



# Schedule for Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting

Adapted from *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards, Appendix K*

- Programs may need to sanitize or disinfect surfaces more often during illness outbreaks and should refer to state, local, tribal, or territorial health authorities and child care licensing for more information.
- Reducing the risk of infection also involves proper ventilation and air filtration, since some infectious diseases spread through the air and not on surfaces.
- Regular handwashing is one of the best ways to remove germs and prevent the spread of illness to others.

Surface/Area	Method: Clean, sanitize, disinfect	Timing: Before each use, after each use, daily, weekly	Comments
<b>Food Preparation and Meal Service Areas: Use an EPA registered product that is safe for surfaces that touch food.</b>			
Food preparation surfaces and countertops CFOC <a href="#">4.9.0.9</a> ; <a href="#">4.9.0.10</a>	<b>Clean and sanitize</b>	<b>Before and after each use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a microfiber cloth or disposable paper towels.</li> <li>• Do not use sponges.</li> </ul>
Eating utensils and dishes CFOC <a href="#">4.5.0.2</a> ; <a href="#">4.9.0.11</a> ; <a href="#">4.9.0.12</a> ; <a href="#">4.9.0.13</a>	<b>Clean and sanitize</b>	<b>After each use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash, rinse, and sanitize by hand OR</li> <li>• Use dishwasher; set on sanitize setting.</li> </ul>
Bottle feeding equipment CFOC <a href="#">4.3.1.10</a>	<b>Clean and sanitize</b>	<b>After each use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash, rinse, and sanitize by hand OR</li> <li>• Use dishwasher; set on sanitize setting.</li> <li>• Squeeze water through nipple hole to be sure it is clean.</li> </ul>
Highchair trays CFOC <a href="#">4.5.0.2</a> ; <a href="#">9.2.3.12</a>	<b>Clean and sanitize</b>	<b>Before and after each use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Also, clean legs and frame when soiled.</li> </ul>



Surface/Area	Method: Clean, sanitize, disinfect	Timing: Before each use, after each use, daily, weekly	Comments
Mixed-use tables CFOC <a href="#">4.9.0.9</a>	<b>Clean and sanitize</b>	<b>Before and after each use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additionally, clean legs and frame when soiled.</li> </ul>
Food preparation equipment CFOC <a href="#">4.9.0.9</a>	<b>Clean and sanitize</b>	<b>After each use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash, rinse, and sanitize by hand, <u>OR</u></li> <li>• Use dishwasher; set on sanitize setting.</li> </ul>
<b>Classroom Areas</b>			
Pacifiers: Used by one child CFOC <a href="#">3.1.4.3</a>	<b>Clean</b>	<b>Before and after each use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sanitize if dirty or used by another child.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use sanitizer safe for food contact, <u>OR</u></li> <li>○ Boil for 1 minute and air-dry, <u>OR</u></li> <li>○ Use dishwasher.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Squeeze water through nipple hole to be sure it is clean.</li> </ul>
Mouthed toys: Used by one child CFOC <a href="#">3.3.0.2</a>	<b>Clean</b>	<b>Before and after each use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sanitize if used by another child.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use sanitizer safe for food contact, <u>OR</u></li> <li>○ Use dishwasher.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Washable cloth toys: Used by one child CFOC <a href="#">3.3.0.2</a>	<b>Clean</b>	<b>Weekly</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Machine wash and dry completely before use by another child.</li> </ul>
Classroom toys CFOC <a href="#">3.3.0.2</a> ; <a href="#">5.3.1.4</a> ; <a href="#">6.4.2.2</a>	<b>Clean</b>	<b>Weekly</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow label directions for cleaning of wooden toys.</li> </ul>
Play activity centers CFOC <a href="#">5.3.1.4</a>	<b>Clean</b>	<b>Daily (end of day)</b>	



Surface/Area	Method: Clean, sanitize, disinfect	Timing: Before each use, after each use, daily, weekly	Comments
Counters and shelves CFOC <a href="#">5.3.1.4</a>	<b>Clean</b>	<b>Daily (end of day)</b>	
Mixed-use tables for activities CFOC <a href="#">5.3.1.4</a>	<b>Clean</b>	<b>After each use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sanitize if used for food preparation, meals, or tooth-brushing.</li> </ul>
Dress-up clothes (washable)	<b>Clean</b>	<b>Weekly</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Machine wash and dry completely.</li> <li>• Machine wash if soiled with body fluids.</li> </ul>
Drinking fountains CFOC <a href="#">5.2.6.10</a>	<b>Clean and disinfect</b>	<b>Daily</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean frequently throughout the day.</li> <li>• Disinfect at the end of the day.</li> </ul>
Water tables and water equipment CFOC <a href="#">6.2.4.2</a>	<b>Clean and disinfect</b>	<b>After each use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff/children wash hands before/after use.</li> <li>• Change water, clean, then disinfect water table, and toys before a new group begins water play or at the end of the day.</li> <li>• Children with open cuts or sores should not join in water play.</li> <li>• Do not use during illness outbreak.</li> </ul>
Animal areas: feeders, fish tanks, or animal cages CFOC <a href="#">3.4.2.3</a>	<b>Clean and disinfect</b>	<b>As needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disinfect these areas after cleaning activity is finished.</li> </ul>
Floors CFOC <a href="#">5.3.1.6</a> ; <a href="#">5.6.0.4</a>	<b>Clean</b>	<b>Daily (end of day)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sweep or vacuum, then damp mop.</li> <li>• Microfiber mops               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Launder after use.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cotton mop heads               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Turn upside down to dry.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Disinfect if soiled with body fluids.</li> </ul>



Surface/Area	Method: Clean, sanitize, disinfect	Timing: Before each use, after each use, daily, weekly	Comments
<b>High-Touch Surfaces:</b> May need to sanitize or disinfect more often during illness outbreaks. Refer to state, local, tribal, or territorial health authorities and child care licensing for more information.			
Doorknobs, handles, and light switches	<b>Clean</b>	<b>Daily</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean often throughout the day with a microfiber cloth or disposable paper towels.</li> </ul>
Shared computer keyboards, phones	<b>Clean</b>	<b>Daily (end of day)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean often throughout the day.</li> <li>• Use silicone keyboard cover.</li> </ul>
<b>Sleeping Areas</b>			
Sheets, blankets, and pillowcases: Used by one child CFOC <a href="#">3.3.0.4</a> ; <a href="#">5.4.5.1</a>	<b>Clean</b>	<b>Weekly</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Label and store each child's sleep items separately from other children.</li> <li>• Follow laundry detergent instructions.</li> <li>• Wash laundry at warmest temperature setting, and dry completely.</li> <li>• If soiled with body fluids, launder with non-chlorine bleach (preferred), or bleach and dry completely.</li> </ul>
Cribs, cots, and mats: Used by one child CFOC <a href="#">5.4.5.1</a>	<b>Clean</b>	<b>After each use and weekly</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use fitted sheet to cover sleep surface.</li> <li>• Clean sleep surface regularly with a microfiber cloth or disposable paper towels.</li> <li>• Disinfect surface if soiled with body fluids.</li> <li>• Follow manufacturer's instructions.</li> </ul>



Surface/Area	Method: Clean, sanitize, disinfect	Timing: Before each use, after each use, daily, weekly	Comments
Cribs, cots, and mats: Used by more than one child CFOC <a href="#">5.4.5.1</a>	<b>Clean</b>	<b>After each use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use fitted sheet to cover sleep surface.</li> <li>• Clean sleep surface with a microfiber cloth or disposable paper towels after use by another child</li> <li>• Disinfect surface if soiled with body fluids.</li> <li>• Follow manufacturer’s instructions.</li> </ul>
<b>Toileting and Diapering Areas</b>			
Changing tables CFOC <a href="#">3.2.1.4</a> ; <a href="#">3.2.1.5</a> ; <a href="#">5.4.2.6</a>	<b>Clean and disinfect</b>	<b>After each use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow the surface to air dry between uses.</li> </ul>
Diaper pails CFOC <a href="#">5.4.1.8</a>	<b>Clean and disinfect</b>	<b>Daily (end of day)</b>	
Toilets CFOC <a href="#">5.4.1.7</a> ; <a href="#">5.4.1.8</a>	<b>Clean and disinfect</b>	<b>Daily (end of day)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disinfect after use if soiled.</li> </ul>
Sinks and faucets CFOC <a href="#">5.4.2.2</a> ; <a href="#">5.4.2.3</a>	<b>Clean and disinfect</b>	<b>Daily (end of day)</b>	
Countertops	<b>Clean and disinfect</b>	<b>Daily (end of day)</b>	
Floors CFOC <a href="#">5.6.0.4</a>	<b>Clean and disinfect</b>	<b>Daily (end of day)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use separate mops/mop heads for toilet/diapering areas and other areas.</li> <li>• Use microfiber mops with split bucket (cleaning/rinsing system).</li> </ul>

Related definitions can be found in the [CFOC Glossary](#).



## Best Practices for Success

Follow these guidelines to protect the health and safety of staff and children:

- Frequent handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol can prevent the spread of infection. Hand sanitizers are less effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.
- Many cleaning products and air fresheners have hazardous chemicals. It is best to use a cleaning product with a third-party certification that says the product is safer to use. Choose products that are free of fragrances or dyes.
- Check the product label to see what personal protective equipment (PPE: such as gloves, glasses/goggles) is needed because of possible hazards. Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after cleaning, sanitizing, or disinfecting.
- To reduce exposure to product fumes, ventilate the space by either opening windows or doors or bringing in outside air using a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system. If you do not have an HVAC system, use a mechanical air filter in individual rooms. Refer to CFOC [Standard 5.2.1.1 Ensuring Access to Fresh Air](#).
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions (listed on the label) for safe use, cleaning, storage, and disposal of products. Always label containers of cleaning products and chemicals.
- Microfiber cloths are preferred for cleaning. If microfiber cloths are not available, disposable towels can be used for cleaning. Using cotton cloths, cotton mops, and sponges in early childhood programs is not recommended. Refer to CFOC Standard [5.6.0.4: Microfiber Cloths, Rags, and Disposable Towels and Mops Used for Cleaning](#).
- Keep all chemical products locked up and safely out of the reach of children. Safely dispose of products not in use. Fumes from closed containers add to poor air quality.
- Disinfect surfaces or objects soiled with blood and body fluids that are bloody by following Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Standard Precautions. Refer to CFOC [Standard 3.2.3.4 Prevention of Exposure to Blood and Body Fluids](#) and [Appendix L Cleaning Up Body Fluids](#). Carefully follow manufacturers' instructions for product use.

## Learn More:

- [Standard 3.3.0.1 Routine Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting](#)
- [Selecting and Using Cleaning, Sanitizing, or Disinfecting Products](#)



National Center on

Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety

888-227-5125

Health@ecetta.info



National Resource Center  
for Health and Safety in  
Child Care and Early Education

NRCKids.org/CFOC

August 2024