap and water.

Resources and Additional Information

UQ: <https://about.uq.edu.au/coronavirus-advice-uq-community>

Australian Government: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/novel-coronavirus-resources>

QLD Health: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/diseases/coronavirus>

CDC - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

For further information, contact your local Work Health and Safety Manager/Coordinator or the UQ HSW-Division, phone: +61 7 336-52365 or email hsw@uq.edu.au.