



Safety Note

21 January 2022

Cleaning of workstations and work areas to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19

Coronaviruses can survive on surfaces for many hours or more but are readily inactivated by standard cleaning methods.

COVID-19 spreads through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. A person can acquire the virus by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or eyes, or through being in close proximity to an infected person and breathing air that has not yet been circulated through the ventilation system. A keyway you can protect workers and others from the risk of exposure to COVID-19 is by implementing appropriate cleaning measures for your local work area.

What arrangements are in place for the routine cleaning of spaces at UQ?

UQ's regular contract cleaning of approximately 40,000 spaces around campuses is continuing with a focus on all hard surfaces and touch points.

Separate teams work in higher-traffic buildings and areas from 9am-5pm sanitising hard surfaces and touch points (e.g. handles, rail, bins, switches, bathrooms, equipment). Additional cleaning can also be requested, via an Archibus work request, for work areas.

Staff and students can also help by cleaning their work areas.

Work practices such as cleaning (several times per day) commonly touched surfaces such as lab benches, lab equipment, desks, phones, remote controls, printers, fax machines, computer mice and keyboards help reduce the threat of disease transmission. It is recommended these areas are wiped down with paper towels and normal household cleaner (or antibacterial wipes).

More frequent cleaning is recommended where:

- The workplace has many people entering each day.
- The workplace operates in shifts, it should be cleaned between shifts.
- Equipment is shared between people, it should be cleaned between uses.

Is it safe to clean my work area?

Yes, with the proper precautions. When cleaning, staff should dispose of paper towels immediately in general waste and using alcohol-based hand sanitiser or soap and water to wash hands before, and after cleaning.

What should I use for routine cleaning?

Standard cleaning products can be purchased via UQ eMarket and are effective when the manufacturer's instructions are followed.

Hard surfaces: In most circumstances, cleaning with detergent and water is sufficient.

Soft or porous surfaces: For soft or porous surfaces like fabric or leather, seek advice from the manufacturer of the item to be cleaned about which products can be safely used.

What type of cleaning should be done if a COVID-19 positive person attends my workspace?

If the diagnosed person was in the workplace more than 24 hours from notification, there is no requirement to do anything other than a surface clean. If the diagnosed person left the workplace on the same day as the workplace was notified, the workspace will need to be temporarily closed so a routine clean can be undertaken. A routine cleaning is using standard household cleaning products and paper towels.¹.

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

Your local [HSW Manager or local Work Health and Safety Coordinator \(WHSC\)](#)

¹ <https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19/current-status/queensland-restrictions-update/changes-to-requirements-for-close-and-casual-contacts> and <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/cleaning/cleaning-workplace.htm>