

Changes to Bleach Sanitizing Solution

What's the problem?

Current OCFS chlorine bleach sanitizing solution guidelines are based on *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care*, by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Public Health Association, the US Department of Health and Human Services and the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care.

These guidelines, which are included in Health and Safety training and in the OCFS Health Care Plan, remain effective for *sanitizing diapering surfaces*. However, for *sanitizing toys that have been mouthed* and *sanitizing food contact surfaces*, the existing guidelines exceed the limits stated in the New York State Sanitary Code.



These bleach sanitizing solution guidelines STAY THE SAME:

- ◆ sanitizing *diapering surfaces*
- ◆ sanitizing *any surface that has been contaminated with blood or bodily fluids*
- ◆ sanitizing *toys that have been mouthed*

These bleach sanitizing solution guidelines NEED TO BE UPDATED:

- ◆ sanitizing *food contact surfaces* (including counter tops, dining tables and high chair trays)

How does this affect my program?

Subpart 14.1 of the New York State Sanitary Code contains requirements for sanitizing *food contact surfaces* (including counter tops, dining tables and high chairs). When chlorine is used as a sanitizer with wiping cloths or spray bottles, a solution of at least 100 parts per million (ppm) is required.



Part 418-1.12(g) of the NYS OCFS Child Day Care Regulations states:

“Food service and storage, including refrigeration of milk and other perishable foods or formula, must comply with the requirements of Part 14 of the State Sanitary code.”

Although this regulation is specific to day care centers, the principles involved—the safety of children—affect *all* modalities of child care. This regulatory reference includes “*food service and storage*,” which naturally includes all aspects of food handling, preparation, serving and storage.

What do I need to do?

The sanitizing solution guidelines for *soaking toys* and *sanitizing diapering surfaces* (or sanitizing surfaces that have been contaminated with blood or bodily fluids) remain the same. Sanitizing *food contact surfaces* require an addition to these guidelines. Unscented chlorine bleach is the most commonly used sanitizing agent, because it is affordable and easy to get.



Bleach with added chemicals such as fragrances and thickeners may NOT be used because they leave residue on food contact surfaces.

While the State Sanitary Code refers to “parts per million,” you can make the right strength sanitizing solution without having to buy any special equipment. Just follow two easy steps: (1) read the label on the bleach container; and (2) use common household measurements.

Read the label

Sodium hypochlorite is the active ingredient in chlorine bleach. Different brands of bleach may have different amounts of this ingredient; the measurements shown below are for bleach that contains 6% to 6.15% sodium hypochlorite. The only way to know how much sodium hypochlorite is in the bleach is by reading the label. Always read the bleach bottle label to determine its concentration of sodium hypochlorite before buying it. If the concentration is not listed, you should not buy that product.

Use common household measurements

Using bleach that contains 6% to 6.15% sodium hypochlorite, you can make sanitizing spray solution for food contact surfaces by mixing 1/2 teaspoon of bleach with 1 quart of water.

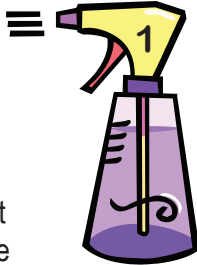
How do I mix the right solution for the right job?

PURPOSE	Mix this much BLEACH...	...with this much WATER
Spray Solution #1: Sanitizing food contact surfaces (including counter tops, dining tables and high chair trays)	1/2 teaspoon	1 quart
Spray Solution #2: Sanitizing diapering surfaces (and any surfaces that have been contaminated by blood or bodily fluids)	1 tablespoon	1 quart
Soaking Solution: Sanitizing toys that have been mouthed	1 teaspoon	1 gallon

Sanitizing solution needs to be made fresh each day. Currently, you've been making one kind of spray solution each day; now you'll need to make two kinds of spray solution each day. To keep them straight, be sure to label both spray bottles. Here are examples of labels you can copy and use to label your spray bottles:

**Sanitizing Solution #1:
FOOD CONTACT SURFACES**


1/2 teaspoon bleach
in
1 quart cool water



Remember: All surfaces must be CLEAN before you sanitize or the sanitizer won't work.

**Sanitizing Solution #2:
DIAPERING SURFACES**

1 tablespoon bleach
in
1 quart cool water



Remember: All surfaces must be CLEAN before you sanitize or the sanitizer won't work.

What if I need help?

The OCFS Division of Child Care Services recommends that Day Care Centers and School-Age Child Care programs contact their local Department of Health about requirements for using chlorine test strips to verify the strength of their sanitizing solution.

As always, whenever you have questions, contact your licensor or registrar.