

Safe Hotels, Safe Hawaii

Operational Guidelines for Safe Hotel Operations in Pandemic Conditions

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These guidelines are the product of research and recent practical experience gathered by the Hotel and Restaurant Industry Employment & Training Trust (HARIETT) and its subsidiary Banquet Solutions Hawaii, in its recent program to perform the initial set up and continuing operations of the Temporary Quarantine Center at Iwilei on Oahu in the State of Hawaii. The Center was set up at the request of the State of Hawaii Department of Health. The Center is currently operating as a partnership between Banquet Solutions Hawaii, the Institute for Human Services and the Hawaii Homeless Healthcare Hui (H-4) on behalf of the State of Hawaii. UNITE HERE Local 5 participated in the planning and launch of the facility, and represents the cleaning, laundry and food service workers currently working there.

This document has been prepared by the authors for use by hotels seeking to expeditiously amend their traditional hotel operations to safely operate under pandemic conditions. This document is intended to provide detailed hands-on advice to enable hotels to offer safe and secure lodgings for guests, and safe and healthy working conditions for hotel staff.

These guidelines are drawn from practical experience at the Iwilei facility, and therefore deal primarily with the room preparation, room and public area cleaning and laundry operations conducted there. The authors continue to examine other aspects of hotel operations and will provide further guidance to hotels amending work procedures beyond those addressed here as that material becomes available.

Guidelines for Hotel Room and Laundry Operations

Site Preparation

The following are the steps undertaken to prepare guest rooms for quarantine and isolation use:

1. Remove all porous materials from the room such as excess linen, toilet paper, hand towels, paper napkins, carpeting, blinds, curtains, fabric door mats and cork boards where the surfaces would be hard to clean and sanitize. Framed and mounted artwork should be removed, especially if there is no glass surface covering the artwork.
 - a. Porous items such as carpets and fabric curtains can be cleaned, but it would require the use of a carpet shampooer/carpet cleaner for the carpet,

and laundering of the curtains. Fabric curtains should be removed with care to ensure virus droplets do not spread into the air and/or onto the employee cleaning the room.

- b. Regular vacuums should not be used on a carpet or fabric curtains that has housed a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 person, due to risk of causing virus droplets to spread into the air and/or onto the employee cleaning the room.
2. Remove all unneeded accessories located on the walls such as clocks and picture frames that would make cleaning and sterilizing of the room difficult and inefficient, and on which the COVID-19 virus could reside.
3. Remove excess furniture that would make cleaning and sterilizing of the room difficult and inefficient, and where the COVID-19 virus could reside. Rooms should be as bare as possible to ensure the least amount of items that may get contaminated and need cleaning and sanitizing.
4. Deep clean and sterilize remaining furniture, counters, walls, bed frames, vinyl mattresses, and bathrooms utilizing Centers for Disease Control (CDC) approved cleaners. Mattresses present a unique challenge as traditional cleaning utilizes a vacuum. However, utilizing a vacuum creates the risk of causing virus droplets to spread into the air and/or on to the employee. It is recommended that plastic mattress covers be utilized for easy cleaning and sanitizing.

Personal Protective Gear for Room Cleaners

CDC guidelines state the following: “...personnel may enter the room and should wear a gown and gloves when performing terminal cleaning. A facemask and eye protection should be added if splashes or sprays during cleaning and disinfection activities are anticipated or otherwise required based on the selected cleaning products. Shoe covers are not recommended at this time for personnel caring for patients with COVID-19.”¹

Due to the uncertain nature and life span of COVID-19, personal protective equipment (PPE) assigned to room cleaning personnel at the hotel should exceed the CDC-recommended PPE. Proper donning and doffing of PPE should be reinforced daily.

Common Area Cleaning PPE

1. Disposable facemask
2. Disposable nitrile or vinyl gloves
3. Protective eyeglasses

Room Cleaning PPE

1. Disposable facemask

2. Disposable nitrile or vinyl gloves
3. Protective eyeglasses
4. Face shield
5. Disposable coveralls
6. Disposable shoe coverings

Procedures for Cleaning Common Areas

At least three (3) times a day, possibly hourly, depending on volume of guest and the frequency of use of the common areas (fire escape stairwell less often), cleaning personnel should don the appropriate PPE and clean and sanitize handrails, doorknobs, handles, “high-touch” areas for staff offices, medical offices, light switches, toilets, sinks, the outer doorways and handles of guest rooms. “Clean” common areas should be addressed first and then staff should clean and sanitize the “Dirty” areas where guests are housed.

Cleaning personnel should use cleaning and sanitizing products approved by the CDC, or specialized products specific to COVID-19 should be procured for use. Cleaning personnel may prepare a bleach solution by mixing:

1. 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water; or
2. 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

Cleaning personnel should ensure that immediately before departing the “Dirty” areas, they should remove contaminated PPE, clean goggles, wash hands, and put on appropriate clean PPE. Personnel should then return to assigned staging area.

Procedures for Cleaning Guest Rooms

Per guidance from the CDC, only essential personnel should enter the room of patients being treated for COVID-19. Cleaning personnel should never enter a room while it is occupied by a person who is suspected to have or has COVID-19. Because it cannot be known whether guests have tested positive or are contagious, all rooms should be treated as though they were housing a COVID-19 positive patient.

1. Inventory and availability of PPE.

Due to the high demand for PPE, it likely is not possible to send personnel to clean and sanitize individual rooms as they become available. The burn rate for PPE would be higher than the current process and would lead to shortages. This could potentially lead to an inability to clean and sanitize rooms in the future.

2. Required time for rooms to be vacant after discharge of patient with COVID-19.

It has been recommended that rooms should remain vacated for a minimum of 24 hours to allow sufficient time for enough air changes to remove potentially

infectious particles in the air. Checkout rooms should be held vacant at least 24 hours and then cleaned in batches to conserve supplies and mitigate laundry demand. This could be safely lessened with the appropriate ventilation to open air with fans.

Steps for Room Cleaning:

The steps listed here assume the occupant is positive for COVID-19. The rationale for this assumption is that the hotel would not be able to ascertain if the person staying in the room is positive for COVID-19 or not. As such, for the safety of the hotel employees cleaning the room, it is recommended that all vacated rooms be treated as if it had housed an occupant that was positive for COVID-19. The following workflow process is the one currently in use at the Temporary Quarantine Facility. We include it as an example of work processes that will be designed to suit varying facility configurations.

(Following guidelines for terminal cleaning, rooms should be cleaned from cleanest areas to dirtiest. The dirtiest room will always be the bathroom.)

1. Cleaning personnel dons appropriate Room Cleaning PPE and preps cleaning supplies. This should include two (2) mops, two (2) wall cleaners and two (2) mop buckets and hand-held sprayers filled with bleach solution.
2. Personnel works as a team on each individual room.
3. Spray the outer door and door frame with bleach solution. Please be aware that spraying could dislodge particles and re-aerosolize them, so wearing the appropriate PPE listed above is required.
4. Wipe outer door, handle and frame and enter room.
5. Spray inside of door, walls, counters, chairs, tables and any remaining fixtures in living room and kitchen areas.
6. Clean doors, walls, counters, chairs, tables and any remaining fixtures in living room and kitchen areas.
7. Once kitchen and living room is cleaned, use hospital grade sanitizing disposable cloths to wipe everything down.
8. Sweep and mop living room and kitchen floors and collect rubbish. Ensure there are no items inside refrigerator. Place rubbish in large trash bag.
9. Remove linen from bed by gently rolling and folding and placing into bag for disposal or cleaning. Personnel should take care to not shake linen to ensure infectious particles are not distributed into the air.

10. Remove and place pillows into a large trash bag.
11. Spray walls, chairs, tables, vinyl mattress, windows and AC Unit, as well as any remaining fixtures in bedroom.
12. Clean walls, chairs, tables, vinyl mattress, windows and AC Unit, as well as any remaining fixtures in bedroom.
13. Once bedroom is cleaned, use hospital grade sanitizing disposable cloths to wipe everything down.
14. Sweep and mop bedroom and collect rubbish. Place rubbish in large trash bag.
15. Spray walls, sink, and toilet in the bathroom. (Bathrooms are the dirtiest room and should be done last.)
16. Clean walls, sink, and toilet in the bathroom.
17. Once bathroom is cleaned, use hospital grade sanitizing disposable cloths to wipe everything down.
18. Sweep and mop bathroom and collect rubbish and towels. This includes unused rolls of toilet paper. Place rubbish in large trash bag. Place towels in separate bag for cleaning.
19. Pour contaminated water from mop bucket into shower drain and clean shower.
20. Place contaminated mop and wall mop head into clean bleach water solution in second mop bucket.
21. Move to next room and repeat process using second mop and wall cleaner.
22. Once rooms are cleaned, personnel should ensure that mops and wall mop heads are in the bleach solution. They should spray down all tools and equipment utilized and allow to dry.
23. Personnel should move to an established doffing area and remove PPE, clean face shield and safety glasses, sanitize hands and don new PPE.
24. Personnel should discard trash into dumpster and place materials to be washed (linen, towels, etc.) into washing machines and start laundry using detergent and warmest water available.

25. Personnel with clean PPE should then bring fresh linen, blanket and pillow to cleaned rooms to dress the bed(s). Never wear contaminated PPE when handling clean linen and entering clean rooms.
26. Personnel should move to the doffing area and remove PPE, clean safety glasses, sanitize hands and don new PPE.

ⁱ Center for Disease Control and Prevention. *Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control FAQs*. 1 April 2020. Website. 5 April 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-faq.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Finfection-control%2Finfection-prevention-control-faq.html>.

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