

Home Care Safety

Home care workers provide in-home personal and health care for the elderly and those with disabilities. To ensure the safety of home care employees and clients, the following measures should be considered prior to and during each shift.

Initial Precautions

- Verify scheduled visits are to continue
- Contact supervisor for direction on client care
 - Consider taking client temperature upon entering the home
 - Postpone visits for clients experiencing a low-grade fever, cough or sore throat
- Wash hands before entering the home and regularly throughout your shift
- Wear personal protective equipment as directed
- Resist touching your face
- Disinfect all surfaces you come in contact with (ex: doorknobs, light switches, faucets, keys, phones, remotes)
- Remain at least six feet from others and prohibit guests during shifts

Laundry

- Use disposable gloves to handle soiled laundry
- Wash clothes, towels and linens on the warmest machine setting
- Disinfect laundry hamper or use a disposable liner
- Don't shake dirty laundry to avoid dispersing contagions into the air
- Remove gloves using CDC [guidelines](#)
- Wash hands following task

Grocery Shopping and Delivery

- Wipe down vehicle controls (steering wheel, gear shift, directional, radio, window controls)
- Wipe down grocery cart/basket handles with disinfectant wipes
- Consider wearing disposable gloves for handling merchandise
- Wipe keypad before entering payment data
- Designate a disinfecting station at the client home — disinfect packaged foods and thoroughly wash produce
- Wash hands following task

Light Cleaning

- Sanitize mop, broom and vacuum handles before use
- Wear disposable gloves when wiping, dusting and emptying trash
- Use universal precautions when handling spills and used tissues
- Consider a mask while dusting, vacuuming or other tasks that generate air particles
- Wash hands following task

Companion/Social

- Maintain six feet distance where possible
- Disinfect communal objects (ex: game pieces, playing cards, keyboards, remote controls)
- Clean/sanitize gait belts and other assistive devices
- Have deliveries dropped at the doorstep and disinfect before opening
- Wash hands after handling mail, magazines or newspaper

The advice presented in this document is intended as general information for employers. For further information, please contact your CompWest loss control consultant.