



Department of Early Education and Care

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Family, Small Group, Large Group and School Age Child Care Licensing

POLICY STATEMENT: Sanitizing and Disinfecting

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) regulations require family, small group, large group, and school age child care programs to sanitize and disinfect equipment daily, weekly, or after each usage, depending on the type and surface of the equipment. *See 606 CMR 7.11(10(f)-(p)).*

Sanitizing Solution with Bleach and Water

Programs using a self made bleach solution must follow the guidelines of the Department of Public Health (DPH) in determining the appropriate concentration of bleach for each use.

DPH recommendations are as follows:

- for dishes, baby toys, thermometer, tables, countertops and sleep mats: *use 1 tbsp of bleach in 1 gallon of cool water*
- for sinks, toilets, diapering tables and pails: *use 4 tbsp (1/4 cup) of bleach in 1 gallon of cool water*
- for blood and vomit spills: *use 1 part bleach in 9 parts warm water*

If household bleach is used to prepare the disinfecting solution, it must contain 5.25% available chlorine as hypochlorite (regular strength bleach) or 6.00% hypochlorite (ultra strength bleach) solutions. The solution must be labeled and stored in either a spray bottle or a bottle that is sealed with a cap and must be out of reach children. A solution of bleach and water will lose its strength and is weakened by heat and sunlight. Therefore, mix a fresh bleach solution every day for maximum effectiveness. Any leftover bleach solution should be discarded at the end of the day. Programs may find it helpful to attach a measuring spoon to the bleach bottle to facilitate accurate measuring. The bleach solution must be inaccessible to children.

Sanitizing Solution Registered by the Environmental Protection Agency

Programs that choose not to use bleach and water solution must use a commercially prepared disinfectant that has been registered as a sanitizing solution by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Evidence of registration by the EPA will be indicated on the product label.

DPH recommendations are as follows:

- Programs must use the EPA approved solution for sanitizing exactly as instructed on the product label
- All disinfectants must be stored in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and in a secure place out of the reach of children

Frequency

The following items, equipment and surfaces must be washed and sanitized after each use:

- toilet training chairs which have first been emptied into a toilet
- sinks and faucets used for hand washing after the sink is used for rinsing a toilet training chair
- diapering surfaces
- mops used for cleaning body fluids (it is important to treat all bodily fluids as infectious because disease causing germs can be present even in the absence of children's illness)
- bibs (when used for only one child, good judgment should be used in deciding whether it can be reused before washing)
- thermometers
- water tables and water play equipment
- toys mouthed by infants and toddlers

The following items must be washed and sanitized at least daily:

- toilets and toilet seats
- containers, including lids, used to hold soiled diapers
- sinks and sink faucets
- drinking fountains
- play tables
- washcloths and towels
- floors (programs operating four or fewer hours per day may wash floors on a weekly basis provided that there are no infants or toddlers in the program; all spills or accidents must be cleaned up immediately)

The following items must be washed and sanitized at least weekly, and before use by another child:

- cribs, cots, mats and other approved sleeping equipment
- sheets, blankets or other coverings
- machine washable fabric toys
- smooth surfaced, non-porous floors
- mops used for cleaning

Examples of Application of Sanitizing Solution

- Spray bottle, for diaper changing surfaces, toilets, and potty chairs
- Dipping the object into a container filled with the sanitizing solution, for smaller toys
- Always allow to air dry for a minimum of 2 minutes