

COVID-19 Waste Management guidance for care homes

PHE are amending the guidance regarding the management of waste from people who are suspected or confirmed Covid positive in care homes. This amendment has been approved by DEFRA, the Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales and the Environment Agency and has been developed in conjunction with Public Health England and Public Health Wales.

This is awaiting final sign off from the Secretary of State but in the meantime PHE have advised that the information may be disseminated.

During the COVID-19 pandemic it is even more important that proper waste management practices are followed. This is to ensure that healthcare waste transportation, treatment and disposal capacity is used appropriately. Care homes should have well-established processes for healthcare waste management which may need adaption to accommodate COVID-19 waste.

Bodily waste such as urine or faeces from individuals with possible or confirmed COVID-19 can be discharged into the sewage system. Where urine or faeces are contained, for example, within incontinence pads, stoma bags etc then this material can be handled and managed as normal 'offensive waste'.

For respiratory intervention waste (e.g. suction catheters and other waste contaminated with respiratory secretions generated from the care of residents with a tracheostomy or long-term ventilation) and personal waste that has been in contact with the individual, including used tissues, and other soiled items, discarded PPE and disposable cleaning cloths should be managed as follows:

If the waste is stored for greater than 72 hours:

- the waste can be then treated and disposed of as offensive waste

If the waste is unable to be stored for 72 hours:




- this waste **must** be disposed of as clinical waste and contained in an orange bag as this waste may still pose an infection risk.



Other waste items for example, pharmaceuticals and sharps that may be associated with the treatment of individuals may require specialist disposal and should be managed in line with the advice given in Health Technical Memorandum. 07-01: Safe management of healthcare waste. This guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-the-safe-management-of-healthcare-waste>

Please refer to the table below which provides you with more detailed information.

It is important to note that non-healthcare waste e.g. recycling, domestic type waste, packaging etc must continue to be handled and managed as normal.

Description of Waste	Requirement	Note
<p>Offensive Waste and PPE from Non-Infectious individuals only</p> <p>e.g bodily fluids incontinence waste, stoma bags</p>	<p>Place in the usual “tiger bag” – a yellow bag with a black stripe. Secure with swan neck and zip tie or tape and store safely.</p>  <p>Dispose of as per usual arrangements.</p>	<p>Where possible urine and faeces collected in vessels/mobile toilets shall be flushed to sewer. Where macerators are routinely used, their use may be continued</p>
<p>Offensive Waste – Bodily fluids waste only from COVID 19 suspected/confirmed individual (still in symptomatic phase)– e.g bodily fluids, incontinence waste, stoma bags etc</p>	<p>Place in the usual “tiger bag” – a yellow bag with a black stripe. Secure with swan neck and zip tie or tape and store safely</p>  <p>Dispose of as per usual arrangements.</p>	<p>Where possible urine and faeces collected in vessels/mobile toilets shall be flushed to sewer. Where macerators are routinely used, their use may be continued.</p>
<p>If the waste is stored for greater than 72hrs (for the specified wastes below only):</p> <p>Respiratory Intervention waste (Suction catheters and other waste contaminated with respiratory secretions generated from the care of residents with a tracheostomy or long-term ventilation)</p> <p>Personal contact waste (used tissues, and other soiled items, discarded PPE and disposable cleaning cloths) used in administering care to the individual suspected or confirmed as having COVID 19.</p>	<p>Place in the usual “tiger bag” – a yellow bag with a black stripe. Secure with swan neck and zip tie or tape and store safely.</p> <p>This should be securely stored for at least 72 hours before being put in your usual collected waste bin. If this is not possible please follow guidance below.</p>  <p>Dispose of as per usual arrangements.</p>	<p>If using this option, you must have clear and clearly displayed [procedures to ensure good segregation from other tiger bag waste detailed in this table. You should maintain written records to demonstrate the waste has been held for 72hrs.</p>

<p>If the waste is unable to be stored for 72hrs (for the specified wastes below only):</p> <p>Respiratory Intervention waste (Suction catheters and other waste contaminated with respiratory secretions generated from the care of residents with a tracheostomy or long-term ventilation)</p> <p>Personal contact waste (used tissues, and other soiled items, discarded PPE and disposable cleaning cloths) used in administering care to the individual suspected or confirmed as having COVID 19.</p>	<p>Place in an orange bag. Secure with swan neck and zip tie or tape and store safely.</p>  <p>Dispose of as infectious clinical waste</p>	
<p>Other Clinical Waste associated with treatment of individuals – this may include other infectious waste from other treatments, sharps, pharmaceuticals etc</p>	<p>This waste requires specialist disposal and should be managed in line with the advice given in Health Technical Memorandum. 07-01: Safe management of healthcare waste. This guidance can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-the-safe-management-of-healthcare-waste</p> 	<p>Your clinical waste contractor should be able to give you advice also and help you get this right.</p>

Appendix 1 Waste disposal log

Waste Disposal log – suspected or confirmed Covid 19. Identify each bag with number, date and time of start of 72 hour storage

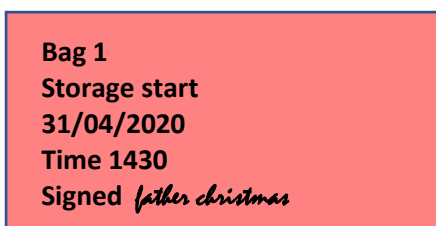
Resident name:	72 hour storage start	72 hour storage complete	Moved to normal waste disposal stream
Bag number	Date/time/signature	date /time/signature	date/time/signature
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			

Guidance notes

Waste bags from suspected or positive Covid residents need to be stored for at least 72 hours before moving into the normal waste stream for disposal.

You need to keep a record of this process

1. Each bag should be clearly identified with:
 - Number – the bag should be numbered so that it is clearly identifiable on the log eg,
 - Date and time that 72 hour storage started



We suggest that you use colour coded labels to distinguish bags that need storage that are big enough to write number, date and time on

E.g. paper wristbands



Luggage labels



Coloured sticky labels



2. Complete the log at each stage of the bag moving through the storage period into the normal waste stream for disposal.