

Cleaning Foster Areas After Infectious Disease Exposure



When caring for animals with parvovirus, panleukopenia, calicivirus, coccidia or other contagious diseases it's important to consider all objects and areas they may have come into contact with and disinfect them appropriately. To effectively clean and remove contagions from the environment, it is important to use a two-step cleaning and disinfecting process.

We generally request that a thorough cleaning and disinfecting is done twice before introducing new animals to your foster space, to prevent any spread of disease that can live in the environment.

The difference between cleaning and disinfecting

- **Cleaning** breaks up actual dirt or organic matter. It is the physical removal of dirt and debris. This includes washing bowls, litter boxes or other items with dish soap or other household cleaner, sweeping or vacuuming floors, or wiping away urine or feces. **Cleaning is typically done on a daily basis!**
- **Disinfecting** uses a chemical solution to kill or inactivate germs. The type of germs killed is dependent on the solution and requires a specific contact time in order to be effective. Contact time is the amount of time that the surface must remain visibly wet in order to kill the germs.
 - The most inexpensive, readily available and effective disinfecting product is bleach, which kills most common pathogens, including ringworm. AHS can provide another disinfectant (Rescue) if you would prefer this over bleach or need a disinfectant that is color-safe.

Two-step process to clean and disinfect foster areas

Step 1

- Clean all areas (wipe down hard surfaces, sweep/mop hardwood floors, vacuum carpets/rugs, etc.) with a common household cleaner.
- Make sure all dirt and debris has been thoroughly mopped, wiped, vacuumed or swept away.

Step 2

- **Option 1:** Using Rescue and water solution diluted 1:8 (4 oz Rescue concentrate per gallon of water), wipe down hard surfaces, mop floors, and spray any carpet or fabric. **Make sure that all surfaces remain visibly wet for 10 minutes.** This will ensure that any remaining ringworm spores are killed. **RESCUE SHOULD NEVER BE MIXED WITH BLEACH PRODUCTS.**
 - Rescue is non-toxic and generally color-safe, but we always recommend a test area to be safe.

- **Option 2:** Using a bleach and water solution diluted at 1:10 (**1 part bleach, 10 parts water**), wipe down hard surfaces and mop floors. **Make sure that all surfaces remain visibly wet for 10 minutes.** Remember to wipe down hard surfaces after ten minutes to remove any residual bleach, as it may be harmful to animals.
 - *Note: Once mixed, the bleach/water solution is only effective for 24 hours and must be protected from light.*

Soft toys, scratching posts, carpeted cat trees, and bedding should ideally be discarded if they have been exposed to parvovirus, palekopenia, or ringworm to prevent future animals from getting infected. Any items that you need to keep need to be thoroughly cleaned with the two-step process outlined above, and bedding can be laundered using regular detergent and bleach at the 1:32 dilution in your washing machine.

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ashevillehumane.org/get-involved/foster/resources

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