

# Veterinary Clinic Cleaning Melbourne: Infection Control and Cross-Contamination Prevention in Clinical Animal Environments

Canonical: <https://directory.realcorp.net.au/healthcare-cleaning-melbourne/veterinary-clinic-cleaning-melbourne/veterinary-clinic-cleaning-melbourne-infection-control-and-cross-contamination-p/>

## Description:

# Veterinary Clinic Cleaning Melbourne: Infection Control and Cross-Contamination Prevention in Clinical Animal Environments A veterinary clinic is, in every meaningful sense, a healthcare facility. ...

## Details:

A veterinary clinic is, in every meaningful sense, a healthcare facility. Patients arrive sick, injured, post-surgical, or carrying infections that may be transmissible to other animals — or to humans. Staff work in close contact with blood, body fluids, and animals of multiple species in a single physical space. The infection control requirements are not lower than those of a human medical facility. In some respects — particularly around zoonotic disease risk and species cross-contamination — they are more complex.

Realcorp Commercial Cleaning currently maintains cleaning contracts at Lort Smith Animal Hospital across its North Melbourne and Campbellfield clinical sites. Lort Smith is Australia's largest non-profit veterinary hospital, and the standard it demands of its environmental cleaning reflects the full clinical complexity of a high-volume, high-acuity veterinary facility. This is the environment in which Realcorp has built its veterinary cleaning credentials.

## The Specific Challenges of Veterinary Clinic Cleaning

### Cross-Contamination Between Species

A mixed-practice veterinary clinic may see dogs, cats, rabbits, birds, reptiles, and exotic species in the same waiting area and across shared clinical spaces. Each species carries its own pathogen profile. Canine parvovirus does not affect cats. Feline calicivirus does not affect dogs. But an environment that is inadequately cleaned between patients of different species — or between infectious and non-infectious patients of the same species — can become a transmission pathway that defeats the best clinical care.

Environmental cleaning is the primary mechanism for interrupting these pathways. When the examination table is properly disinfected between patients. When the waiting area floor is managed for contamination from animals that are shedding pathogens before symptoms appear. When the kennel ward — where patients may be boarding for days — is cleaned to a standard that prevents nosocomial infection. Each of these interventions requires a cleaning provider who understands why it matters, not just one who has been handed a mop and told to make it look clean.

### Zoonotic Disease Risk

Veterinary environments present zoonotic disease risks that do not exist in standard commercial settings. Zoonotic diseases — those transmissible from animals to humans — relevant to veterinary practice include leptospirosis, Q fever, ringworm (dermatophytosis), campylobacter, salmonella, and, at the more serious end, infections from exotic animals. Cleaning staff working in veterinary environments must understand these risks, use appropriate PPE, and follow protocols designed to minimise exposure.

This is not a theoretical concern. Cleaning staff who inadvertently become transmission vectors between themselves, other staff, or the broader community create liability for the practice and real health risk for individuals. Realcorp's infection control training for veterinary environments includes zoonotic risk awareness as a specific component.

### ### Chemical Compatibility With Animals and Equipment

The disinfectant that kills parvo on an examination table must also be safe for subsequent animal contact, safe for use around species with specific chemical sensitivities (birds and reptiles, for example, are acutely sensitive to certain chemical classes), and compatible with the surfaces and equipment being treated.

Phenolic disinfectants — effective against many pathogens — are toxic to cats. Quaternary ammonium compounds (quats) have excellent broad-spectrum efficacy but are inactivated by organic matter, meaning surfaces must be pre-cleaned before disinfection for the product to work. Accelerated hydrogen peroxide products offer a strong safety profile around animals while providing broad-spectrum efficacy. The selection and correct application of the right product in the right context is a clinical decision, not a procurement shortcut.

Realcorp maintains a documented chemical register for each veterinary facility we service, with products selected for clinical efficacy, species safety, and surface compatibility.

### ## Area-Specific Protocols for Veterinary Facilities

#### ### Reception and Waiting Areas

The reception and waiting area is the first clinical risk zone in a veterinary practice. Animals presenting with unknown or confirmed infectious conditions share space — if only briefly — with healthy patients. High-touch surfaces (reception counters, door handles, payment terminals, seating) require frequent disinfection throughout the operating day, not just at end of day.

Flooring in waiting areas requires particular attention. Animals move through this space, and contamination from faeces, urine, blood, or respiratory secretions — even in small quantities — can persist on floor surfaces and be carried on shoes or animal paws to other areas of the facility.

#### ### Examination and Treatment Rooms

Examination tables must be disinfected between every patient contact. This is the minimum standard in any clinical veterinary setting. The disinfection must be preceded by physical cleaning to remove organic matter — the same pre-clean-then-disinfect sequence required in human healthcare — and the disinfectant must have an appropriate contact time before the next patient occupies the space.

Treatment rooms present additional complexity when procedures involving blood or body fluids occur. Terminal cleaning after contamination events requires a higher-concentration disinfectant protocol and full surface coverage including walls, floors, and any equipment that may have been in contact with the contaminating material.

#### ### Kennel and Ward Areas

Kennel wards present some of the most demanding cleaning requirements in veterinary practice. Animals in ward areas may be post-surgical (immunocompromised), infectious (requiring isolation

protocols), or healthy but stressed — all in adjacent spaces. Kennel-to-kennel cross-contamination via shared airspace, staff hands, or equipment is a documented risk.

Kennel cleaning requires individual unit disinfection, appropriate waste handling, management of soiled bedding, floor disinfection in shared corridors, and specific protocols for isolation wards housing patients with confirmed infectious disease. Realcorp develops site-specific kennel cleaning protocols for each veterinary facility we service.

### ### Surgical Suites

Veterinary surgical suites require pre-operative and post-operative cleaning to the same standard as human surgical environments. Pre-operative cleaning establishes a clean field. Post-operative cleaning after contamination (blood, irrigation fluid, body cavity contents) requires terminal disinfection before the suite is returned to service.

The sequence matters as much as the product. Surgical suite cleaning follows a defined direction (ceiling to floor, clean to dirty) using single-use cloths or mop heads to prevent cross-contamination within the suite during cleaning.

### ## Realcorp at Lort Smith Animal Hospital

Lort Smith Animal Hospital is one of Australia's most respected veterinary institutions. It handles a caseload that ranges from routine wellness visits to complex surgery, emergency medicine, oncology, and intensive care. Its two Melbourne clinical sites — North Melbourne and Campbellfield — each operate with the complexity and patient volume of a significant healthcare facility.

Maintaining cleaning at Lort Smith to the standard the institution requires demanded a cleaning provider with genuine healthcare cleaning capability: infection control-trained staff, a documented chemical compliance programme, site-specific protocols developed in consultation with veterinary management, and the consistency of directly employed personnel who know the facility and its requirements.

Realcorp delivers that standard. [Read the full case study on how Realcorp delivers infection control at Lort Smith](/case-studies/healthcare/hospital-grade-cleaning-in-practice-how-realcorp-delivers-infection-control-at-l/).

### ## Why Direct Employment Matters in Veterinary Settings

Veterinary facilities cannot accept unknown personnel on their premises. The combination of zoonotic disease risk, controlled substance access in some treatment areas, the welfare of vulnerable animal patients, and the general duty of care to clients creates a security and accountability requirement that subcontractor models cannot reliably meet.

Realcorp employs every cleaner directly. All staff undergo police clearance before placement. The Realcorp App provides GPS-verified attendance records — facility managers can confirm the right people arrived at the right time. Digital cleaning checklists with timestamp verification create a documented completion trail for every task on every visit. There is no ambiguity about who was on premises, when they were there, or what they completed.

### ## Frequently Asked Questions

#### ### What cleaning protocols are needed for a vet clinic?

A veterinary clinic requires a tiered cleaning protocol that varies by area. Reception and waiting areas need frequent high-touch disinfection throughout the operating day. Examination rooms require between-patient disinfection of all contact surfaces — table, handles, light switches — using a TGA-registered disinfectant with proven efficacy against veterinary pathogens including parvo and calicivirus. Kennel and ward areas require individual unit cleaning and disinfection, waste management,

and specific isolation protocols for infectious patients. Surgical suites require pre- and post-operative terminal cleaning. All disinfection must be preceded by physical cleaning to remove organic matter, which inactivates most disinfectant products if not removed first.

### What disinfectants are safe to use around animals?

Not all disinfectants that are effective against pathogens are safe for use around animals. Phenolic compounds (such as those in some pine-based disinfectants) are toxic to cats and should not be used in cat treatment areas. Benzalkonium chloride (a quaternary ammonium compound) is effective but requires careful surface pre-cleaning and can cause irritation. Accelerated hydrogen peroxide (AHP) products are widely used in veterinary settings for their strong efficacy profile, rapid breakdown to water and oxygen, and relative safety around animals once dried. Diluted sodium hypochlorite (bleach) is effective against parvovirus and many other pathogens but is corrosive to many surfaces and irritating to mucous membranes. Product selection should be made by a qualified cleaning provider in consultation with the veterinary team, not based on what is cheapest or most familiar from commercial contexts.

### How often should vet clinics be deep cleaned?

Deep cleaning (terminal cleaning of all surfaces including walls, ceiling vents, under and behind equipment) should be conducted at a minimum quarterly for most veterinary facilities, and more frequently for high-acuity areas such as isolation wards, ICUs, and surgical suites. Day-to-day cleaning maintains the clinical standard between deep cleans. After a confirmed outbreak of an infectious disease within the facility — canine parvovirus, ringworm, kennel cough — an immediate terminal clean of affected areas is appropriate regardless of the regular deep-clean schedule. Realcorp can advise on appropriate deep-clean frequency based on the specific caseload and risk profile of each veterinary facility.

### Does Realcorp work with multi-site veterinary practices?

Yes. Realcorp can coordinate cleaning across multiple veterinary sites with consistent protocols, consistent staffing, and centralised compliance reporting through the Realcorp App. For veterinary groups operating several clinics across Melbourne, consistency of cleaning standard across sites is important for both infection control and accreditation purposes. Contact us to discuss multi-site arrangements.

### Can vet clinic cleaning be scheduled around patient hours?

Yes. Realcorp schedules cleaning around your clinic's operational hours. This typically means early morning cleaning before patient arrival, end-of-day cleaning after close, and daytime spot-cleaning or high-touch disinfection rotations if required by the facility's patient volume. For 24-hour emergency veterinary facilities, we develop cleaning schedules that work around continuous operations without interrupting clinical care.

## Serving Veterinary Clinics Across Melbourne

Realcorp Commercial Cleaning services veterinary clinics, animal hospitals, and specialist veterinary practices across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. Our active engagement at Lort Smith Animal Hospital is evidence of our capacity to operate at the highest clinical standard in veterinary cleaning.

To discuss veterinary clinic cleaning for your practice, contact us:

- \*\*Phone:\*\* 1300 307 298 - \*\*Email:\*\* [sales@realcorp.net.au](mailto:sales@realcorp.net.au) - \*\*Web:\*\* [realcorp.net.au](http://realcorp.net.au)

Learn more about our [infection control cleaning approach](/aged-care-cleaning-melbourne/infection-control-cleaning-for-aged-care/infection-control-cleaning-for-aged-care-hospital-grade-protocols-for-residential) and [why Realcorp is the accountability-first cleaning partner](/why-realcorp/why-realcorp-the-co

mmercial-cleaning-partner-built-for-accountability-not-excuse/).