



Norovirus Outbreak Prevention Guidelines

The guidelines below are intended to provide recommendations for the prevention and control of norovirus outbreaks. Handwashing is one of the most important, simple, and inexpensive steps in preventing an outbreak from spreading. However, there are other measures available to increase the likelihood of controlling or preventing an outbreak.

<u>I. General Recommendations</u>	<u>Implemented</u> <i>(Please check)</i>
Inform all employees of the need for handwashing and provide instructions on proper handwashing techniques. Instructions on proper handwashing can be found at: http://www.health.ri.gov/environment/food/retail/handwashing.pdf	<input type="checkbox"/>
1. Increase employee hand washing to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. At least once per hour b. Upon entering a kitchen c. After using the restroom d. After shaking hands or other physical contact with peers and guests e. After sneezing f. After touching the face g. After blowing the nose h. After rubbings hands on clothing and similar activities i. After handling raw foods j. After handling dirty kitchen utensils and kitchenware k. After cleaning, sweeping or mopping l. Before and after a break m. Before starting a shift and after ending a shift n. After smoking, eating, or drinking o. Before handling any food, especially ready-to-eat foods and ice p. After handling money (tips) q. After using a common telephone 	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Maintain employee handwashing vigilance through active management reminders and correction.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Assure strict glove use policy for all food preparation, ready to eat foods and for handling eating utensils. Ensure that gloves are changed frequently and that hands are washed between glove changes.	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Inspect the parking and surrounding area for evidence of public bio-hazardous accidents. Handle any positive findings as outlined under “Vomit and Feces Removal, and Follow-up Environmental Contact Surface Clean-up, and Sanitization,” Section V.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Switch to auto-dispensing paper towel dispensers for all public restrooms, employee restrooms, kitchens and locker rooms.	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Display polite reminders in the restrooms on the need for proper washing. Please note that a sign should be displayed stating that employees must wash their hands after using the restroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>
II. Basic Cleaning/Sanitization Recommendations <i>In addition to routine cleaning activities, ensure the following:</i>	Implemented <i>(Please check)</i>
1. Increase frequency of cleaning and sanitizing (using a virucidal agent) the handles of sinks and doors in public restrooms, employee restrooms and throughout all kitchens to once per hour during periods of frequent use.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Increase frequency of cleaning and sanitizing employee restrooms to once per hour during periods of frequent use.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Use disposable cleaning cloths and mop heads for all cleaning, sanitizing.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Clean and sanitize (using a virucidal agent*) high touch areas such as drinking fountains and telephones, door handles, push plates, elevator buttons and panels.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Frequently sanitize public stair rails, balcony rails, bar rails, and similar high frequency human contact surfaces throughout the facility with a virucidal agent.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Spray or hand wipe as applicable, high frequency human contact equipment and employee areas with a sanitizer effective against viruses at least daily. Carefully follow all manufacturer instructions on cleaning, rinsing, and sanitizing equipment being careful not to damage sensitive electronic components.	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Clean and sanitize (using a virucidal agent*), the inside of all dish and glass washers. The currently recommended sanitizers for non-high-temperature dishwashers are not effective against norovirus. Therefore, if an item contaminated with norovirus is placed in the dishwasher, the equipment may then be contaminated.	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Clean and sanitize floor surfaces (using a virucidal agent*) in all public areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>9. Discard the ice in all ice machines once per week throughout all kitchen facilities followed by thorough cleaning and sanitizing of the machine. Discard ice stored in bins, sinks used to store ice, and other associated equipment once per day followed by a thorough sanitizing of the bin or sink. Sanitize all such bins and sinks again prior to use.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>III. <u>Employee Illness</u></p>	<p><u>Implemented</u> <i>(Please check)</i></p>
<p>1. Exclude all employees who report having experienced vomiting, diarrhea, or “stomach flu” symptoms remain off duty for a minimum of 24 hours (48 hours if serving a highly susceptible population) after their symptoms end per the RI Food Code, Section 2.2: http://www.health.ri.gov/environment/food/retail/FoodCode_RI2007_October.pdf (Thorough handwashing and no hand contact of ready-to-eat foods are essential for these employees since some individuals may shed the virus for weeks.)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>2. Have managers look for obvious signs of employee illnesses such as increased frequency of restroom use. Send ill employees home as per the recommendation above.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>3. Report unusual numbers of employees ill with symptoms of gastroenteritis to the Health Department at 222-2577</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>4. Post in a highly visible area, the “Employee Illness Reporting Agreement”. Be sure to review the agreement with all employees. The form can be found at: http://www.health.ri.gov/environment/food/retail/Reporting%20Agreement.pdf</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>IV. <u>Recommendations for Health Care Facilities</u></p>	<p><u>Implemented</u> <i>(Please check)</i></p>
<p>1. Look for common cross-contamination issues (e.g., using the same rag to clean bathroom surfaces and wiping down ice buckets.) Correct deficiencies when found, and share the information with other managers to standardize better cleaning methods.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>2. Use one cloth for cleaning and a new cloth for sanitizing surfaces.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>3. Use separate colored cloths in toilet areas.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>4. Use a new set of cloths for each patient room.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>5. Clean and sanitize high touch areas such as taps, faucets, door and drawer handles, door latches, toilet or bath rails, telephones, rails on balconies, light and lamp switches, thermostats, remote controls, curtain pulls and wands</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>6. Increase the frequency of cleaning public toilets. All surfaces in the toilet areas should be cleaned with a virucidal agent* using disposable cloths.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>V. Vomitus and Feces Removal, and Follow-up Environmental Contact Surface Clean-up, and Sanitization.”</u></p>	<p><u>Implemented</u> <i>(Please check)</i></p>
<p>1. In the event of a member of staff or a member of the public having an accident involving vomit or feces, the area must be cleaned as a matter of urgency. Because of the potential for aerosolization of the virus, the area where such an incident has occurred should be closed or cordoned off, with a 25-foot radius.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>2. Individuals, who clean up vomitus or feces should use the following procedures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as disposable mask, gloves, eye shield, disposable shoe covers, and plastic disposable apron. b. Use paper towels to soak up excess liquid. Transfer these and any solid matter directly into a plastic bag. c. Clean the soiled area with detergent and hot water, using a disposable cloth. d. Sanitize the contaminated area with a virucidal agent*. e. Dispose of apron, gloves and cloths into a Biohazard waste bag. f. Wash hands thoroughly using soap and water after completing the clean-up procedure and again after completing the disposal procedure. g. If the area soiled was carpeted, then steam clean using a virucidal agent* in the reservoir for the cleaning solution. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>3. Contaminated surfaces should be cleaned using the following procedures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Contaminated linen and other materials should be placed carefully into separate laundry bags. They should be washed in a hot wash. If an outside laundry is used, they should be consulted, as the laundry is potential infectious. b. Contaminated carpets should be cleaned with carpet detergent and hot water, then disinfected with a virucidal agent* and lastly steam cleaned (also using a virucidal agent*). c. Contaminated hard surfaces should be washed with detergent and hot water, using a disposable cloth, then sanitized using a virucidal agent*. Cloths should be disposed of as biohazardous waste. Non-disposable mop heads should be washed in hot water using a virucidal agent*. d. Horizontal surfaces, furniture, and soft furnishings in the vicinity of the soiled area should be cleaned with detergent and hot water, using a disposable cloth and sanitized using a virucidal agent*. Followed this with air-drying in the sun for a few hours (if possible). 	<input type="checkbox"/>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. If applicable, soiled mattresses and soft furnishings should be removed for sanitization using a virucidal agent* and subsequent steam cleaning. If soiling on a mattress is significant, treat the mattress in place, then wrap the mattress in heavy gauge plastic and either have the mattress sterilized, or discard via normal solid waste disposal procedures. f. Fixtures and fittings in toilet areas should be cleaned with detergent and hot water using a disposable cloth, and then sanitized using a virucidal agent. * 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>4. Cleaning Up Vomitus in Food Preparation or Service Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Stop all food preparation and service until clean up is complete. b. Using the above principles, carefully remove all vomit and clean the area. c. Destroy any exposed food, food that may have been contaminated, and food that has been handled by an infected person. 	<input type="checkbox"/>

* To view EPA’s Registered Antimicrobial Products Effective Against *Norovirus* (Norwalk-like virus) go to the following URL:

http://www.epa.gov/oppad001/list_g_norovirus.pdf

Be sure to follow the manufacturer’s directions for use of virucidal agent.

Adapted for the RI Department of Health from the Southern Nevada Health District’s “Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Norovirus in Hotel/Casinos”.

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