



RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

DIRECTOR:

Wayne P. Santel Jr.

**POLICY
NUMBER:
17.14-2 DOC**

**EFFECTIVE
DATE:
10/12/2023**

**SUBJECT: CLEANING,
DISINFESTATION, AND LAUNDERING
OF INMATE CLOTHING AND BEDDING**

LAST REVIEWED: 10/2023

**SECTION: SANITATION
AND HYGIENE**

SUPERSEDES: 17.14-1 DOC

AUTHORITY: Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) § 42-56-10(22), Powers of the director

REFERENCES: Centers for Disease Control – 2003 Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health Care Facilities; The most recent versions of RIDOC policies 10.19 DOC, [Personal Protective Equipment](#); 11.01 DOC, [Inmate Discipline](#); 18.15 DOC, [Ectoparasite Control](#)

INMATE/PUBLIC ACCESS: YES

AVAILABLE IN SPANISH: YES

I. PURPOSE:

- A. To establish a cleaning and/or disinfestation program for the contaminated clothing of all inmates and of new commitments entering the Rhode Island Department of Corrections (RIDOC) intake facilities – Intake Service Center (males) or Gloria DiSandro McDonald building (females).
- B. To establish a program regarding the laundering and issuance of inmate bedding.

II. POLICY:

- A. To prevent cross contamination or re-infestation upon release, all inmates who exhibit evidence of lice, scabies, skin infections, and/or whose clothing is grossly soiled and/or identified as contaminated, shall have their clothing laundered hygienically clean and/or disinfested prior to storage, or destroyed with the inmate's permission.

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- B. Clothing and bedding shall be managed in a manner appropriate with regulatory standards for infection control and that ensure inmate worker and staff safety.
 - 1. All inmates and staff involved in laundering shall utilize safe storage and transport practices appropriate for clean/contaminated laundry to minimize the risk of contamination.
 - 2. All inmates and staff involved in laundering have appropriate protection and training to minimize exposure risk to infection.
 - C. Laundering practices shall be based on laundry machines' manufacturer recommendations, then mechanically dried prior to being stored.

III. DEFINITIONS:

- 1. **Bedding** - mattresses, pillows, pillowcases, linens/sheets, and blankets.
- 2. **Contaminated Clothing/Laundry** - clothing/laundry that has been soiled with blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM) such as semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid, peritoneal fluid, amniotic fluid, saliva in dental procedures, any bodily fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood, and all bodily fluids that is difficult or impossible to determine its infectivity.
- 3. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** - equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards that cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses. Examples of PPE include disposable gloves, puncture resistant gloves, masks, and impervious gowns. See the most recent version of RIDOC policy 10.19 DOC, [Personal Protective Equipment](#), for more information.

IV. PROCEDURES:

A. Handling and Laundering of Contaminated Laundry

All affected articles, contaminated clothing belonging to new commitments or any inmates are destroyed, with the inmate's permission, or managed as follows:

- 1. The contaminated items are placed in a water-soluble bag which then placed in a red plastic bag. Outside of the plastic bag shall be marked "Contaminated."

2. Contaminated laundry will be handled with particular attention to safe and responsible procedures to reduce the chance of cross contamination; contaminated laundry will be handled as little as possible and with minimum agitation to prevent exposure to laundry personnel.
3. Rubber gloves shall be worn whenever handling contaminated items and if there is risk of splashing, additional PPE such as gowns or aprons, as well as face shields or goggles, should also be worn.
4. The bags containing the contaminated clothing shall be taken to the laundry room for proper washing procedures. If the bags are not washed immediately, they should be placed in the designated area within the soiled laundry room, separate from uncontaminated laundry items.
5. The water-soluble bags containing the contaminated clothing shall be carefully placed in the washer and laundered using a normal wash cycle.
6. Bedding and clothing infected with ectoparasites are laundered in hot water with a minimum temperature of 130°F for a minimum of 10 minutes or transported to the designated commercial washing machine to launder.
7. The outer plastic bags shall be disposed immediately in the outside garbage bin.
8. Laundering detergent practices should be based on manufacturer recommendation and may warrant higher laundry time.
9. Disinfectant may be used on a case-by-case basis, following the product safety data sheet (SDS).
10. Laundry personnel shall wash their hands and arms immediately after handling contaminated items.

NOTE: Chlorine bleach may be utilized in powdered or liquid form for a follow up disinfection, in case of a spillage, or overflow of bio-hazardous materials (such as blood, blood products, sewerage back up) as determined by facility standard operating procedures. Refer to Attachment 1 for more information on chlorine bleach use procedures.

B. Laundering of Bedding

Wardens or designees ensure all inmates at RIDOC receive beds, mattresses, pillows, pillowcases, sheets (2) and sufficient blankets to provide comfort under existing temperature conditions. These items (with the exception of the beds themselves) constitute “bedding” for the purposes of this policy.

1. The sheets and pillowcases must be changed at least weekly and are laundered hygienically clean and/or disinfected consistent with established facility procedures.
2. Blankets must be laundered hygienically clean and/or disinfected weekly and whenever visibly soiled.
3. Contaminated laundry and laundry related to ectoparasite infection should be handled and laundered as described above (see Section IV.A.).

C. Storage and Transport of Clean Laundry

1. Storage of clean linen should be handled as little as possible and should be covered or wrapped before being stored.
2. Laundry carts should be cleaned and disinfected daily with an EPA-registered germicidal detergent to maintain their cleanliness.
3. Whenever laundry carts are employed to transfer linens offsite, they should be cleaned and disinfected using EPA-registered disinfectants before restocking them with laundered linens for their return to the facility.
4. Linens from inmate rooms will not be returned to the laundry cart or shelf until after it has been laundered.
5. Clean and soiled clothing and bedding will be separate during storage and transport.

D. Laundry Supervisor Responsibilities

The laundry supervisor shall oversee laundry operations and conduct the following duties:

1. Supervise inmate workers in laundering of all clothing garments, bedding, mop heads, and kitchen rags;
2. Ensure that no damp laundry is left in machines overnight;
3. Instruct inmate to regularly clean and disinfect the work areas on the clean side of the laundry facility;
4. Train inmate laundry workers on the operation of the laundry room and appropriate PPE use;
5. Ensure PPE is available and laundry personnel utilize appropriate PPE;
6. Ensure accessibility to alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water in areas where laundry is handled;
7. Ensure use and maintenance of laundry equipment according to manufacturers' instructions, and report equipment repairs needed;
8. Assure that inmate laundry workers adhere to RIDOC rules and guidelines;
9. Report safety or security hazards; and
10. Report injuries immediately, as appropriate.

Rhode Island Department of Corrections Chlorine Bleach Use

Chlorine bleach is a highly controlled hazardous substance within RIDOC facilities. It is utilized in powdered or liquid form as a bleaching agent for inmate clothing, as determined by individual facility standard operating procedures.

Cleaning should always be performed prior to disinfection, using commercial cleaners that contain soap or detergent. Cleaning helps reduce the number of germs on surfaces, but it does not kill them. Therefore, it is essential to follow up with disinfection.

Disinfection kills germs that may remain on surfaces after cleaning, thus significantly reducing the risk of disease transmission. It is crucial to allow the disinfectant to remain wet on the surface for an appropriate amount of time (known as the **contact/wet time**), in order to achieve effective disinfection.

When using chlorine bleach, follow these guidelines:

- Read and adhere to the instructions provided on the bleach product label.
- Use gloves, eye protection, or other protective equipment as recommended.
- Dilute bleach with water according to recommended instructions or by mixing:
 - 1 part chlorine bleach per 9 parts water for blood/bodily fluid spills disinfection.
 - 1½ cup concentrated liquid chlorine bleach per 1 gallon water.
 - 1 quart bottle concentrated liquid chlorine bleach into a 5-gallon mop bucket.
- Leave diluted bleach on the surface long enough to kill germs. Contact time can be found in the product safety data sheet and/or in the directions.
- Make a new diluted bleach solution daily because it becomes less effective after 24 hours.
- Ensure good ventilation while using bleach products.
- NEVER mix bleach with other cleaners or chemicals.
- Wash hands after working with chlorine bleach.

Liquid chlorine bleach is located only within each facility hospital/infirmarary/dispensary and is appropriated for biohazard clean up and disinfection with the approval of facility Health Care Services supervision. Appropriation of liquid bleach will be documented by Health Care Services and will identify to whom bleach is released, quantity of material released, location and reason for appropriation.