

# User Guide

## About the EVS Micro-Learns

Environmental services (EVS) workers are vital members of the healthcare team and are crucial to stopping the spread of germs in health care. Project Firstline's *EVS Micro-Learns: Essentials for Infection Control* are a series of guided discussions that provide brief, on-the-job educational opportunities on infection control topics relevant to EVS tasks.

## Using the EVS Micro-Learns

The micro-learns can be incorporated into existing opportunities where EVS workers gather, such as pre-shift "huddles" or team meetings. The sessions should be led or facilitated by an experienced team member with infection control expertise specific to EVS.



**Each EVS micro-learn package includes an adaptable discussion guide for the facilitator and a job aid, which facilitators are encouraged to review prior to presenting.**



**Discussion Guide.** The discussion guide is not a script. Facilitators are encouraged to adapt the guide for their audience by incorporating relevant and practical questions and ideas. For instance, facilitators can connect the content to the audience's job duties, facility-specific cases or issues, resources and points of contact, and other information.



**Job Aid.** The one-page, visual job aid helps to reinforce the key messages of the micro-learn. Facilitators are encouraged to make the job aid available after the micro-learn session in digital or hard copy form.

Use the QR code to provide feedback on this training.



# Clean Hands for Environmental Services (EVS)

## Prepare:

Environmental services (EVS) workers are the first line of defense in stopping harmful germs from spreading in the healthcare environment. Clean hands are a simple and effective way to prevent the spread of germs. As you present the information below, provide examples relevant to your team and any facility-specific guidance related to this topic.

## Share key information:

- Clean hands are essential to stopping the spread of germs, preventing infections, and saving lives.
  - Using alcohol-based hand sanitizer (ABHS) or soap and water are both effective ways of killing germs on your hands.
- Most of the time, you should use ABHS to clean your hands because it works better than soap and water and is less damaging to your skin.
  - ABHS cannot physically remove dirt, grime, and bodily substances, so when you can see things on your hands, you should wash your hands with soap and water.
    - **Facilitator note:** *Discuss other instances when washing with soap and water is preferred (e.g., after going to the restroom).*
- Gloves also protect your hands from germs by protecting your skin from what you're touching, and they let you remove germs when you take the gloves off.
  - Wear gloves any time your hands might touch blood or other body fluids from another person.
  - We also use gloves for certain types of germs, like *C. difficile*, when we want to be especially careful not to spread them to other people or to other places.
- Although gloves can help keep germs from spreading, they are not a substitute for cleaning your hands.
  - Gloves can spread germs to surfaces and patients.
  - Germs can also spread to your hands when you take off your gloves.
- ABHS should not be used on gloves because it may damage your gloves and keep them from protecting your hands.

(continued)

## Clean Hands for Environmental Services (EVS) *(continued)*

### When to clean your hands:

- Before touching anything in a patient's room
- Before touching the EVS cart or new supplies while cleaning
- When going from a dirty task to a clean task
  - **Facilitator note:** Discuss examples of dirty tasks (e.g., taking out the trash) and clean tasks (e.g., cleaning and disinfecting surfaces).
- When your hands are visibly dirty
- Immediately after taking off gloves

### When to take off gloves:

- Before washing your hands
- Before exiting a room
- When going from a dirty task to a clean task
- When the gloves are visibly dirty
- When gloves are damaged

### Reinforce key points:

- Cleaning your hands the right way at the right time is essential to keeping harmful germs from spreading to you, patients, and others in healthcare settings.
- Gloves are not a substitute for cleaning your hands.

# Clean Hands Prevent Infections and Save Lives



## As an EVS worker, do you know when to clean your hands?

- ✓ Before touching anything in the patient's room
- ✓ Before touching the EVS cart or new supplies while cleaning
- ✓ When going from a dirty task to a clean task
- ✓ When your hands are visibly dirty
- ✓ Immediately after taking off gloves

## Do you know when to take off your gloves?

- ✓ Before washing your hands
- ✓ Before exiting a room
- ✓ When going from a dirty task to a clean task
- ✓ When the gloves are visibly dirty
- ✓ When the gloves are damaged

**Learn More**

Germs Live on the Skin: <https://bit.ly/4ioJfd3>

Infection Control in Health Care: An Overview: <https://bit.ly/43Qaf1v>