

Frequently Asked Questions about...

Infection Prevention Training for Staff

Q. Which staff members should receive training about infection prevention practices?

A. ALL staff members, including employees and volunteers, should receive training addressing appropriate infection prevention practices as it relates to their duties and responsibilities. For example, all employees and volunteers must be trained in proper hand hygiene techniques.

Q. What are the recommended infection prevention topics that should be addressed during staff training?

A. Trainings about infection risk-reduction behaviors and infection prevention practices should be relevant to the facility's population and address specific staff duties and roles regarding how to incorporate infection prevention practices.

Recommended infection prevention topics that should be addressed include, but are not limited to:

- Basic review of types of disease-causing agents (e.g. bacteria, viruses) and routes of disease transmission
- Hand hygiene, such as when to use alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water, proper technique, and length of time
- Proper personal protective equipment (PPE) including when and how to use gloves, gowns, and masks
- Description and appropriate implementation of standard and transmission-based precautions
- Environmental cleaning applicable to all staff to help maintain a clean, safe environment as well as specific practices and chemicals used by environmental service staff during daily and terminal cleaning
- Facility policies regarding required and/or available vaccinations for staff and residents
- Facility sick leave guidelines, such as the exclusion of staff with communicable diseases or infections
- Handling, storing, processing and transporting linens, supplies, equipment, and medical waste in a manner that prevents the spread of infection
- Procedures for reporting and documenting specified diseases, incidents, or outbreaks both to facility leadership, to the local health department and/or the licensing agency

Q. When should staff members receive training about infection prevention practices?

A. Staff members, including volunteers, must receive infection prevention training *prior to assuming job responsibilities*. In addition, it is suggested a similar training occur annually for all staff in order to review these important practices and update staff about any new policies. When there are infection-related incidents at your facility, in-services and/or educational opportunities should be available to all applicable staff to address specific infection prevention practices that can help avoid future events. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Bloodborne Pathogens Standard requires applicable training at the time of initial assignment to tasks where occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious body fluids may take place and annually thereafter.

Q. Who should provide the training?

A. It is preferable if a facility staff member, properly trained and up-to-date in infection prevention practices, consistently provides trainings to all facility staff. However, other potential resources for various trainings and in-services may include infection preventionists from your surrounding hospitals, the Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAI) Program at the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), your local health department, VDH Office of Licensure and Certification (OLC), Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) Division of Licensing Programs (DOLP), Virginia Health Care Association (VHCA), Virginia Association of Nonprofit Homes for the Aging (VANHA), Virginia Assisted Living Association (VALA), and home health agencies.