



Interim Guidance for Hotels Providing Lodging for Healthcare Professionals and Other Persons Potentially Exposed to COVID-19*

As government and private sector leaders consider additional control measures to address the evolving COVID-19 outbreak, there is a distinct possibility that healthcare providers, emergency personnel, and other public service personnel will seek alternative lodging arrangements to self-isolate from their families, when not working. State and federal governments have considered the option of encouraging hotel management to make guest rooms available to meet this need.

This interim guidance addresses two major points: 1) the management and laundering of bedding/sheeting and bathroom/terry products used in the care of COVID-19-exposed healthcare personnel (HCP) and other potentially exposed persons, as needed; and 2) maintaining a safe workplace. This guidance may be subject to updates when additional information becomes available.

Management and Laundering of Textiles Used by Persons Exposed to COVID-19

Hotel management, specifically the housekeeping supervisor, should take steps to protect housekeeping employees who will be collecting the textiles used by people potentially exposed to COVID-19. The housekeeping staff should receive training on proper linen handling techniques and other measures to prevent potential exposure to the used textiles.

Topics to be covered in this training should include:

1. [Introduction to Universal Precautions \(UP\)](#).
2. Use of personal protective equipment (PPE), e.g., gloves.
3. Linen handling methods that minimize aerosol production from agitation.

With regards to laundering of the used textiles, hotel management has two options, either contracting with an off-site laundry services provider or using the hotel's laundry service.

Option #1 – Use an off-site laundry services provider

Managers may refer to the list of laundries accredited by the Healthcare Laundry Accreditation Council (HLAC) at <https://www.hlacnet.org/accredited-laundries>. The housekeeping manager should confirm that the outsourced laundry practices UP when handling all textiles. If the laundry does not follow UP when handling all textiles, the hotel will need to conform to the laundry's practice of identifying this linen as *potentially* contaminated.

Option #2 – Use of the hotel in-house laundry service

If managers are unable to secure an outsourced laundry and the hotel has a laundry room for processing hotel textiles, ALM encourages the following measures as a minimum:

- **Universal Precautions.** To ease the process during this situation, treat all textiles on property the same, maintaining one process *unless the textile is observed to contain visible blood*. If blood is visible, recommendations are to follow the property's standard of guidance for handling and processing blood-soiled textiles.
- **Functional separation.** The key focus is to create functional separation – a strategy designed to prevent soiled/used textiles from being present in the open at the same time clean textiles are in the same space. Typically, economy and extended-stay hotel laundries sort, wash, dry, and fold textiles in the same room. If these tasks can be performed in separate rooms, that is preferable, to avoid re-contaminating the clean textiles in the laundry room.
- **Personnel separation.** The ideal situation is designating some housekeeping personnel to work exclusively with soiled textiles and others to work exclusively with clean textiles. This will help to minimize the likelihood of contaminating the clean textiles.
- **Disinfecting surfaces.** Clean touched surfaces with a cleaner followed by a disinfectant to prevent re-contaminating the clean product.
- **Wash personal clothing.** During this time, housekeeping personnel should be given the option (a) to wash their personal apparel/uniforms at the hotel laundry or (b) the housekeeping supervisor to arrange for a temporary uniform laundry service to launder uniforms off-site.

Regardless of which option the property chooses to apply, ALM suggests the following procedures for collection, handling, and distribution of textiles.

1. Provide guests with the hotel's **Amended Procedures Guide** (template provided by ALM) directing guests to collect their sheets, pillowcases, towels, and washcloths after three days' use; place these used textiles in the plastic bag provided by the hotel; and to tie the bag closed and place in the hallway by a time determined by the hotel processes.
2. Again, the ideal situation is to designate **soiled-handling housekeeping personnel** and **clean-handling housekeeping personnel**, to minimize the likelihood of contaminating the clean textiles. If this strategy is not an option, pay special attention to the surface cleaning and disinfection process and cover clean textiles with a clean sheet when transporting these in an area where soiled/used textiles are co-located, while maintaining as much reasonable distance as possible between soiled textiles and clean textiles.
3. **Soiled-handling housekeeping personnel** wearing gloves will collect the bags of used textiles from the hallway in a washable plastic cart (not canvas) and take them to the laundry room. If using an off-site laundry processor, those staff will deliver the carts to a designated location, then complete items e, g, and h below.
 - a. While still wearing gloves, open the bags away from you and sort textiles into washers, separating by textile type (a) bath or terry products, such as towels and washcloths; (b) bedding, such as sheets and pillowcases; and (c) bed coverings, such as bedspreads, comforters, etc.
 - b. Discard plastic bags into a closed trash receptacle for appropriate disposal.
 - c. Pay special attention when handling the used/soiled textiles not to aerosolize lint and other particles from the textiles through unnecessary agitation, such as tossing across open spaces or into containers/washers.
 - d. Close the washer doors, start the wash cycles, and reclose any remaining bags of used textiles. Do not leave these bags open in the cart.

- e. Remove gloves and wash hands with soap and water or, if that is not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
 - f. Clean the surfaces of the washer, door handles, and buttons with a cleaning product, then disinfect these surfaces using an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#), following the product's label instructions for adequate application and contact time.
 - g. Carts that have held the soiled linen bags, when emptied, must be cleaned and then disinfected with an EPA-registered product, paying special attention the product's label instructions for adequate application and contact time.
 - h. Clean then disinfect the surfaces of tables or benches that will be used for clean linen folding.
4. **Clean-handling housekeeping personnel** will remove wet textiles when all wash cycles are complete from the washer, cover with a clean sheet, and transport them to the dryer for drying. The cover sheet should then be placed with used sheets for processing.
 5. **Soil-handling housekeeping personnel** wearing gloves can now reload the washers by following steps 3a - h.
 6. **Clean-handling housekeeping personnel** will remove textiles from the dryer and transport to a separate room for folding, storage, and distribution to guests.
 7. **Clean-handling housekeeping personnel** will fold and store or distribute clean sheets, pillowcases, washcloths, and towels by a set time that same day for use by guests. Washing may be staggered or all performed on the same days according to property staffing ability.
 8. Guests may wash their personal laundry in the hotel guest laundry areas.

Universal Precautions

- Textile handling – Following Universal Precautions is an infection control measure where all textiles are treated the same, as though they were contaminated.
- Gloves – Can be single-use exam gloves disposed after each use or reusable utility gloves. If utility gloves are used, these should be provided for each individual and labeled with that person's name. The utility gloves should be washed and air-dried at the end of the day for use again by the same person. Discard the gloves if they are torn or otherwise damaged.
- Employers should provide appropriate gloves at no cost the employee. For full details on the provision of gloves and PPE, see 29 CFR 1910.1030(d).
- Contact your laundry chemical representative to discuss possible adjustments to your wash process to ensure you are getting the desired results while maintaining quality linen life.
- Review the complimentary tutorial video from ALM on Universal Precautions, available on Vimeo at <https://vimeo.com/403816059>.



More resources available at [ALMnet.org/COVID-19](https://www.almnet.org/COVID-19)

Amended Procedures for Hotels Providing Lodging for
Persons Potentially Exposed to COVID-19

To best help to minimize the likelihood of contaminating clean textiles in the hotel, or possibly spreading COVID-19, we ask our guests to adhere to the following procedures for linen collection and distribution.

Collection

Your sheets, pillowcases, towels, and washcloths will be collected after three days' use. Please place these used textiles in the plastic bag provided, tie the bag securely closed, and place in the hallway by _____.

Delivery

Staff will process the textiles and deliver clean ones to you at _____.

Personal Laundry

You are welcome to wash your personal belongings in the guest laundry, located at _____

If you have any questions, please feel free to the front desk or housekeeping.

This document is provided compliments of the Association for Linen Management (ALM).
ALMnet.org

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Clean Textile Room

Sala limpia de textiles

You must wash hands before entry.

Debes lavarte las manos antes de entrar.

No soiled textiles allowed.

No se permiten textiles sucios.

Soiled Textile Room

Sala sucios de textiles

Bag/contain all
soiled/used textiles.

Bolsa de todos los textiles sucios.

Don't Forget!

Recuerda!

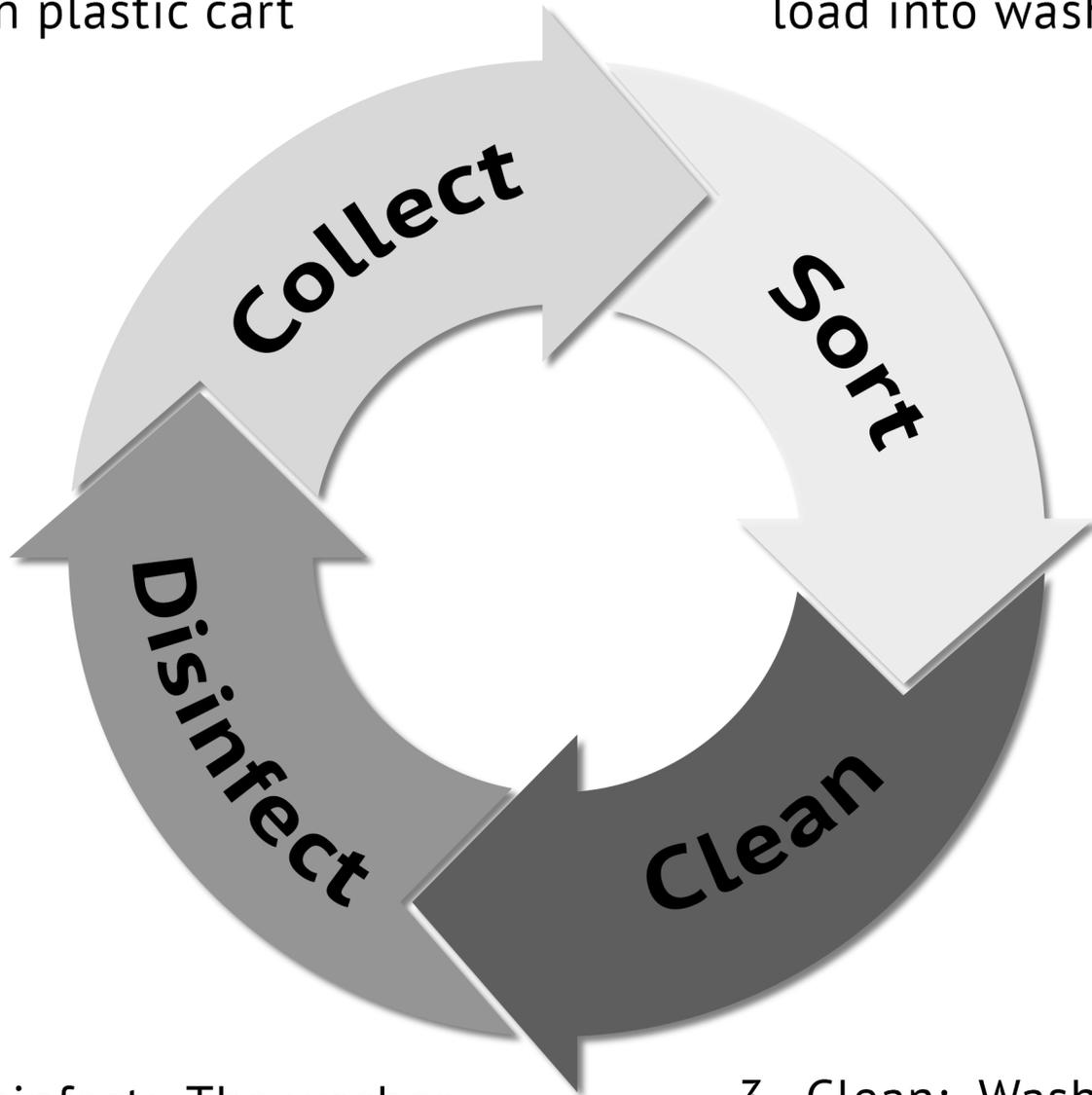
Cover all clean textiles.

Cubrir todos los textiles limpios.

Interim Guidance for Hotels with Textiles Potentially Exposed to COVID-19*

1. Collect: Guest bags from hallway and place in plastic cart

2. Sort: Remove textiles from bags in cart and load into washers



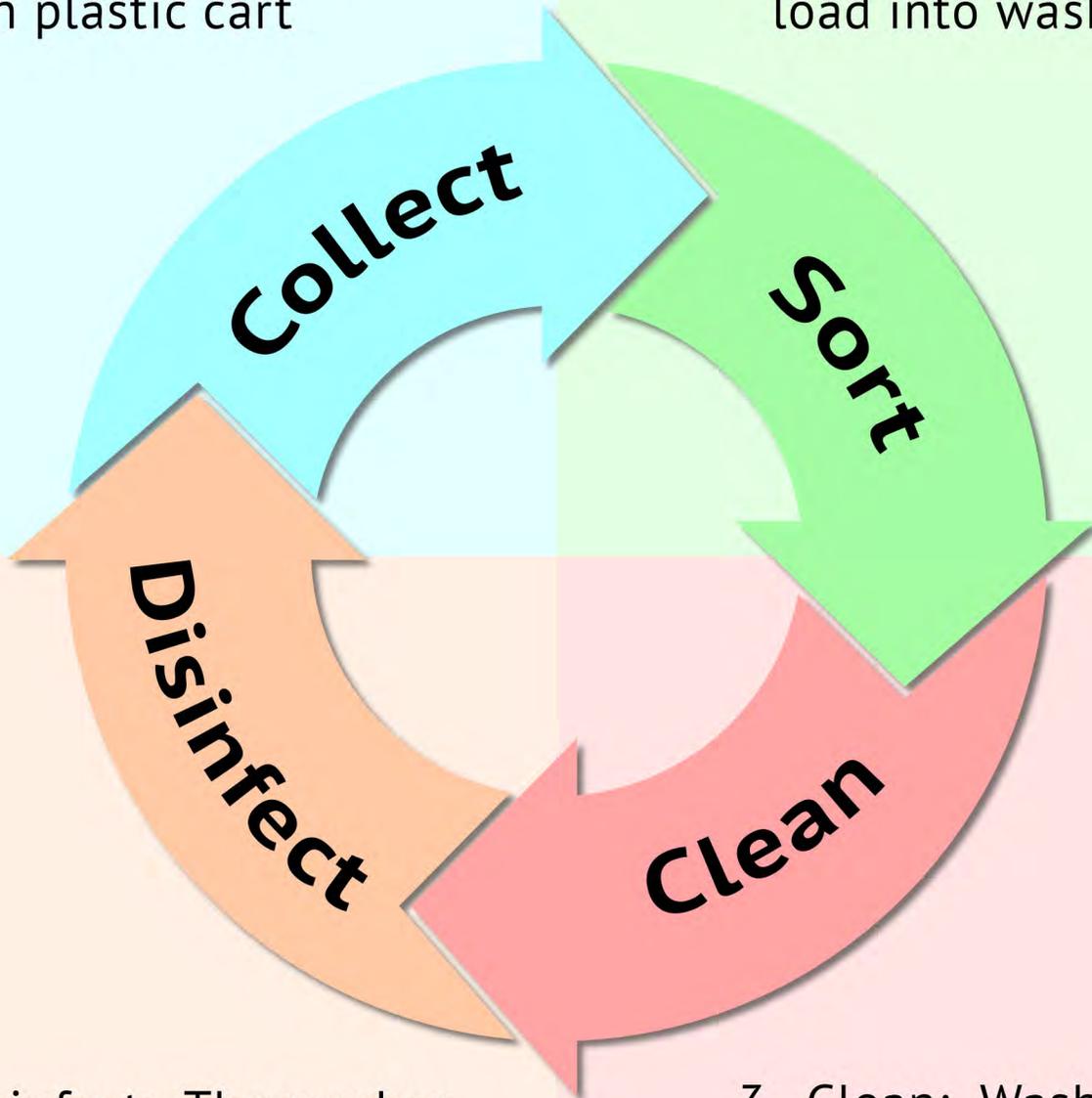
4. Disinfect: The washer fronts, handles, and buttons; empty carts; and tables and benches

3. Clean: Wash your hands, then the washer fronts, handles, and buttons; empty carts; and tables and benches

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