



COVID-19 Infection Prevention Competency Tools for Use in Congregate Residential Facilities

Introduction

Congregate residential settings present unique infection control challenges. A congregate residential setting is a facility where a group of people reside and gather in close proximity with each other for a limited or extended period of time. This includes nursing homes, adult care facilities, group homes, homeless shelters, correctional facilities, residential substance use treatment facilities, and supportive housing sites. Interventions to prevent and interrupt COVID-19 transmission should be part of a comprehensive infection surveillance plan for your facility. The competency tools included in this document focus on cleaning and disinfecting as well as the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and serve as a guide to evaluate infection prevention processes at your facility.

How to use the competency tools

A staff member may act as the evaluator and observe another staff member perform the sequence detailed in the tables below on an annual basis, or more frequently if deviations from practice are identified at your facility. The evaluator should be a senior or manager level staff member and have knowledge of the processes in the competencies and can teach the process being evaluated. The evaluator guidance in the competencies below serves as a prompt to the evaluator to look for specific details or to ask questions of the staff being evaluated. The staff member being evaluated should be asked to verbalize each step as it is performed. If any step is not completed properly, the staff member should be instructed on how to properly complete the task. Depending on the overall outcome, the evaluation should be repeated at a later date at the discretion of the evaluator (i.e., a few weeks later) to assess improvement. When each step is completed properly, the staff member should be considered competent in that activity. For assistance using the competency tools or other infection prevention questions, contact the NYC Health Department's Congregate Settings Investigation and Response Unit infection prevention team at IPC@health.nyc.gov.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
Cleaning and Disinfecting Competency Tool¹**

Employee Name: _____	Job Title: _____
Evaluator Name: _____	Job Title: _____

Task	Evaluator Guidance	Competent	
		Yes	No
Gather appropriate supplies	Supplies include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate disinfectant(s) listed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as effective against COVID-19². • Additional cleaning supplies as needed (e.g., cleaning rag). • Appropriate PPE (e.g., gloves and eye protection). 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don (put on) PPE when appropriate	When cleaning a room occupied by a resident with confirmed or suspected COVID-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don full PPE (gown, gloves, eye protection, and N95 or higher level respirator) in the correct sequence.³ For routine cleaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don gloves. <p>Note: Staff should not touch personal items such as their cell phone with soiled gloves and when in PPE.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clean soiled area	Use soap and water or other cleaning agent to remove visible dirt or buildup.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹ [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(2021, June 15\) Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)

² [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) About List N: Disinfectants for Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

³ The correct sequence for donning PPE is as follows: (1) identify and gather the proper PPE. (2) Perform hand hygiene. (3) Put on isolation gown. (4) Put on N95 or higher level respiratory (facemask if respirator not available). (5) Put on eye protection. (6) Put on gloves. Source: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(2020, June 9\) Using Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#)

	Note: Not applicable for electronics. For electronics, check manufacturer’s cleaning recommendations.		
Disinfect area	Disinfect surface with appropriate disinfectant following instructions on the label. Ask participant to verbalize: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturer’s cleaning instruction for electronics and other objects • The disinfectant’s contact time (how long the surface must remain wet for the disinfectant to be effective). 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doff (take off) PPE	After cleaning a room used by a symptomatic person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to doffing sequence in competency tool. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dispose of trash	Properly dispose of any trash generated from the cleaning and disinfection process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clean set of gloves is donned prior to touching and moving the trash. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remove gloves safely and perform hand hygiene	Hand hygiene can be performed with either hand sanitizer or soap and water. Observe individual perform hand hygiene properly including the front and back of hands, in between the fingers, fingertips, thumb, and wrist area. ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Follow up actions:

Employee Signature: _____	Date: _____
Evaluator Signature: _____	Date: _____

⁴ [World Health Organization \(2009, May\) How to Handwash?](#)

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
Donning when Caring for a Resident with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19
Competency Tool**

Employee Name: _____	Job Title: _____
Evaluator Name: _____	Job Title: _____

Task	Evaluator Guidance	Competent	
		Yes	No
Gather appropriate supplies	Supplies include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 pair of gloves Disposable gown 1 N95 respirator (or equivalent or higher level) or disposable mask if respirator is not available Eye protection (face shield or goggles) <p>Note: The individual should identify the type of respirator and size for which they have been previously fit-tested or other appropriate mask.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform hand hygiene	Hand hygiene can be performed with either hand sanitizer or soap and water. Observe individual perform hand hygiene properly including the front and back of hands, in between the fingers, fingertips, thumb, and wrist area for 20 seconds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don (put on) disposable gown	Opening of the gown goes in the back. Gown fits properly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covers torso from neck to knees. Arms extend to end of wrists. Can wrap around back. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tie gown at the back and neck	Individual can ask for assistance to tie straps in the back. Once secured, the gown should cover the back and not slip from shoulders with movement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don (put on) disposable mask or N-95	For surgical mask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure ties at crown of the head and base of the neck or hook loops around ears. Fit band to nose bridge. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fit bottom of mask below the chin. <p>For N95:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual has the appropriate size and mask. • Secure bottom band around base of neck. • Secure top band at crown of head. Do not cross bands. • Fit band to nose bridge. • Perform fit check by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exhaling into the respirator and feeling for air leaking around the edges of the mask or ○ By inhaling so that the respirator collapses slightly, hold breath for 10 seconds, feeling for a slight collapse of the respirator and air leakage around the edges of the mask 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don eye protection	Face shield, goggles, or safety glasses are acceptable eye protection. Adjust fit as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don gloves	Put on gloves and extend over the cuff of isolation gown.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Follow up actions:

Employee Signature: _____	Date: _____
Evaluator Signature: _____	Date: _____

Additional resources:

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(2020, August 19\) Using Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(2020, July 14\) Demonstration of Donning \(Putting On\) Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) video](#)

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
Doffing Competency Tool**

Employee Name: _____	Job Title: _____
Evaluator Name: _____	Job Title: _____

Note: Remember that the front of the gown, outside of gloves, and outside of eye protection are all considered contaminated. Any breaches in the PPE doffing process could result in self-contamination, and all steps should be performed with care.

Doffing Sequence	Evaluator Guidance	Competent	
		Yes	No
Remove gown	Untie/unfasten at waist first, then at the neck.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remove gloves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grasp outside of one glove with opposite gloved hand and peel off. • Hold removed glove in remaining gloved hand. • Slide fingers of ungloved hand under remaining glove at the wrist. • Peel off remaining glove and turn inside out, continuing to hold the first glove. <p>Note: Gloves should be removed in a way that avoids contaminating the hands. The outside (contaminated side) of the glove should never touch the skin. There are multiple ways to remove gloves safely. This competency describes one way to remove gloves. If the individual fails to remove gloves safely, counsel them on technique.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dispose gloves in trash		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform hand hygiene	Hand hygiene can be performed with either hand sanitizer or soap and water. Observe individual perform hand hygiene properly including the front and back of hands, in	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	between the fingers, fingertips, thumb, and wrist area for 20 seconds.		
Remove eye protection/ face shield	Both items should be removed by the strap at the back of the head. Remove away from face.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remove mask or respirator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not touch the front of the respirator or mask. For N95: remove the bottom strap by touching only the strap and bring it carefully over the head. Grasp the top strap and bring it carefully over the head, and then pull the respirator away from the face without touching the front of the respirator. <p>Note: Mask or respirator may be left on as appropriate. If the mask or respirator has become wet, damaged, or soiled, it should be removed and discarded.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform hand hygiene	Hand hygiene can be performed with either hand sanitizer or soap and water. Observe individual perform hand hygiene properly including the front and back of hands, in between the fingers, fingertips, thumb, and wrist area for 20 seconds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Follow up actions:

Employee Signature: _____	Date: _____
Evaluator Signature: _____	Date: _____

Additional resources:

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(2020, August 19\) Using Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#)

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention PPE doffing video \(2020, April 21\)](#)
[Demonstration of Doffing \(Taking Off\) Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) video](#)

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves. 7.20.21