

## Environmental Services Best Practices – General Cleaning Principles

### *Personal Care/Group/Residential Homes*

#### Definitions

**Cleaning:** The physical removal of foreign material (e.g., dust, soil) and organic material (e.g., blood, secretions, excretions, microorganisms). Cleaning physically removes rather than kills microorganisms. It is accomplished with water, detergents and mechanical action.

**Disinfecting:** The inactivation of disease-producing microorganisms. Medical equipment/devices must be cleaned thoroughly before effective disinfection can take place. Note: - Disinfection does not destroy bacterial spores.

#### Cleaning Process

**Proceed only after a visual preliminary site assessment** to determine if:

- resident status could pose a challenge to safe cleaning
- there is any need for additional PPE or supplies (e.g., if there are any spills of blood/body fluids or if the resident is on Additional Precautions)
- there are any obstacles (e.g., clutter) or issues that could pose a challenge to safe cleaning
- there is any damaged or broken furniture or surfaces to be reported to supervisor/management

#### **Proceed from Cleaner to Dirtier**

Proceed **from cleaner to dirtier** areas to avoid spreading dirt and microorganisms.

Examples include:

- during cleaning, clean low-touch surfaces before high-touch surfaces
- clean resident living areas (e.g., bed, chair) before toilets
- clean general resident areas not under Additional Precautions before those areas under Additional Precautions

#### **Proceed from High to Low (Top to Bottom)**

Proceed from **high to low** to prevent dirt and microorganisms from dripping or falling and contaminating already cleaned areas. Examples include:

- cleaning bed rails before bed legs
- cleaning counter surfaces before cleaning floors
- cleaning floors last to allow collection of dirt and microorganisms that may have fallen

**Immediately Attend to Body Fluid Spills** – see separate procedure – “SASWH Environmental Services Best Practices Cleaning Biological Spills”