

Overall risk of disease transmission from laundry in a healthcare facility is low, but contaminated textiles and fabrics can be a source of microorganisms. Pathogens may be transmitted from contaminated textiles via direct contact or aerosols generated from handling contaminated linen. Handling laundry carefully is part of Standard Precautions.

Infection Prevention Checklist



1. Ensure **policies** pertaining to linen management are in place.
2. During **environment of care rounds**, observe areas where clean and soiled laundry are stored or processed (e.g., clean and soiled laundry storage on units, soiled laundry transport area on dock, clean textile receiving area on dock, laundered textile staging area)
 - a. Clean linen
 - Cover during storage and transport on resident care units
 - Ensure clean linen/laundry area is free from dust, lint, or signs of water intrusion
 - b. Soiled linen
 - Contain (without sorting) in a container or bag at the point of use
 - Maintain soiled laundry holding areas at negative pressure adjacent to clean areas
 - Hold soiled laundry carts in soiled supply areas until transported to the soiled laundry area
 - c. Laundry processing areas
 - Clearly separate receiving area for soiled/contaminated laundry from the clean laundry area
3. Ensure laundry areas have **handwashing facilities** and products and appropriate **personal protective equipment** available for workers.
 - a. Personnel who sort soiled laundry should wear impervious gowns and puncture-resistant gloves. Eye protection and masks may also be needed.
 - b. An eyewash station should be easily accessible. Summary of eyewash station requirements (Health Quality Innovation Network): <https://hqin.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Eye-Wash-Station-Requirements-508.pdf>
4. **Clean and disinfect** healthcare laundry areas (e.g., clean and soiled laundry holding areas) and equipment (e.g., carts used to transport laundered textiles) with an EPA-registered disinfectant.
5. Ensure staff who handle healthcare laundry have appropriate infection prevention **education**, including in the handling of soiled linens/laundry, selection of PPE, and putting on/taking off PPE.

Additional Resources

CDC: Environmental Infection Control Guidelines:

<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/environmental/index.html>

- Additional background on laundry and bedding:

<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/environmental/background/laundry.html>

