



## Guidance on Protecting Court Personnel and General Practices for Sanitation and Disinfecting

### **A Statement from the Action Committee**

*Our Committee exists to support Canada's courts as they work to protect the health and safety of all court users in the COVID-19 context while upholding the fundamental values of our justice system. These mutually sustaining commitments guide all of our efforts.*

The [Action Committee on Court Operations in Response to COVID-19](#) has released this document to provide guidance on protecting court personnel and general practices for sanitation and disinfecting.

This document is intended as overall general guidance, and is not intended to replace protocols developed at the level of individual courts and courthouses. This guidance is advisory only and is not intended to replace applicable health and safety laws and regulations, nor does following this guidance ensure compliance with those laws and regulations. Awareness and observation of legal responsibilities must form an integral part of court operations in response to COVID-19.

### **Guidance on Protecting Court Personnel**

- Follow guidance from the Public Health Agency of Canada and local public health agencies.
- Develop written procedures outlining all of the preventative measures that are being taken to reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure and make sure court personnel know what they are.
- Require court personnel who are experiencing symptoms, have been in contact with someone suspected of having or confirmed to have COVID-19, or have recently travelled outside the country to stay home and self-isolate. Follow the Public Health Agency of Canada's steps for self-assessment: <https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus> and its recommendations.
- Implement and monitor physical distancing measures and other controls such as barriers where possible to protect court personnel and members of the public.
- Ensure that all court personnel and members of the public wash their hands when entering the facility. Recommend that everyone frequently wash their hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer, especially between activities that involve physical contact with surfaces or close engagement with other individuals.
- Promote good respiratory etiquette, such as covering the mouth and nose with flexed elbow or sleeve when coughing and sneezing. If tissues are used, dispose immediately and wash hands.
- Disinfect surfaces and equipment frequently with disinfectant following the manufacturer's instructions, or with a bleach solution.
- Clean and disinfect all equipment.
- Recommend that court personnel report any health and safety concerns immediately to their supervisor or health and safety representative.
- Ensure that mental health resources and support are available to all court personnel, including access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- For further information on COVID-19, refer to the Public Health Agency of Canada <https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus>



## Guidance on Protecting Court Personnel and General Practices for Sanitation and Disinfecting

### General Practices for Sanitation and Disinfecting

#### Sanitation

A touch point is any surface that can be touched by bare hands by multiple people, multiple times.

- Make sure that any person required to perform cleaning of any type has received the appropriate training plus any required personal protective equipment.
- Train workers on how to work with and care for personal protective equipment, and to understand its limitations.
- Use a dedicated cloth for cleaning.
- Create a checklist of all surfaces that must be cleaned, including door and sink handles, paper towel dispensers, countertops, wheelchair access buttons, turnstiles, kitchen equipment, elevator buttons, vending machines, and printers/photocopiers.
- Clean all areas, including offices, cafeterias, change rooms and washrooms.
- Determine the frequency of cleaning and disinfection based on the courthouse's needs. Clean at least once per day, but note that more frequent cleaning (e.g., once every 2 to 3 hours) will be required when court is in session. Identify high touch surfaces, such as witness stands, which will require more frequent cleaning.
- Cleaning courtrooms at the end of each day, and ideally between the hearings of distinct matters involving different participants.
- Record when cleaning and disinfection has occurred.

#### Disinfectants

- Clean visibly dirty or soiled surfaces with soap and water before disinfecting.
- Use a disinfectant or bleach solution to destroy or inactivate the virus.
  - Use a disinfectant with a drug identification number (DIN). This number means that it has been approved for use in Canada.
  - If household or commercial disinfectant cleaning products are not available, hard surfaces can be disinfected using a mixture of 5 mL of bleach (5% sodium hypochlorite) and 250 mL of water. Test surfaces before using a bleach solution. Bleach can be corrosive.
  - If liquids can be withstood, disinfect high-touch electronic devices (keyboards, tablets, smartboards) with alcohol or disinfectant wipes.
- Follow the product manufacturer's instructions, including any need for personal protective equipment such as gloves.
- Apply the disinfectant to a clean cloth. Saturate the cloth before treating touch points. Reapply as needed.
- Apply enough disinfectant to leave a visible film on the surface.
- Allow the surface to air dry. Reapply disinfectant to the cloth between surfaces.
- Change the cloth daily or when it becomes visibly soiled.

#### Resources and References

Action Committee on Court Operations in Response to COVID-19: <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/ccs-ajc/ac-ca/term.html>

Court Operations Tip Sheet series: <https://www.ccohs.ca/products/publications/covid19/#courts>

Public Health Agency of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus>