Risk Assessment, Risk Mitigation Strategies, and Infectious Disease Prevention Practices

*Risk assessment*: is the combined process of identifying and evaluating the potential events involving hazards that may negatively impact individuals and cause harm.

*Risk Mitigation Strategy*: is the way in which you can prevent, eliminate, or reduce the potential for harm.

*Hazard*: is a potential source of harm. In the workplace this might include chemical, biological, physical, electrical and or safety hazards.

*Please list examples of your company's plans to integrate risk assessment procedures into your GBAC STAR™ Program. Take into consideration employees, guests, your facilities and any procedures and practices you use for infectious disease control and prevention. Identify methodologies for identifying, assessing relevant hazards, and prioritizing risks. How will your company implement, maintain, and document these practices?*

Hazard identification.

* Identify and document any biological, physical, chemical, electrical, and safety hazards in the area that is to be cleaned and disinfected for infectious disease agents.
  + Known hazards are for example, the biological agent, residual body fluids, sharp objects, slip and fall hazards, the chemicals and equipment used for cleaning and disinfecting.
* These hazards can be identified through visual observance (walk through), questioning the owner/operator of the area, talking to staff and employees, looking at SDS for chemicals, etc.
* Also, do procedures and practices involve hazards like, for example lifting heavy equipment, furniture, operating near moving equipment, and noise? Identify and document these hazards.
* Assess and document the consequence (what can go wrong) and the likelihood of the hazard causing harm.

Risk Rating. Rate your risks from high to low (colored risk matrix).

* Rating the risk is based on the consequence and the likelihood and is a combination of both.
* After you determine the risks, prioritize them based on, for example on high, medium, or low risk. Prioritize which are the ones you will need to mitigate first. Other risks with no or minimal likelihood and consequence might not be addressed based on the task at hand since the overall risk is low. Determine and document which risks are acceptable.

Determine your risk mitigation approach.

This process allows you to select the most appropriate tools, processes, procedures, and PPE for the risks identified. Use the “Hierarchy of Controls” ([see our Risk Assessment Tip Sheet](https://gbac.issa.com/additional-accreditation-resources/)) and walk your way through these control measures by starting with the most effective controls which are elimination and/or substitution of the hazard (e.g., using a safer chemical for cleaning and/or disinfecting). Next determine any engineering controls you can use for hazard mitigation like keeping the HVAC system running during the application of airborne chemicals. Next review your administrative controls by looking at processes, SOPs, procedures, and requirements. For example, do you need additional training, are the SOPs clearly written and based on your risk mitigation approach? Lastly identify any PPE required. Keep in mind that PPE is the least effective control measure! The overall objective is to protect your staff, building personnel, occupants, and others from any of the hazards, and prevent any damage to the area, room, equipment and successfully complete the cleaning and disinfecting work safe and efficient.

Example:

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| **Hazards**  *(E.g., Biological agent (Covid-19), body fluids, sharps objects, etc.)* | **Likelihood & Consequence**  *(What is the likelihood of this happening and what are the consequences?)* | **Hazard Location**  *(Where are the hazards located)* | **Surfaces**  (*Doorknobs, light switches, faucets, etc*.) | **Risk Rating**  *(Use Matrix below)* | **Mitigation Strategy**  *(What steps will you take to reduce or eliminate the risk? Include both administrative and engineering controls)*  *Be specific!* | **Equipment, SOPs, Other**  *(List the equipment, PPE, and other needed tools to carry out the procedures)* |
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| Biological agent(s), body fluids | Medium to high likelihood of agent (e.g., Covid-19, flu, etc.) present based on frequent use by uncontrolled public and staff; can cause severe human disease | Restroom in areas 3.4, and 5 | Faucet, Doorknob, toilet seat, urinals, sink | 15 (high) | Limit use by public, add handwashing procedure flyer (Flyer #xyz) to all locations, increase frequency of manager checkup on cleanliness (2x a day), encourage staff to report any need for improvement of conditions, supplies etc. Increase cleaning and disinfection schedule to 4x a day. Revise SOP (# 123, 345) and training (restroom protocol) to start cleaning restroom from dirty to clean areas first. Add box with disposable toilet seat covers, add handsfree soap dispenser. Starting next fiscal year, installation of hands-free door openers and faucets. | Use touch free floor cleaning system (Mighty-Clean System). Refer to SOP #123. Use approved Microfiber cloth and approved Quad disinfectant. Refer to SOP# 345. Use approved PPE (see SOP # 123, 345) |
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| *Likelihood* | Risk Matrix  *(Likelihood x consequence)* | | | | | | |
| Risk Rating  1-4= Low  5-10= Medium  12-25= High | | ***Consequence*** | | | | |
| ***Insignificant*** | ***Minor*** | ***Moderate*** | ***Major*** | ***Extreme*** |
| Rare | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unlikely | 2 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 |
| Possible | 3 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 12 | 15 |
| Likely | 4 | 4 | 8 | 12 | 16 | 20 |
| Very frequent | 5 | 5 | 10 | 15 | 20 | 25 |