

Infection Control Measures for homes



In an environment where young people live together with rotating staff, infection control is a key mitigation strategy in preventing harm from infection. The strategies set out in this fact sheet are particularly important in situations where young people are less likely to comply with social distancing measures.

Outlined below is an overview of key infection control actions that providers can take to reduce the spread of the virus around a home setting.

Action	Detailed Mitigation Strategies
Employ Physical Distancing	<p>Encourage physical distancing, including maintaining a distance of 1.5 metres between one another and staff members where possible (noting that this will not always be possible within the environment of a small house, and where young people forget to comply).</p> <p>Designate private and confidential open spaces for interactions to minimise risk in enclosed environments.</p> <p>Use physical barriers such as a big table between staff and young people to create distance.</p> <p>Require staff to wash their hands before and after every face-to-face interaction and ask young people to do the same.</p> <p>If required to transport young people, transport less people per trip and ensure that passengers have more space between one another.</p> <p>Move staff meetings to video-conference where possible (e.g. Skype, CISCO WebEx or Microsoft Teams).</p>
Stagger Room Access	<p>Create staggered access to shower and bathroom facilities to prevent young people using the facilities at the same time.</p> <p>Discourage congregation in common areas.</p> <p>Schedules for the use of common areas could be used where helpful.</p>
Control Air Flow	<p>Ensure that shared spaces have good air flow, such as by an air conditioner or an opened window.</p>
Implement Safe Hygiene Practices	<p>Encourage everyone in the house to cover their cough or sneeze with a tissue (or into their elbow if a tissue is unavailable) and have rubbish bins available to dispose of tissues immediately.</p> <p>Encourage young people to wash their hands regularly, with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • upon entering and leaving the premises • after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing • after using the bathroom • before eating • before and after the use of cooking utensils e.g. cutlery, dishes, glasses <p>All tableware to go through the dishwasher if available.</p> <p>Use of disposable tableware might also be considered.</p>

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The advice in this fact sheet has been taken from the *Guidelines: Residential Care Settings for Young People in Out of Home Care (OOHC) and COVID-19*, prepared by the Department of Communities and Justice, in consultation with ACWA and an expert group of service providers, and the Australian Services Union (ASU).

Action	Detailed Mitigation Strategies
Increase Availability of Hygiene & Other Supplies	<p>Ensure all rest rooms in the house are well stocked with soap, disposable paper towels and guidance for hand washing.</p> <p>Do a big food order to reduce need for staff to go to the shops regularly.</p> <p>Provide hand sanitiser (60% alcohol min.) at key locations around the house (by entrance/exits, phone, computers, eating areas etc).</p> <p>Provide access to tissues and plastic bags/lined rubbish bins for the proper disposal of used tissues.</p>
Implement Stringent Cleaning Procedures	<p>Rigorous cleaning procedures should be implemented in common areas, as transmission can occur via contaminated surfaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disinfect high touch surfaces at beginning and end of every shift at a minimum e.g. doorknobs, phones, tablets, monitors, bench tops etc. • Checklists could be used to record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item cleaned • Time and data • Staff Member responsible <p>Cleaners could be brought in to support staff with the more stringent cleaning requirements.</p>
Reduce Cleaning Frequency of these rooms to 'As Needed'	<p>In the young person's self-isolation accommodation setting, consider reducing cleaning frequency to as-needed (e.g. soiled items and surfaces) to avoid unnecessary contact.</p> <p>Staff should wait as long as practical after use by COVID-19 positive young person to clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces, as the virus remains on hard surfaces for up to 12 hours, and the sooner a staff member cleans the surface the greater the chance they have of contracting COVID-19.</p> <p>Where appropriate, provide young person with personal cleaning supplies including tissues, paper towels, cleaners, and EPA-registered disinfectants.</p> <p>Please contact your DCJ contract manager if you require an environmental clean in the event of a confirmed case.</p>

More information can be found in the *Guidelines: Residential Care Settings for Young People in Out of Home Care (OOHC) and COVID-19*. E.g. Appendix 3: Handwashing Technique and Appendix 4: Cleaning Procedures—Waste.

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