Custodial / Environmental Hygiene Coronavirus FAQs

AUGUST 21, 2020

1. What standards and guidelines is UVA using to ensure that buildings are clean and disinfected?
   UVA is using guidelines from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Governor’s Higher Education Reopening Guidance, and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) along with housekeeping industry standards and best practices.

2. What does enhanced cleaning mean?
   UVA’s existing cleaning protocols contain highly prescriptive work elements for cleaning and disinfecting spaces based on industry standards and best practices combined with a comprehensive staff development and training program, an inspection and quality assurance program, and a metrics-driven continuous improvement program. UVA’s cleaning program is industry certified and has won multiple awards. On June 11, 2020, UVA’s custodial staff received the Effective and Innovative Practices Award from APPA, the premier professional organization for higher education facilities management.

   Enhanced cleaning builds on this robust program and incorporates recommendations from the CDC, VDH, and the Governor’s Higher Education Reopening Guidance document. These include disinfection using EPA-approved disinfectants, and frequent disinfection of surfaces and objects touched by multiple people.

3. How long does the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 live on surfaces?
   Research published in The New England Journal of Medicine (see link) found viable virus up to 72 hours on plastic and 48 hours on stainless steel, and no viable virus on cardboard after 24 hours and copper after 4 hours. However, in all cases, the amount of virus remaining decreased exponentially with time.

4. Will UVA provide sanitizer solution?
   Yes, UVA will provide sanitizer stanchions at building main entrances, on floors, and near elevators, which will be refilled as needed by custodial staff.

5. Will the University or my department provide cleaning products such as disinfecting wipes, or do I need to bring these from home?
   Initial stocks are being provided. Ongoing restocking and resupplying will be provided by departments.

6. What are “high touch” surfaces and when will these be disinfected?
   The CDC includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc. in high traffic areas as high touch surfaces. These surfaces will be wiped throughout the day. In addition, the UVA community is encouraged to use disinfecting product before and after using these high touch surfaces.
7. How will classrooms be cleaned?
Classrooms will be cleaned and sanitized daily using UVA's Enhanced Cleaning Protocols and Standard Operating Procedures. Disinfecting product will be provided in classrooms so that educators and students can disinfect podiums, desks, chairs, and tabletops before and after use.

8. How will residential halls be cleaned?
Residential hall rooms and similar private spaces will be cleaned as they normally are by the individuals in those spaces. Public spaces will be cleaned per UVA's Enhanced Cleaning Protocols and Standard Operating Procedures.

9. How will offices, laboratories and similar private spaces be cleaned?
Offices, laboratories, and similar private spaces will be cleaned as they normally are by the individuals in those spaces. Public spaces will be cleaned per UVA's Enhanced Custodial Cleaning Protocols and Standard Operating Procedures. Centralized trash and recycling are being implemented to the extent feasible to minimize the need for custodial staff to enter these spaces.

10. How will kitchenettes be cleaned?
These spaces will be cleaned each day by the custodial staff per UVA's Enhanced Cleaning Protocols and Standard Operating Procedures. However, because kitchenettes and similar centralized coffee, drink, and snack areas in buildings are in constant use with high turnover, individuals will need to use disinfecting product before and after using appliances, coffee makers, refrigerators, sink fixtures, and microwaves. Individuals may want to bring their own food and beverages in a cooler to limit use of shared appliances.

11. What about recreational facilities and pools?
IMRec-Sports facilities will be cleaned per UVA's Enhanced Cleaning Protocols and Standard Operating Procedures, which include specific practices for gym equipment.

12. Does my department need to hire a supplemental cleaning company?
No supplemental cleaning company is needed.

13. My building is small and only gets cleaned twice a week. What happens here?
Smaller facilities as well as those with low intensity of use are serviced fewer than five days/week. Employees in these facilities are encouraged to use disinfecting product on high touch surfaces in between cleaning.

14. Who is going to clean the new plexiglass and acrylic panels that were installed to provide physical barriers?
These will be cleaned during routine cleaning on a frequency similar to glass doors and interior windows.

15. What is UVA planning to do with outdoor spaces and surfaces?
UVA will follow CDC guidance, which recommends normal routine cleaning and recommends against disinfection of parks, playgrounds, wooden surfaces (structures, benches, tables), groundcovers (mulch, sand), walks, and roadways.
16. What actions does the CDC recommend that I do to protect myself and my colleagues?

The CDC recommends that you practice social distancing, wear facial coverings, avoid touching your face, and follow proper prevention hygiene, such as washing your hands frequently and using alcohol-based (at least 60% alcohol) hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.

17. How are leased spaces being cleaned?

UVA recommends all property managers supporting University personnel adopt CDC cleaning protocols at a minimum although they may want to adopt measures equivalent to UVA’s Enhanced Cleaning Protocols and Standard Operating Procedures.

18. What happens in a space when an employee, student, or visitor who has been in the space tests positive?

By the time a person learns that they have tested positive and UVA FM is notified of that result, it is likely that the spaces the person testing positive occupied have already been cleaned and disinfected, sometimes multiple times. If this is the case, no special actions need to be taken as most spaces, including classrooms, are cleaned and disinfected daily following the UVA Enhanced Cleaning Protocols and Standard Operating Procedures, which incorporate industry standards and best practices following guidelines from the Center for Disease Control and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH). This protocol specifies the use of EPA-approved products that are effective against the coronavirus for disinfecting spaces and emphasizes disinfecting high touch surfaces. For the very rare situation in which a person testing positive was in the space within the last 24 hours before we are notified, UVA FM has developed a protocol and trained staff on how to respond.

19. Will a space need to be shut down as a result of a person testing positive for COVID-19 occupying the space?

The probability of a space needing to be closed is near zero. This is because of the inherent time delay that occurs between when a person learns that they have tested positive, VDH completes contact tracing and notification, and the spaces that the person testing positive occupied have been identified. Because this time delay adds more than 24 hours since the person was in a space, that space would already have been cleaned and disinfected as part of its normal cleaning schedule. However, and in the event that a person who tests positive has been in the space subsequent to the daily cleaning and disinfection schedule and prior to the next scheduled cleaning, any known spaces impacted by this scenario would be closed until UVA FM has had an opportunity to re-clean and re-disinfect the area. Again, this is expected to have a zero to near-zero probability of occurrence. Because custodial services are aligned with normal operating hours, staff is typically available to assist when needed.

20. What products will be provided in classrooms so that educators and students can disinfect podiums, desks, chairs, and tabletops before and after each use?

Sanitizer stanchions containing sanitizer solution are being placed in most classrooms. Acrylic shields are being placed on most podiums. In addition, bottles containing EPA-approved disinfectant for use in cleaning high touch surfaces along with tubs of multifold paper towels are being placed in each classroom for use by educators and students to clean surfaces before and after use. UVA Custodial Services will stock the classrooms with the supplies and refill these daily as needed.
21. How do Schools and business units obtain disinfecting products for private spaces and kitchenettes?

UVA Procurement & Supplier Diversity Services can assist Schools and business units in procuring disinfecting products, materials and other COVID-19 supplies. Please refer to the UVA Procurement & Supplier Diversity Services COVID-19 Supplies Guide.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

1. CDC Background

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) Considerations for Institutes of Higher Education lists the following information concerning the transmission of COVID-19:

- The virus is thought to spread mainly from **person-to-person**. Transmission occurs between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets that are produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. The infected person may not be showing symptoms.

- It **may** be possible for a person to get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes. However, this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads as the CDC is still learning more about how it spreads.

2. Relevant Links


https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/environmental-cleaning/


