

FS No. 98-008-520

ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING FOR SARS-CoV2 IS NOT STANDARD PRACTICE

Environmental sampling for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome-Coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2) is not feasible nor recommended at this time. To date, there are no validated, commercially available, environmental test methods specific for infectious SARS-CoV-2 viruses in air or on surfaces. Additionally, there are no procedures in place that will permit data interpretation necessary to establish a level of contamination or to evaluate the effectiveness of cleaning and disinfection within buildings.

Environmental sampling to verify effectiveness of cleaning and disinfection is not currently included in the guidelines published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) or other public health authorities. Currently, the U.S. Army Public Health Center (APHC) is advising Army facilities to implement practices and procedures identified by the CDC, AIHA, or APHC for cleaning and disinfection.

Many of those infected with SARS-CoV-2 are “silent spreaders.” Testing surfaces can verify their cleanliness only until a space is re-occupied and potentially re-contaminated. This is why public health professionals recommend routine, not episodic, cleaning and disinfection for most buildings.

Leaders and supervisors should provide oversight to confirm that cleaning and disinfection procedures are properly followed.

The following links provide detailed cleaning guidance currently recommended by APHC:

- APHC TIP No. 98-105-0420, Cleaning and Disinfecting Buildings and Areas Previously Occupied by Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Personnel.
https://phc.amedd.army.mil/PHC%20Resource%20Library/TIP_No_98-105-0420_CleaningandDisinfectingAreasOccupiedbyCOVID-19Personnel.pdf
- CDC Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>
- AIHA Workplace Cleaning for COVID 19 Guidance Document.
https://aiha-assets.sfo2.digitaloceanspaces.com/AIHA/resources/Guidance-Documents/Workplace-Cleaning-for-COVID-19-Guidance-Document_FINAL.pdf

The APHC COVID-19 site provides Army-specific information and communication resources related to the COVID-19. The resources and tools available on this site may be shared with, tailored for, and/or used to create informational and educational materials for Army beneficiaries.

<https://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/campaigns/covid19/Pages/default.aspx>

The APHC Health Information Products e-Catalog for COVID-19 communication materials are located at:

<https://ephc.amedd.army.mil/HIPECatalog/searchResults.aspx?hotlist=88>