

# Dry Cleaning and Laundry Services

This document is intended for employers, workers and customers/participants of dry cleaning and laundry services, as an overview of potential hazards in the workplace due to COVID-19.

In all cases, guidance from local public health authorities must be followed and general COVID-19 prevention practices should be implemented, as outlined in: <https://www.ccohs.ca/pdfs/covid-general.pdf>

## Consider the Risks

Providing dry cleaning and laundry services may involve close contact with other people and frequently touched surfaces. The chance of COVID-19 spreading during these activities depends on the number and characteristics of people who attend (e.g., age, maturity, physical ability, comprehension), proximity and durations of interactions between customers, as well as the measures put in place by employers.

Each dry cleaning and laundry facility may have unique situations. Assess the risk for each activity and interaction separately. Consider the following:

- Review the characteristics of each setting. Consider:
  - How close employees work from one another.
  - How many employees and customers are present at the same time.
- What interactions are occurring in closed or confined indoor spaces. Consider:
  - Interactions with customers at the service desk, laundromat, etc.
  - Pick up and delivery services
- Is the ventilation system maintained and working properly? Consider:
  - Whether windows and doors can be opened to provide fresh air into the facility.
- Can employees and customers follow public health measures appropriately?
- Is there frequent contact with high-touch surfaces or shared items such as door handles, computers, chairs, tables, faucets, vehicles, tools and equipment, etc.? Consider:
  - Surfaces in the customer entry – waiting area and washrooms (if available).
  - Shared spaces for coworkers – lunch/break rooms, washrooms.
  - Shared tools, machines and equipment.
- Can work procedures be implemented to reduce contact between individuals? Consider:
  - Providing flexible attendance, start time and days of work?
  - Identify employees who can work from home, all or some of the time.
- Is there availability of supplies and facilities necessary for frequent hand hygiene? Consider:
  - Hand washing stations with soap and water.
  - Hand sanitizing stations with 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
  - Tissues and waste bins.



# Dry Cleaning and Laundry Services

## Communication

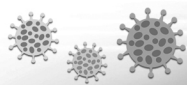
- Notify workers and customers, vendors, contractors, etc. in advance if there are changes to policies or practices, including reduced hours or restricted access (e.g. washrooms, lockers, etc.).
- Information can be shared online, through advertisements, with notices at the front doors, and verbally by workers.
- Post signs for workers and others not to enter the facility if they may be sick, suspect they may have been exposed or have travelled outside of Canada within the last 14 days.
- Post signs throughout the facility to encourage physical distancing, cleaning and disinfecting of equipment, hand hygiene, and respiratory etiquette.
- Make sure that all communications including internal posters and signs are suitable for people's age, ability, reading level, and language preferences.
- Provide your COVID-19 safety requirements before external service providers visit, and work with them to meet their safety requirements.
- Help workers and customers understand that protective measures are necessary, and that their experience might be different than what they are used to. Remind them to be considerate of your workers and other customers.

## Screening

- Consider asking screening questions before workers and customers, etc. enter using a checklist from your local public health authority or have them complete a questionnaire.
- Symptoms can vary person to person and within different age groups.
- Older adults, people of any age with chronic medical conditions, people of any age who are immunocompromised, and those living with obesity are at risk for more severe disease and outcomes from COVID-19. The most common symptoms are:
  - New or worsening cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Temperature equal to or over 38°C
  - Feeling feverish
  - Chills
  - Fatigue or weakness
  - Muscle or body aches
  - New loss of smell or taste
  - Headache
  - Gastrointestinal symptoms (abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting)
  - Feeling very unwell
  - Skin changes or rashes (young children)
- Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to others. Some people with COVID-19 have mild or no symptoms.
- Record the names and contact information of all workers and customers, and vendors in the workplace to assist with contact tracing by the local public health authority if needed. Make sure that privacy is protected, and that the information is stored in a safe and secure manner.
- Anyone who does not pass screening should not enter the facility. They should wear a mask (if not already doing so), return home, preferable not by public transit, and call their health care provider or local public health authority for further instruction.

## Physical Distancing, Engineering and Administrative and Other Controls

- Allow workers to work from home whenever possible.



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- Consider installing barriers (e.g., installing plexiglass above head height at reception).
- Remove soft furnishings and objects (e.g., magazines, newspapers) that cannot be easily cleaned.
- Minimize the number of workers and customers on-site. Stagger start times, break times, meetings, safety talks, and orientations.
- Re-arrange waiting areas and staff break or lunchrooms to promote physical distancing.
- Shut off water fountains or replace them with water bottle refill stations. Each person should have their own labelled water bottle. Water bottles or food should not be shared.
- Encourage workers to only work at one location and assign cohort groups of workers to the same shifts every week if possible. Adjust schedules to reflect any necessary changes.
- If there are fewer workers available, make sure essential roles such as trained supervision, and first aid or emergency response persons are still present.
- Make sure workers are trained to work safely, including when replacing the duties of others.
- Consider asking customers, suppliers, vendors, etc. to call ahead of time to make an appointment to schedule a drop off or pick up. Only allow them to enter at their pre-determined appointment time.
- Consider curbside drop-off and pick-up. Ask customers to call when they arrive and remain in their vehicle. Maintain 2 metre distance when retrieving or delivering dry cleaning and laundry items.
- For pickup and home delivery service:
  - Provide garment bags to customers for pick up and delivery.
  - Ask customers to ensure laundry is placed in an airtight sealed bag for 24 hours prior to placing in a company garment bag.
  - Ask customers to place laundry outside their homes to provide contactless pickup.
- Complete hand hygiene after completing curbside transaction or home pickup and delivery.
- Restrict non-essential persons from entering the building. Post signs providing them with contact information (e.g., reception) rather than entering without an appointment.
- Maintain physical distancing wherever possible between customers, service providers, etc. and between coworkers including outdoor entrances and walkways.
- Manage how individuals will use or travel through shared spaces, such as hallways and washrooms. Mark one-way routes, and use floor markings, signs, and other visual cues.
- Minimize worker contact during sign-in. Have the supervisor sign in for people (or provide separate pens) or ask workers to text their supervisor. Clean any sign-in devices between users.
- Minimize customer, client, etc. contact with paperwork and surfaces as much as possible. Encourage pre-pay, on-line, credit, debit or e-transfer purchases to minimize or eliminate exposures. Clean payment pads and touch screens between each use.
- Hold virtual orientations to avoid touching papers. Submit documents electronically, or wash hands after handling papers.
- Use videoconferencing or teleconferencing when possible for meetings and gatherings.
- When videoconferencing or teleconferencing is not possible, hold meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces or outside continuing to maintain physical distancing.
- Set a clear policy for what is expected of workers if they get sick, have symptoms, receive a positive COVID-19 test result, or if an exposure is reported involving a co-worker or customer, clients, etc.
- Consider a flexible attendance policy to allow employees to stay at home if they are sick or need to care for a sick individual.
- Develop procedures for contacting local public health authorities in the event of a positive case.
- Discourage unnecessary physical contact such as handshakes, hugs and high fives.
- Provide mental health and grief support resources.



# Dry Cleaning and Laundry Services

## Ventilation and Aerosol Transmission

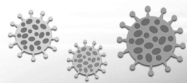
- Ensure that ventilation systems for indoor spaces operate properly.
- Increase introduction and circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, or other methods. Do not open windows and doors if doing so creates a safety risk.
- Powerful portable cooling fans might increase the spread of COVID-19 in enclosed spaces. Use other ways to keep rooms cool, such as adjusting building ventilation systems, and air conditioning units.
- Ventilation systems should be adjusted to:
  - Increase filtration efficiency to the highest level appropriate for the system.
  - Increase fresh air flow/percentage of outdoor air (increase % of outdoor air in HVAC air supply, open windows and doors, etc.).
  - Limit use of demand-controlled ventilation; keep system running at the optimal setting.
- Explore the use of portable high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtration units.
- Reduce noise levels so workers and customers can speak as quietly as possible to avoid the spread of the virus through shouting, yelling, etc.

## Personal Hygiene

- Hand wash and sanitizer stations should be well stocked and easy to find near the entrance and other appropriate areas. Make sure they are accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Everyone should perform hand hygiene with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer when entering and leaving the facility after using washrooms, before and after eating and drinking, before and after touching shared equipment and surfaces, and after contact with another person.
- Encourage good respiratory etiquette. Everyone should sneeze or cough into a tissue or into the bend of their arm instead of their hands.
- Encourage the use of tissues and other means to prevent the spread of bodily fluids. Immediately dispose of used tissues in lined garbage cans and follow up with hand hygiene.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Depending on the type of surface, viruses can live on objects and surfaces for a few hours to days. Develop a cleaning and disinfection program with a schedule and checklists for all shared areas, facilities, furniture, and equipment. Clean between users.
- Focus on commonly touched objects and surfaces such as doors, counters, chairs, handles, railings, lounge chairs, tabletops, debit machines and ATMs, touchscreens, phones, light switches, faucets, taps, sanitizer dispensers, water bottle refill stations, washing machines, dryers and any protective barriers.
- Clean and disinfect vehicles that are used for pick-up and delivery. Include the phone, cab, radio, tablets, cargo door handles, seat belts, steering wheel, mirrors, gear shift, control knobs, buttons, latches, handles, clipboards, pens and any other high-contact areas.
- Shared spaces such as lunchrooms and washrooms should also be cleaned and disinfected more often.
- Remove soft furnishings and objects (e.g., magazines, newspapers) that cannot be easily cleaned.
- Clean and disinfect the work area before and after contractors complete their work.
- Follow the occupational health and safety requirements for your jurisdiction including following the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) about hazardous products in the workplace.
- Provide workers with training on cleaning and disinfecting procedures, adequate supplies, and access to required personal protective equipment, if needed.
- Follow the product's safety data sheet or manufacturer's instructions for use (e.g., wear gloves, use in well-ventilated area, amount and duration of product needed to kill germs).



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- Wash hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol before and after personal protective equipment (PPE) is used.
- Place cleaning supplies and lined garbage cans where it is accessible to workers.
- Clean visibly dirty surfaces before disinfecting.
- Damp cleaning methods (damp clean cloths and wet mops) are preferred over dry methods (dusting and sweeping). Damp methods of cleaning are less likely to distribute virus droplets into the air.
- Use dedicated re-useable cleaning materials (towels, sponges, mops, etc.) that can be washed using laundry soap and then dried completely.
- Put used disposable cleaning items (e.g., mop heads, cloths) in a lined garbage bin before disposing of them with regular waste. Reusable cleaning items can be washed using regular laundry soap and hot water (60-90°C).
- Use a household or commercial disinfectant to destroy or inactivate the virus.
  - Use a disinfectant with a drug identification number (DIN). This number means that it has been approved for use in Canada.
  - Read and follow manufacturer's instructions for the safe use of products (e.g., wear gloves, use in well-ventilated area, allow enough contact time for disinfectant to kill germs based on the product being used).
  - If approved household or commercial disinfectant products are not available, hard surfaces can be disinfected using a mixture of 5 mL of bleach (5% sodium hypochlorite) and 250 mL of water. Test surfaces before using a bleach solution. Bleach can be corrosive. Follow instructions for safe handling of bleach.
  - If the use of liquids can be withstood, disinfect high-touch electronic devices (e.g., touch screens, pin pads, keyboards) with alcohol or disinfectant wipes.
- Clean so that when the surface is wiped, the surface still appears wet.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning regularly used electronics like keyboards, tablets and smartboards. If electronics can withstand the use of liquids, disinfect them with 70% alcohol, like alcohol prep wipes.
- Dispose of single-use tissues, wipes, gloves, and other cleaning materials in a plastic lined waste container.
- Replace garbage bins with no-touch receptacles or remove lids that require contact to open.
- Empty garbage at least daily. Use disposable gloves when handling garbage.
- Follow up with hand hygiene.

## Laundry

- All laundry should be transferred in a closed container or a tied bag to avoid handling or spreading the virus.
- Wipe down the machine controls and handles with a disinfectant wipe before and after use.
- Minimize contact with laundry. Do not shake or hug dirty laundry. Place directly from the laundry container or bag into the washer.
- Machine wash all laundry at 60-90°C (140-194°F) using regular laundry detergent and dry thoroughly.
- Wash and disinfect laundry bag and hamper before re-filling with clean laundry.
- Take clean laundry home to fold or fold on a cleaned and disinfected surface.
- Close dryer doors when not in use.
- Don't leave soiled laundry or baskets on top of machines.
- Don't leave cleaning product residue in machines.
- Limit the number of people in the laundry room to ensure physical distancing.
- Wash hands after handling dirty laundry.
- Instruct workers to wash their work clothing separately upon returning home.



# Dry Cleaning and Laundry Services

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Continue to use PPE for existing occupational safety hazards and emergencies as directed by applicable laws and your employer.
- Situations where PPE may be considered for protection from COVID-19 include:
  - Wearing gloves when cleaning as recommended by the product's safe work instructions or safety data sheet.
  - Wearing disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids.
  - Wearing PPE if direct care is unavoidable (e.g. first aid in a medical emergency).
- If workers need to wear PPE, train them on how to wear, remove, work with, care for the equipment, and to understand its limitations.
- Clean and disinfect any shared PPE before you wear it.
- Wash hands before wearing and after removing PPE

## Non-Medical Masks or Face Coverings

- The wearing of non-medical masks or cloth face coverings is an additional personal practice that can help to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Wear a non-medical mask when:
  - You are in public and you might come in close contact with others
  - You are in any indoor space with people from outside your immediate household
  - Advised by your local public health authority
- Ensure [everyone wears their mask correctly](#), making sure nose and mouth are covered. People should be instructed to avoid touching the mask while wearing it.
- Be aware that non-medical masks have limitations and improper mask use and disposal can increase the risk of infection.
- Instruct workers (participants, members, etc.) to change their mask if it becomes wet or soiled. They may wish to bring a second mask in a clean paper bag, envelope, or container that does not trap moisture. Reusable soiled masks should be stored in a separate bag or container. Workers should be reminded not to touch the outside of the mask while removing it and to wash their hands before putting on and after taking off the mask.
- For some situations, not being able to see the person's face and mouth clearly may cause difficulties. Consider providing a transparent mask if appropriate for workers and customers that may require that visibility.
- For customers who cannot wear a mask for medical reasons, offer accommodations such as curbside pick up, or providing service outside of the facility with a mobile keypad, or through a window. Customers with a disability are not required to provide written proof that they cannot wear a mask; however, you should also have the right to provide service in different ways to accommodate their medical needs while protecting your employees.
- Workers who may have health-related concerns associated with wearing a mask and should get guidance from their healthcare provider.
- Workers should be instructed on [the differences between and when to use](#) respirators, surgical masks and non-medical masks.
- Do not allow the mask to be a hazard when performing other tasks or activities, such as getting caught in moving machinery or equipment.

**If you or someone you know is in crisis, please contact your local hospital, call 911 immediately, or contact a Crisis Centre in your area.**

<https://suicideprevention.ca/need-help/>







# Dry Cleaning and Laundry Services

For further information on COVID-19, refer to the Public Health Agency of Canada  
<https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus>

**Note that this guidance is just some of the adjustments organizations can make during a pandemic. Adapt this list by adding your own good practices and policies to meet your organization's specific needs.**

**Disclaimer:** As public and occupational health and safety information is changing rapidly, local public health authorities should be consulted for specific, regional guidance. This information is not intended to replace medical advice or legislated health and safety obligations. Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy, currency and completeness of the information, CCOHS does not guarantee, warrant, represent or undertake that the information provided is correct, accurate or current. CCOHS is not liable for any loss, claim, or demand arising directly or indirectly from any use or reliance upon the information.