

IC9: 0600 LAUNDRY

1.0 STANDARD

All staff must follow Routine Practices when handling soiled laundry

Off site processing (general linen)

Off site processing (general linen) will not require special separation of normal and heavily soiled laundry.

On Site processing (general linen/personal clothing)

Laundry refers to personal laundry, resident specific, as well as general linen.

Regular, normal soiled, laundry will follow a one wash cycle.

Heavily soiled laundry will follow either a two wash cycle or an extended cycle depending on the equipment.

For laundry processed on site, facilities will develop a process for identifying heavily soiled laundry

Definition:

Heavily soiled laundry is laundry that has large amounts of gross soil.

2.0 PROCEDURE

1. Store and transport clean laundry separate from soiled laundry
2. Sort laundry with a minimal of handling
3. Remove solid waste from laundry using a gloved hand and toilet tissue and discard into toilet or hopper
4. Laundry is not to be rinsed or soaked in the toilet or sink in resident rooms or in soiled utility room hopper or sink
5. Ensure that linen is free of sharps, instruments, and patient's personal belongings before placing in laundry bag
6. Roll wet or heavily soiled items inwards without contaminating your clothing and place items into an impervious laundry bag or line the laundry bag with a plastic bag
7. Bag all soiled laundry in the room at point of use

8. For laundry processed on site, facilities will develop a local process for identifying/handling heavily soiled laundry.
9. Double bagging is not required
10. Melt away bags are not recommended.
11. Close soiled laundry bags when 2/3 full
12. Collect soiled laundry bags at regular intervals, at least daily
13. Wear appropriate PPE: gloves, gowns, mask and eye protection if sprays or splashes of body fluid likely when handling and sorting soiled laundry
14. Remove gloves and gowns, and perform hand hygiene after contact with soiled laundry
15. Wipe down transport carts before loading with clean laundry
16. Cover clean laundry carts during transport and storage
17. Clean laundry is transported separately from soiled laundry
18. Clean linen that has been dropped on the floor is considered soiled.
19. Apply moisture-resistant mattress and pillow covers to prevent soiling mattresses and washable pillows
20. Change bed linen at least weekly and replace wet or visibly soiled linen as needed

2.1 REGULAR, 'NORMAL SOILED' LAUNDRY

1. When handling soiled laundry, staff are to wear the appropriate PPE: gloves and gowns at all times and masks and eye protection if sprays or splashes are likely.
2. Wash hands following the removal of PPE and before contact with clean laundry.
3. Laundry is to be processed in the machine with the minimal of handling.
4. When laundering ensure the detergents/chemicals used are appropriate for the water temperature. Consult product representatives, and maintain updated written instructions for mixing chemicals.
5. When processing personal laundry follow the label directions for selection of hot or cold water wash. Use the appropriate detergent and chemicals for the water temperature
6. Run the load through a complete wash, rinse, and spin cycle.
7. Select the dryer cycle according to the label directions, or hang to dry.

Regular /Normal Soiled Laundry			
	Domestic machines	Commercial machines	Off site linen services
Separating laundry	A system to identify heavily soiled laundry is required	A system to identify heavily soiled laundry is required	No system to identify heavily soiled laundry is required
Loading washer	Full loads	Full loads	N/A
Chemical additions	Household detergent to be used	Select standard formula*	N/A
Manufactures directions	Maintain written direction in the department	Maintain written direction in the department	N/A
Cleaning machines	No need to disinfect machine between uses	No need to disinfect machine between uses	N/A
* For programming and maintenance of proper and adequate detergents/chemicals consult vendor			

2.2 HEAVILY SOILED LAUNDRY

1. When handling heavily soiled laundry, staff are to wear the appropriate PPE: gloves and gowns at all times and masks and eye protection if sprays or splashes are likely.
2. Wash hands following the removal of PPE and before contact with clean laundry.
3. Laundry is to be processed in the machine with the minimal of handling. No pre soaking in sinks is to be done; any solid waste will have been removed.
4. When laundering ensure the detergents and chemicals used are appropriate for the water temperature. Consult product representatives, and maintain updated written instructions for mixing chemicals
5. If using a domestic washing machine 2 full wash cycles are required
6. Refer to the table below to select the wash routine and chemical additions according to the type of washing machine
7. Select the dryer cycle according to the label directions, or hang to dry

Heavily Soiled Laundry			
	Domestic machines	Commercial machines*	Off site linen services
Separating laundry	A system to identify heavily soiled laundry is required	A system to identify heavily soiled laundry is required	No system to identify heavily soiled laundry is required
Loading washer	Create half loads Note: the items will require 2 full wash cycles	Full loads	N/A
Chemical additions	Full detergent/chemicals used for both loads	Select “Heavy” formula with extra flushing and rinsing**	N/A
Manufactures directions	Maintain written direction in the department	Maintain written direction in the department	N/A
Cleaning machines	No need to disinfect machine between uses	No need to disinfect machine between uses	N/A
<p>* If the commercial machine is non programmable follow the domestic machine double wash (full load) ** Pre programmed wash formula may vary due to size and configuration of the commercial wash equipment Consult representative re: recommended chemical formula for heavily soiled linen.</p>			

3.0 LAUNDRY ROOM SET UP AND LAUNDRY STAFF

1. A clear separation of clean and soiled areas for processing laundry is required.
2. Sinks need to be available for hand washing in the laundry room.
3. Staff need to have ongoing education on the detergents and disinfectants used and be informed of any changes to products
4. Access to and knowledge of donning and doffing PPE is required
5. Minimize the number of staff responsible for laundry
6. Maintain education for staff that process laundry to ensure consistency of best practices.
7. When replacing laundry equipment consideration should be given to commercial machines as they provide good control of water temperature, cycle time and chemical additions.

4.0 REFERENCES

Health Canada 1999. Infection Control Guidelines: Routine Practices and Additional Precautions for Preventing the Transmission of Infection in Health Care.

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Canadian Committee on Antibiotic Resistance (CCAR): Infection Prevention and Control Best Practices for Long Term Care, Home and Community Care including Health Care Offices and Ambulatory Clinics. June 2007.

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