

MRV Lodging Committee Best Practices for Laundry

The laundry process starts with the removal of used or contaminated textiles, fabrics, and/or clothing from the areas where such contamination occurred. Handling contaminated laundry with a minimum of agitation can help prevent the generation of potentially contaminated lint aerosols in guest rooms. Sorting or rinsing contaminated laundry at the location where contamination occurred is prohibited by OSHA. Contaminated textiles and fabrics are placed into bags or other appropriate containment in this location; these bags are then securely tied or otherwise closed to prevent leakage. Single bags of sufficient tensile strength are adequate for containing laundry, but leak-resistant containment is needed if the laundry is wet and capable of soaking through a cloth bag.

Proper PPE for Employees:

- Practice hand hygiene before application and after removal of PPE.
- Wear tear-resistant reusable rubber gloves when handling and laundering soiled linens.
- If there is risk of splashing, for example, if laundry is washed by hand, laundry staff should always wear gowns or aprons and face protection (e.g., face shield, goggles) when laundering soiled linens.

Items that must be washed between guests:

- Pillows and pillow covers
- Mattress covers
- Sheets, pillowcases, and blankets
- Towels
- Bathmats
- Non-skid in-tub mats
- Shower curtain liners
- Eliminate the use of decorative pillows, bedspreads and other unnecessary items from each room.

Handling Used Items

- Handle items with minimal agitation to avoid contaminating surrounding air and other items. Do not shake used items.
- Gently bag used items in the location where they were found. Do not sort or rinse items at the location where they were used. The bag should be tied to prevent aerosols from escaping into the air. Use bags where leakage/dampness will not penetrate during transport.
- If leakage/dampness is possible, the bag should be placed in appropriate container to contain leakage.

Washing used items

- Where possible, launder items using the warmest permissible water setting for the items and dry items completely. Hot water provides effective means of destroying microorganisms (bacteria, viruses, protozoa or fungi). For commercial laundry facilities, the CDC recommends 160°F washing at a minimum of 25 minutes.
- Remove clean items from the washing machine immediately after washing.
- Transport clean items directly to the dryer.
- Use the highest heat recommended by the item's manufacturer.

Storage room for clean linens

- Ideally, store linens in room temperature (between 68° to 78°F)
- Where possible, the storage area should be well-ventilated, free from drains or hot water pipes
- Store items on shelves with proper clearance from the floor and from the ceiling. Shelf height: Bottom 6" – 8" above floor. Top 12"-18" below ceiling.
- Keep the guest room doors closed at all times.

Information sourced from [CDC](#), [OSHA](#) and [Dentalcare.com](#) and [Infection Control Today](#).

NOTES:

Mattresses, Covers and Pillows.

A mattress cover is generally a fitted, protective material, the purpose of which is to prevent the mattress from becoming contaminated with body

fluids and substances. A linen sheet placed on the mattress is not considered a mattress cover. Patches for tears and holes in mattress covers do not provide an impermeable surface over the mattress. Mattress covers should be replaced when torn; the mattress should be replaced if it is visibly stained. Wet mattresses, in particular, can be a substantial environmental source of microorganisms. Infections and colonizations caused by *Acinetobacter* spp., MRSA, and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* have been described, especially among burn patients. In these reports, the removal of wet mattresses was an effective infection-control measure. Efforts were made to ensure that pads and covers were cleaned and disinfected between patients using disinfectant products compatible with mattress-cover materials to ensure that these covers remained impermeable to fluids. Pillows and their covers should be easily cleanable, preferably in a hot water laundry cycle. These should be laundered between patients (i.e. guests) or if contaminated with body substances.

Air mattresses and camping cots should be cleaned and sanitized after each use.

Keep in mind that in order to properly eliminate pathogens in the laundering process, consider: Time, Temperature, Mechanical Action and Chemistry.