

R381-100-5: CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE.

Purpose

This section provides information for general cleaning and maintenance of the building, furniture, toys and equipment. Proper cleaning and maintenance of the facility are key factors to ensure a healthy and safe environment.

General Information

The physical structure where children spend each day can present health and safety concerns if the facility is not kept clean and maintained in good repair and safe condition. For example, peeling paint in older buildings may be ingested, floor surfaces in disrepair could cause falls and other injuries, broken windows could cause severe cuts. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg. 261 Standard 5.7.0.7*

In addition, one of the most important steps in reducing the spread of infectious diseases in child care settings is cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting surfaces that could possibly pose a risk to children or staff. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg. 440 Appendix J*

A certain amount of mess is normal when caring for active children. Licensing Specialists will need to distinguish between messes made as the consequence of an activity done that day and a chronic buildup of dirt, soil, food, etc. over time where disease-causing bacteria can grow.

Developing a cleaning schedule that delegates responsibility to specific staff members helps to ensure that the facility is properly cleaned on a regular basis. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg. 260 Standard 5.7.0.5*

Cleaning means to physically remove all visible dirt and sanitizing is reducing the germs.

A clean and sanitary environment helps to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. This is especially important in bathrooms, where fecal material can be easily spread to any surface children touch. Regular and thorough cleaning can prevent the spread of diseases.

If the provider uses it as specified, by the manufacturer, any product that has manufacturer instructions for how to use it as a sanitizer will be accepted as a sanitizing solution. Refer to the definition section for more details about sanitizing.

If bleach water is used to sanitize, a fresh solution must be made at least every 24 hours and be left on the surface to be sanitized for at least two minutes. According to the manufacturer, after 24 hours the bleach mixture loses its ability to sanitize. However, bleach water may be kept longer than 24 hours if the provider tests the sanitizer with a test strip and the test strip indicates the bleach water registers at least 50 parts per million on the strip.

A steam cleaner may be used to meet the requirement for cleaning and sanitizing if operated according to manufacturer's instructions.

It is recommended, though not required by rule, that sponges not be used for cleaning and sanitizing. Sponges harbor bacteria and are difficult to completely clean and sanitize in between cleaning surface areas. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg. 193 Standard 4.9.0.9*

Cracked or porous surfaces cannot be kept clean and sanitary because they trap organic materials in which microorganisms can grow. Repairs with duct tape and other similar materials add surfaces that also trap organic materials. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg. 186 Standard 4.8.0.3; pgs. 240-241 Standard 5.3.1.6*

Many children have allergies to dust mites, which are microscopic insects that ingest the tiny particles of skin that people shed normally every day. Dust mites live in carpeting and fabric but can be killed by frequent washing and drying in a heated dryer. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg 239 Standard 5.3.1.4*

(1) The provider shall maintain a clean and sanitary environment.

Rationale/Explanation

Young children sneeze, cough, drool, use diapers and are just learning to use the toilet. They hug, kiss, and touch everything and put objects in their mouths. Illnesses may be spread in a variety of ways, such as by coughing, sneezing, direct skin-to-skin contact, or touching a contaminated object or surface. Respiratory tract secretions that can contain viruses (including respiratory syncytial virus and rhinovirus) contaminate environmental surfaces and may present an opportunity for infection by contact. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg. 116-117 Standard 3.3.0.1*

It is important to keep all areas and equipment used for the storage, preparation, and service of food clean and sanitary. Outbreaks of food-borne illness have occurred in child care settings. Many of these can be prevented through appropriate sanitation methods. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg. 193 Standard 4.9.0.9*

Enforcement

A finding will be issued only when there is no other more specific rule that applies to the cleanliness of the environment.

Level 2 Noncompliance if there are any of the following:

- rotting food or a buildup of food on a surface
- a slippery spill on a floor
- mold growing
- a visible buildup of dirt, soil, grime, etc. that germs could grow in
- a buildup of cobwebs, bugs, or carpets in need of cleaning, when there is a child with asthma or another known respiratory condition enrolled in the group

Level 3 Noncompliance if there are any of the following:

- a buildup of cobwebs, bugs, or carpets in need of cleaning, but there is no child with asthma or another known respiratory condition enrolled in the group

(2) The provider shall clean and sanitize bathroom surfaces daily, including toilets, sinks, faucets, and counters.

Rationale/Explanation

Illnesses may be spread a variety of ways, including touching a contaminated object or surface. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the American Public Health Association (APHA) recommend that all bathroom surfaces be cleaned and disinfected daily. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pgs. 116-117 Standard 3.3.0.1; pgs. 442-443 Appendix K*

Enforcement

Level 2 Noncompliance if there are visible feces on a bathroom surface that children could touch. Level 3 Noncompliance otherwise.

Because they cannot be sanitized, toilet seats that are cracked through or broken, or toilet seats made of foam that is torn will be considered out of compliance.

(3) The provider shall take safe and effective measures to prevent and eliminate the presence of insects, rodents, and other vermin.

Rationale/Explanation

Insects, rodents, and vermin carry disease and may also sting or bite children. The purpose of this rule is to reduce these potential hazards to children. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg. 205 Standard 5.1.3.3; pg. 226 Standard 5.2.8.1*

Some insect and rodent feces can trigger asthma attacks in children.

Enforcement

Level 1 Noncompliance if there is a beehive or wasp nest in the outdoor play area and there are children in care who are allergic to bee or wasp stings.

Level 2 Noncompliance if:

- insects, rodents, or other vermin are visibly present in the facility
- droppings are found in a food delivery, storage, preparation, or eating area, or in areas accessible to children
- there is a beehive or wasp nest in the outdoor play area but there are no children in care who are allergic to bee or wasp stings

Level 3 Noncompliance otherwise.

Assessment

If there is a problem with insects, rodents, or other vermin, a finding will not be issued if the Licensee can show that 1) an exterminator has been scheduled, and 2) extra measures have been taken to ensure that the environment is as clean as possible. A Licensing Specialist will follow up to determine if the extermination took place by the scheduled date, if not a finding may be issued.

If inaccessible to children, fly strips may be used to control flying insects.

This rule is not intended to prevent children from participating in science activities with insects (for example, butterflies, lady bugs, or praying mantises).

Fruit flies, grasshoppers, crickets, and tarantulas are not a health risk to humans therefore providers will not be out of compliance when they are present.

(4) The provider shall maintain ceilings, walls, floor coverings, draperies, blinds, furniture, fixtures, and equipment in good repair to prevent injury to children.

Rationale/Explanation

The purpose of this rule is to prevent harm to children due to a poorly maintained facility or broken equipment. Examples of this include being cut on a sharp edge or point of a broken item, tripping over loose carpeting or tiles, falling from collapsing broken furniture, etc. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg. 277 Standard 6.2.5.1; pg. 374 Standard 9.2.6.1*

It is recommended that light fixtures containing shielded or shatterproof bulbs be used throughout the child care facility. Use of a shield or shatterproof bulbs prevents injury to people and contamination of food. Halogen lights burn at a temperature of 1200 degrees Fahrenheit and are a potential burn or fire hazard. Multi-vapor and mercury lamps can be harmful when the outer bulb is broken, causing serious skin burns and eye inflammation. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pgs. 217-218 Standard 5.2.2.2; pg. 218 Standard 5.2.2.3*

Enforcement

Level 2 Noncompliance if there are any of the following:

- exposed accessible electrical wiring
- deteriorating asbestos (the asbestos is peeling and residue is on the floor)

Level 3 Noncompliance if there are any of the following:

- accessible fiberglass insulation
- wooden equipment and furnishings that have splinters and are used by children
- cracks in equipment that could pinch a child's skin
- torn draperies or broken blinds that a child could become entangled in
- leaking plumbing other than a leaking faucet
- heat vents that are accessible to children and are missing covers
- exposed fluorescent light tubes with no covering on the fixture

Assessment

Only fluorescent light tubes, any size, need to be protected.

If a fluorescent light tube has an individual cover on the fluorescent bulb, the Licensee will be considered to be in compliance with this rule.

Worn vinyl furniture is in compliance, unless it is used as a sleeping surface for children in care.

Because coving or baseboards are attached to walls and children do not walk, sit, or play on them, they will be considered part of the wall and not part of the floor.

For both indoors and outdoors, if the play equipment has splintery wood it will be considered out of compliance.

- (5) The provider shall maintain entrances, exits, steps and outside walkways in a safe condition, and free of ice, snow, and other hazards.**

Rationale/Explanation

The purpose of this rule is to prevent injuries, including from falls, and to allow safe and timely exit from the building in case of emergency. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg. 259 Standard 5.7.0.1; pg. 210 Standard 5.1.6.3, 5.1.6.4; pg. 207 Standard 5.1.4.3*

Enforcement

Level 2 Noncompliance if there is a buildup of ice in one of these areas. Level 3 Noncompliance otherwise.

Assessment

The Licensee will be allowed a reasonable amount of time during and immediately after a snowstorm to remove snow from outdoor exit areas, stairs, and walkways. In this case, the Licensee will be in compliance unless there is a buildup of snow or ice on these surfaces.

In case of an emergency, all walkways, exits, and stairways must be free of ice and snow even if the children will not be going outside.

If a facility has a walkway greater than 3 feet wide, the Licensee will be considered in compliance with this rule if the walkway is cleared to a width of at least 3 feet and a distance of at least 6 feet from the facility.