**POTENTIAL HAZARDS**

Laundry and Housekeeping Safety

* **Handling contaminated laundry**Exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials
* **Handling needles/sharps**Exposure to bloodborne pathogens from laundry that contains needles/sharps
* **Hazardous chemicals**Exposure from cleaning chemicals found in laundry or housekeeping products, including unlabeled chemicals, splattering when pouring chemicals, soaps and detergents, and mixing chemicals
* **Heat stress**Exposure to excessive heat from working in hot areas
* **Lifting/pushing/pulling**Exposure when lifting, reaching, pushing or pulling heavy objects like wet laundry, trash containers/bags, and cleaning carts
* **Slips/trips/falls**Exposure from wet floors, cords, other objects, and various floor surfaces

**PROTECTION**

* **Contaminated laundry**Wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Bag and handle contaminated laundry at the location where it is used. When sorting or rinsing contaminated laundry, transport in properly labeled/color-coded bags or containers to the laundry area for decontamination. Do not hold contaminated laundry bags close to the body or squeeze them.
* **Needles/sharps**

Visually check all laundry for needles/sharps BEFORE handling. Wear appropriate PPE. Properly dispose of any discovered needles/sharps into designated sharps containers.

* **Hazardous chemicals**Know where your Safety Data Sheets (SDS) are located. Understand warning labels and SDS. Wear PPE like gloves, goggles, and splash aprons when handling hazardous detergents and chemicals.
* **Heat stress**Recognize the first signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Drink plenty of water. Avoid caffeine. Wear loose-fitting, breathable (cotton) clothing. Take appropriate rest breaks as allowed by your facility.
* **Lifting/transferring/pushing/pulling**Avoid using improper lifting techniques such as twisting, lifting bulky objects, and lifting above shoulder height. Use well-maintained carts, preferably with large wheels, when available. Use mechanical aids as directed by your supervisor/policy.
* **Slips/trips/falls**Clean up non-hazardous/non-infectious spills when you first find them (use PPE as required). Use warning signs for wet floors. Use mats in wet areas. Look for cords and other trip hazards.