



**Cleaning & Disinfection Guidance: Shared  
Workspaces/PPE/Tools/Equipment**

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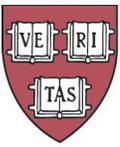
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## Purpose

This guidance addresses how to properly manage shared workspaces, personal protective equipment (PPE), and tools or equipment to prevent and minimize the spread of COVID-19. It has broad applicability and can be utilized by operational service units, as well as in general office, residential, and academic spaces.

## Background

Shared workspaces can include cubicles, benches/tabletops, desks, workstations, etc. In some operations, PPE may be for specific operation(s) and left in place at each use for the next person performing that operation.

Types of PPE that may be shared vary widely depending on work duties, but can include:

- Oven mitts
- Welders’ masks
- Fall protection
- Earplugs

Specialized tools and equipment that may be shared can also vary from intrinsically safe hand tools, meters, monitors, and other tools/devices. Typically, none of these are routinely cleaned or disinfected by employees or custodial services.

Given that the transmission of the SARs CoV-2 virus can occur from droplets that remain on hard surfaces, this practice of sharing workspaces, PPE, tools, and equipment can present a risk of transmission. As such, wherever possible, the practice of sharing workspaces, PPE, tools, or equipment should be eliminated.

However, if this is not possible, it is important that these items are properly cleaned/disinfected before and after each use to minimize the risk of exposure to the virus.

## Assessing Shared Workspaces/PPE/Tools/Equipment

It is important to collaborate with all potentially affected staff to identify in the workplace(s) where and when the practice of shared workspaces, PPE, tools, and equipment is taking place. Once identified, collaborate with staff and others to identify approaches to eliminate this practice.



## Evaluation Questions

- Can the work task or process requiring sharing be eliminated for short term?
- Can six feet of social distancing be maintained while the task or process is conducted?
  - Are temporary barriers (caution tape, signage) available to keep others from entering the workspace?
  - Can work be delayed or put on hold until social distancing is attainable?
  - Does a physical barrier need to be installed to conduct work if six feet cannot be maintained?
  - If the task calls for more than one employee working closer than six feet apart contact Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) for a work assessment.
- Can the work task or process be restructured or assigned in a way to minimize the need for PPE or the number of employees sharing the workspace, PPE, equipment, or tools?
  - Can work be accomplished remotely?
  - Is it possible to outfit each employee with their own PPE, tools, equipment?
  - Is single-use disposable PPE an option for the task?

## Cleaning and Disinfection

If sharing cannot be stopped or avoided, the affected workspaces, PPE, tools, and equipment must be cleaned and then disinfected before and after each use with an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved disinfectant.

## Precautions

It is important to determine if the cleaning/disinfectant products will compromise the efficacy of the PPE or the functionality of various tools and equipment; contact the manufacturer or distributor supplier. In some cases, cleaning/disinfection may require specialty equipment, or an outside company needs to be used.



## Product Type Guidelines

### Separate Cleaning and Disinfection Products

If using separate cleaning and disinfection products, clean the surfaces first, following the cleaning product's directions for use. If required, rinse surfaces after cleaning. Disinfection products must be applied, in accordance with the label directions, and each has a specific "dwell" time which is the amount of time that the disinfectant must remain wet on the surface in order to kill the virus. The EPA web page specifies these dwell times for approved disinfectants.

### Combination Cleaning and Disinfection Products

If using a combination cleaner/disinfectant product, clean the surfaces first, following the product's directions for use. Apply the product a second time, using a fresh wipe or cloth (depending on chosen product formula), and wipe the targeted surfaces so that they remain wet for the required dwell time.

### Cleaning and Disinfection Frequency Logging/Tracking

It is recommended that workplaces track/log the cleaning/disinfection frequency to ensure it happens. See the [disinfection procedure example in EH&S Reusable Safety Glasses/Goggles/Face Shields: Use, Care, and Decontamination](#).

## Shared Surfaces

### Workspaces

Shared workspaces shall be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use focusing on high touch surfaces (tabletops, railings, arm rests, etc.).

### PPE

Shared PPE shall be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use following the manufacturer's instructions. If there are no available instructions, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 60% alcohol and thoroughly dry the surface.



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## Tools/Equipment

Shared tools/equipment shall be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use following the manufacturer's instructions. If there are no available instructions, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 60% alcohol and thoroughly dry the surface. Consider putting a wipeable cover over top electronic touch screens for easier cleaning.

## Launderable Materials

Launderable materials shall be washed and dried in accordance with manufacturer guidelines. A procedure should be developed to track the use and laundering frequency.

## Post Cleaning and Disinfection

Following cleaning/disinfection, personnel must wash their hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and warm water. If not near a handwashing sink, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.