

Sanitation and Hygiene Guide

Seattle-King County Public Health

Sanitation & Hygiene Guide

for Homeless Service Providers

STAY SAFE & HEALTHY
Toolbox for Facilities and
Communities That Serve People
Experiencing Homelessness

December 2019

**Environmental Health
Services Division**

Public Health
Seattle & King County

[See it here](#)

Food Safety

Germs and bad food can make you sick. Protect your health.

Safe Food

Rinse fruits and vegetables before preparing or eating

Write the date on prepared food and eat or throw it out within one week

AVOID THE FOOD DANGER ZONE: 41-135°F

These foods can make you sick if they are left out for more than 4 hours

Shelf-stable foods are safe at any temperature

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Lice, Scabies & Bed Bugs

No one wants to be itchy. Prevent the spread!

Stop the Spread

Tell staff if you are itchy or have other symptoms so you can get treated

Use a heat treatment box to treat belongings that could carry bed bugs, scabies, or lice

Machine wash infested items separately and dry at 130°F for at least 30 minutes

Place items that cannot be heat-treated or washed and dried at 130°F in a sealed plastic bag for two weeks to control lice and scabies

Clean and disinfect sleeping mats and wash bedding between clients

Throw out bed bug infested items that cannot be treated

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Hygiene

Good personal hygiene will protect your health.

Laundry

Ask for clean bedding when you arrive at a shelter

Use a heat treatment box to treat belongings that could carry bed bugs, scabies, or lice

CLEAN BELONGINGS = BETTER HEALTH

For best results, wash laundry in the detergent's recommended water temperature

Do not overload machine – fill to ¾ or less

Dry laundry on high heat

If laundry has vomit, blood, or poop on it, wash separately. Use detergent, hot water, and 1/2 cup bleach. Remove solid waste before washing and wear gloves, an apron, a mask, and eye protection.

Disinfect sleeping mats daily and wash bedding weekly or when dirty

Do not place unwashed laundry in the dryer

If washing someone else's laundry, do not shake it out and wear gloves and an apron

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Sanitation & Hygiene Guide INTRODUCTION

Who is this guide for?
This guide is for operators, staff, volunteers, clients, and residents who are involved in the day-to-day operations of shelters, tiny home villages, day centers, and other communities that serve people experiencing homelessness. It will also be useful for management staff and contract monitors who are involved in setting up, equipping, and supporting these facilities.

Why does this guide matter?
The purpose of this guide is to reduce the spread of contagious diseases, prevent foodborne illnesses, and to ensure safe and sanitary spaces for individuals experiencing homelessness. Sites like yours play a key role in addressing the health and safety of our communities and we hope this guide will be a useful, go-to resource.

How do I use this guide?
People involved in day-to-day operations of your site should review the printable posters at the beginning of each section. We recommend printing and posting these visual guides for daily use. Alternatively, you could print, laminate, and connect the posters with a metal ring – creating a packet that can be hung and used when needed. For people who are in charge of setting up, equipping, or supporting sites, we recommend using the checklists provided in each section and referencing the appendices for more information when needed. If you are reading this document on a computer or phone, you can use the table of contents and poster directory to navigate to relevant sections.

This Guide Does Not Provide Medical Advice.
The contents of this guide are for informational purposes only. Nothing in this guide is intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Those seeking medical consultation, advice, diagnosis, or treatment should contact their physician or other qualified health care provider. If you think you have a medical emergency, call 911 immediately.

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Food Safety CHECKLIST

Use this checklist if you are in charge of setting up, managing, equipping, or inspecting facilities that serve people experiencing homelessness.

Set up your facility for safe food prep and service.

- Provide a sink or hand washing station in the food prep area.
 - Ensure water is warm (100°F - 120°F).
 - No running water? Set up a temporary hand washing station (Appendix H).
- Serve food using tongs, disposable gloves, or single-use pastry paper.
- Provide sanitizing solution in labeled spray bottles for food prep and serving surfaces. Write this on the label:
 - **Sanitizing Solution**
 - **How to Use:** Spray surface and leave for 1-2 minutes. Dry with clean paper towel.
 - **How to Mix:** 1/4 teaspoon of bleach with 4 cups of water.
- Provide the following items to set up a dishwashing station.
 - Trash can to scrape off food scraps
 - Dish soap, paper towels, scrubbers, rags, sponges
 - Sink (2 compartment recommended) or deep containers for dishwashing, rinsing, and sanitizing
 - Bleach for making a sanitizer solution (1 teaspoon bleach to 1 gallon of water)
 - Space to air dry dishes or paper towels
- Post steps for dishwashing
 - Wash with warm soapy water
 - Rinse with clear/clean water
 - Soak in sanitizing solution for 10 seconds
 - Air dry on a wrack or with dry with paper towel
- Equip kitchen with a dishwasher (recommended, but not required). You don't need a commercial dishwasher. Residential dishwashers work well.

Post instructions for dishwasher use:

- Scrape food off first and avoid overloading machines
- For commercial grade chemical dishwashers set the chlorine concentration between 50-200 ppm
- For commercial grade high temperature dishwashers set rinse cycle to 180°F or higher.

Avoid the Danger Zone (41-135°F).

- Provide a digital thermometer for measuring food temperatures.
 - Sanitize thermometer before using. Place tip in the center of the thickest part of foods for accuracy. Sanitize thermometer again when done.
- Keep hot food hot, and cold food cold. Minimize time spent in the bacteria-growing Danger Zone 41-135°F.
 - Cool food in the fridge, uncovered, and in small batches to exit the Danger Zone quickly. If you have large batches, cool in the freezer.
 - Re-heat food to 165°F and serve hot.
- Cook foods to appropriate final temperatures:
 - Vegetables = 135°F
 - Pork, seafood, and eggs = 145°F
 - Beef = 155°F
 - Chicken = 165°F

Checklist continues on the next page

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