

**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF SCHOOL FACILITIES
OFFICE OF FIELD OPERATIONS**

September 1, 2022

OFFICE OF FIELD OPERATIONS CIRCULAR NO. 2 – 2022/23

NOTE: All Circulars are to be kept in a permanent file

TO ALL CUSTODIAN ENGINEERS

2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR RE-OPENING CIRCULAR

In preparation for the upcoming school year, the Division of School Facilities (DSF) is implementing a strategic approach to help maintain the health and safety of all building occupants. The pillars from which we have built our strategy are as follows:

- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
- **Disinfectant Supplies**
- **Building Ventilation**
- **Handwashing Sinks**

Custodian engineers are to actively engage their deputy director of facilities and principals to strategize on effective ways to provide a clean, safe learning environment for every school community.

Custodial staff members who are assigned to the day shift must ensure student and staff restrooms are regularly checked for cleanliness, that touchpoints are disinfected, dispensers are stocked with hand soap and that toilet paper and paper towels are available at all times. The Bathroom Inspection Log [Attachment 1] must be completed on an ongoing basis and all completed logs are to be maintained in the custodian engineer's office.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

As per Circular No. 3 – 2020/21, PPE supplies will continue to be ordered by custodian engineers via FAMIS. Custodian engineers are to work with their building principal(s) to order enough of the required types of PPE to maintain a 30-day supply of all PPE products based on the building's current burn rates. If a custodian engineer believes they do not have enough additional funding to maintain these levels, they are to contact their deputy director of facilities immediately and adjustments will be made, or supplies will be provided from the central supply.

Additionally, DSF will continue to send custodian engineers an inventory survey of COVID-19 supplies and PPE items. This survey must be completed weekly for the foreseeable future.

Installation of Wall Mount Hand Sanitizer Dispensers

As a reminder, hand sanitizer dispensing stations are required in all classrooms and high traffic areas of all buildings. Hand sanitizer pump stations and personal hand sanitizer bottles must be provided when dispensing stations are not feasible. Additionally, hand sanitizer dispensers and pump stations must be placed throughout all administrative buildings. All hand sanitizer dispensers must be accessible and replenished as needed.

Custodian engineers are to refer to the building's AHERA report prior to the mounting of hand sanitizer dispensers. If ACM is present, custodian engineers

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must utilize double-sided adhesive strips when mounting. Additionally, when installing dispensers in rooms that are occupied by students under the age of 6, custodian engineers are to either utilize double-sided adhesive strips or must follow the O&M Procedures for deteriorated lead-based paint outlined in Circular No. 3 – 2019/20.

Hand sanitizer dispenser installations must comply with the NYC Fire Department Fire Code and New York State Fire Code section 5705.5 as it pertains to alcohol-based hand rubs.

Hand sanitizer is a flammable substance and, as such, specific dispenser placement and storage requirements must be met:

- The maximum capacity of each dispenser shall be 68 ounces.
- The minimum separation between dispensers shall be 48 inches.
- The dispensers must not be installed directly next to, above, or below an electrical receptacle, switch, appliance, device, or other ignition source. The wall space between the dispenser and the floor or intervening countertop shall be free of electrical receptacles, switches, appliances, devices or other ignition sources.
- Dispensers shall be mounted so that the bottom of the dispenser is not less than 42 inches and not more than 48 inches above the finished floor.
- The custodial staff shall test the dispensers each time a new refill is installed in accordance with the manufacturer's care and use instructions.

In addition to the above, hand sanitizer dispensers are not to be installed in any corridors that is less than 72” in width or in carpeted areas/rooms.

Unused supplies of hand sanitizer are to be stored in the paint room or other secured sprinkled storage rooms. Custodian engineers are not to store more than 275 gallons of hand sanitizer in the building. Any custodian engineer storing more than 275 gallons must contact their deputy director of facilities for further instructions.

Disinfectant Supplies

Disinfecting supplies are the responsibility of the custodian engineer to order utilizing their building’s custodial supply allocation.

Custodian engineers will be responsible for ensuring their buildings have a 30-day inventory of all supplies. Urgent supply needs must be escalated to your deputy director of facilities immediately. Centrally provided supplies will be strategically placed across the city for rapid deployment, if needed. Additionally, DSF will send custodian engineers an inventory survey of COVID-19 supplies and PPE items. This survey will be sent to you weekly for the foreseeable future.

Building Ventilation

Adequate ventilation is a critical part of the Department Of Education’s layered strategy for maintaining occupant safety and health. Ensuring that each building’s ventilation system is working correctly is the responsibility of the custodian engineer. Custodian engineers must follow all of the below listed protocols on the maintenance and operation of building ventilation systems, as well as informing multiple parties (including principal(s), deputy directors of facilities, and central DSF through the ventilation status application) of any non-working ventilation systems, in part or whole.

Custodian engineers must turn on all applicable HVAC equipment (e.g., exhausts, blowers, AHUs, RTUs, dedicated outside air units, fan coil units, univents etc.) and ventilate buildings two (2) hours prior to occupancy at the start of the school day, and turn them off one (1) hour after the school day has ended. All HVAC equipment must be inspected daily by the custodian engineer to ensure equipment is in a good state of repair. Equipment operation is to be documented on the building’s PO7. Issues are to be brought to the deputy director of facilities immediately. Additionally, custodian engineers are to perform regular maintenance on HVAC systems. This includes, but is not limited to, replacing belts, lubrication and adjusting linkages and damper controls to ensure the maximum amount of outside air is entering the building. All air filters are to be cleaned, replaced, or modified

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as required throughout the school year. HVAC systems must be maintained in proper working order focusing on fresh air intake, ventilation, exhaust and filtration.

Custodian engineers must update the status of their building(s) ventilation system in DSF's HVAC Ventilation database immediately after there is a changes in the system's operational status. Additionally, all custodian engineers must complete a weekly Ventilation Certification to confirm that the information in the ventilation database is accurate.

Funding for MERV-13 filter replacements has been added to building custodial supply budgets. Merv-13 filter replacements can be found in the FAMIS custodial supply catalog under item numbers beginning in FIL.

Windows are a part of the building's ventilation system and are to be utilized whenever possible. Lower sash frames must have stops limiting their opening to 6". Upper sash frames, other than those used for window AC units, can be opened as required. Safe procedures must be adhered to in order to keep lower sash windows with inoperable balances opened, including the utilization of chocks fabricated by DSF. Custodian engineers are to request these devices by immediately advising their deputy director of facilities and submitting a work request. Whenever utilizing window chocks, the appropriate signage is to be placed over the window. [Attachment 2]

Custodian engineers are to ensure that all univents that circulate outside air are free from obstructions and debris such as student desks, boxes, bookcases, etc. Additionally, all exhaust registers, especially those found in student wardrobe closets, are to be free from obstructions such as boxes, clutter, etc.

In addition to the above, please be advised of the following:

- Bathroom exhausters must run while the building is occupied.
- If a bathroom has exhausters, keep windows closed. If the exhausters are NOT operational, open windows. Remember to close windows when exhausters are operational.
- When not using MERV-13 rated filters or higher, visually inspect all HVAC equipment and verify damper position is 100% open for fresh air and exhaust, and close the return to prevent recirculating air from entering the occupied space. When using MERV-13 rated filters or higher, maintain normal damper opening positions and operations.
- In buildings that utilize windows as the primary means of ventilation, custodian engineers are to open them 2 hours prior to occupancy and 1 hour after occupancy. Custodian engineers should exercise good judgement when opening windows in cold weather conditions.
- Close/block return vents in nurse's office if served by a central HVAC system that supplies other rooms or areas.

Air Purifiers have been provided to buildings to supplement existing ventilation systems. Custodian engineers are to install two (2) air purifiers in every occupied classroom. Additionally, one air purifier is to be placed in the nurse's office. If possible, air purifiers are to be installed between 3 and 5 feet from the floor when placed in classrooms. It is important to note that air purifier filters come wrapped in a protective covering that must be removed prior to powering up the unit. To maximize the efficiency and life of these units custodian engineers are to perform general maintenance including the replacement of the preliminary and main filters and the cleaning of the high energy grid following the manufacturer's recommendations. Over the coming weeks all buildings will be provided with replacement pre and main filters. Custodian engineers are to record the date that these filters were replaced directly on the filter. Custodian engineers should refer to the unit's operation and maintenance manual for additional information.

In cases where a room requires more operable windows and a window AC unit is installed in the upper window sash with SK3 brackets preventing the lower sash from opening, deputy directors of facilities will be instructing custodian engineers to remove the SK3 brackets. In doing so, lower sash windows can be opened up to, their 6" limit. Once the SK3 brackets are removed the attached signage, which reads "Warning The above AC unit cannot be serviced, replaced or removed until

the SK3 brackets are installed. Contact the Custodian Engineer for further assistance” must be placed on the lower sash of the window with the signage facing inside the room. [Attachment 3] Custodian engineers are to advise custodial staff members of this information and are to periodically inspect these windows to ensure signage remains in place.

Custodian engineers have been provided with air quality testing devices to measure CO₂ levels in rooms when requested by the principal or after a complaint has been received. Along with indicating numeric CO₂ values these units also provide color-coded readouts ranging from Good to Hazardous. Note that CO₂ readings greater than 1000 PPM are considered unhealthy for sensitive groups. In cases of high CO₂ readings, custodian engineers are to advise their deputy director of facilities and the room is not be occupied until CO₂ conditions are remedied. Custodian engineers are to read the user’s manual and are to familiarize themselves with these devices.

Custodian engineers will be required to record their findings in the electronic “Ventilation Complaint Log”.

Additionally, custodian engineers have been provided with a ventilation diagnostic device known as an anemometer. Custodian engineers are to utilize the anemometer to measure airflow, which may aid in determining the operational status of a ventilation component or system. Anemometers must be calibrated correctly in order to obtain accurate measurements of various spaces.

Handwashing Sinks

The DSF is working to ensure that the maximum amount of handwashing sinks are operational in every building. This includes restoring handwashing sinks that were previously decommissioned, as well as handwashing sinks requiring general maintenance and repair. Custodian engineers are to repair handwashing sinks as required. Custodian engineers are to immediately enter a work request for any repair beyond the scope of their responsibilities.

Domestic Water Systems

Custodian engineers are reminded that all domestic water systems need to be thoroughly flushed prior to their usage. Stagnant water can create health risks that can be avoided by implementing the following:

- Systems must be flushed to remove potential contaminants from stagnant water fountains, faucets, equipment, piping, etc.
- Domestic cold-water systems must be flushed with all fixtures on a branch of piping opened simultaneously for a minimum period of five minutes – with a preferred approach of having all building fixtures open at same time, if possible – if not, care should be taken to ensure flow rate is adequate to flush piping mains and branch lines.
- Domestic hot water systems must be flushed with all fixtures on a branch of piping opened simultaneously for a minimum period of 15 minutes – with a preferred approach of having all building fixtures open at same time, if possible – if not, care should be taken to ensure flow rate is adequate to flush piping mains and branch lines.

Please contact your Deputy Director of Facilities if you have any questions regarding this information.

John T. Shea
Chief Executive Officer
Division of School Facilities

PN/JL

WARNING

**Do not attempt to
operate.**

**If you need to open or close
this window,
contact the custodian
engineer.**

Warning

The above AC unit cannot be serviced, replaced or removed until SK3 brackets are installed.

Contact the Custodian Engineer for further assistance.