



The Infection Preventionist's Orientation Workbook

Essential Instructions for the Survival Guide

Backgrounds, Purpose, and Intended Use

Background

Nebraska Medicine and the University of Nebraska Medical Center with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (CDC-RFA-CK22-2203) have developed an infection prevention support center to empower Infection Preventionists to advance practice through education, resource development, and novel technological solutions.

Purpose

The 90-Day Survival Guide was developed to help new Infection Preventionists navigate the complexity and nuance of the Infection Preventionist role. This guide has been specifically designed as a resource for infection prevention topics that are foundational for a new Infection Preventionist in the first 90 days on their job.

Intended Use

This workbook was developed by Infection Preventionists to aid in the training and education of new Infection Preventionists. Its content is based on a combination of regulatory requirements, guidelines, and current practice recommendations in infection prevention and control. It is intended to supplement infection prevention education.

Document Sharing

For sharing purposes, please direct people to <https://innovateipc.org/ipc-support-center/survival-guide> for access to the Survival Guide to ensure they receive the latest version of the workbook.



Acknowledgments

The University of Nebraska Medical Center and The Nebraska Medicine Center acknowledge the subject matter experts and organizations who contributed significantly to this work.

Contributing Authors

Alisha Sheffield MSN, RN, CIC

Lauren Musil BSN, RN

Reviewers

Teresa Micheels MSN, RN, FAPIC

Lori Snyder-Sloan MSN, RN, CIC

Amy Encinger PhD

Angela Vasa MSN, RN

Aretha Boex MBA, MS, PMP

Tracy Gady MS

Ryan Draper

Janet Glowicz PhD, RN, CIC, FAPIC

Karen Vallejo MSN, RN, CIC

Rebecca Martinez BSN, BA, RN, CIC

Disclaimer & Copyright

Disclaimer

This Guide is for general reference and educational purposes only. It does not provide, and is not a substitute for, medical, legal, or other professional advice. The information and resource materials provided in this Guide (the Content) are intended for the user's convenience and are not intended to be a comprehensive or exhaustive resource on infection control. While Nebraska Medicine and the University of Nebraska Medical Center have endeavored to make sure the Content is accurate, Nebraska Medicine and the University of Nebraska Medical Center cannot guarantee the accuracy of the Content. Please note that laws, regulations, standards, and practices affecting the Content are subject to change over time. Neither the authors, Nebraska Medicine nor the University of Nebraska are obligated to correct or update any of the Content, and shall not be liable for omissions, typographical errors, or out-of-date information that may be contained in this Guide. This Guide and the Content are provided "as is" and without warranty or guarantee of any kind.

The views and opinions expressed in this Guide are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of any entities they represent including Nebraska Medicine, the University of Nebraska, or the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and its Project Firstline. Links to external websites are provided for the convenience of users and are not managed by Nebraska Medicine or the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Please note that Nebraska Medicine and the University of Nebraska Medical Center do not review, control, or take responsibility for the content of any linked external websites.

Copyright Notice

© 2025 University of Nebraska Medical Center. All rights are reserved. This work is provided solely for education of the recipient target audience and is not intended for anyone to copy, modify, or otherwise use without specific permission from the creator/owner.

Key Terms

AGP	Aerosol-generating procedure	HCID	High-consequence Infection Disease
AIIR	Airborne Infection Isolation Room	HCW	Healthcare Worker
AR	Antimicrobial Resistance	HVAC	Heating, Ventilation, Air-Conditioning
BBP	Bloodborne Pathogen	ICC	Infection Control Committee
CAUTI	Catheter-associated Urinary Tract Infection	IFU	Instructions for Use
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	IPC	Infection prevention and control
CDI	Clostridioides difficile	MDRO	Multidrug-resistant organism
CHG	Chlorohexidine gluconate	NHSN	National Healthcare Safety Network
CLABSI	Central line-associated Bloodstream Infection	NIOSH	National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
CMS	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services	OPIM	Other potentially infectious materials
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services	OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
DHQP	Department of Healthcare Quality Promotion	PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
EHR	Electronic Health Record	QAPI	Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Committee
EOC	Environment of Care	SIR	Standardized Infection Ratio
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	SSI	Surgical Site Infection
FDA	Food and Drug Administration	SUR	Standardized Utilization Ratio
HAI	Healthcare-associated Infection	TB	Tuberculosis
HAP	Healthcare-associated Pneumonia	VAE	Ventilator-associated Event

How To Use This Guide

Welcome to the **90-Day Survival Guide**—your comprehensive orientation workbook designed to set you up for success as an Infection Preventionist (IP). This guide has been thoughtfully crafted to provide you with the foundational knowledge, tools, and strategies to confidently navigate your first 90 days in this critical role.

Whether you're new to infection prevention practice or transitioning into the role from another healthcare specialty, this guide will serve as your roadmap, breaking down complex topics into manageable weekly lessons for new IPs.



How To Use This Guide

Follow the weekly structure

Each week builds on the previous week

Take your time to thoroughly explore each topic, ask questions, and reflect on your role and IPC practice at your facility

Engage with teams

Use this guide as a starting point for conversations with your mentors, colleagues, and leaders

Collaborative discussion can provide invaluable context

Navigate with purpose

Use the “Questions to Consider” to prompt evaluation of IPC practices at your facility

Document important findings and follow ups in the notes sections provided

Revisit and revise

Your learning doesn't stop at 90 days!

Use this guide as a supportive tool throughout your IP journey to reinforce your knowledge, skills, and practice

Table of Contents

It is understood that each topic covered in this guide inherently encompasses fundamental infection prevention practices, such as hand hygiene, standard precautions, and education and training, *even if not explicitly stated*.

Week	Topics Covered	Week	Topics Covered
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infection Prevention Program Background • Organization and Committee Structure • Infection Prevention and Control Program Plan • NHSN Surveillance • Policy & Procedure 	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respiratory Protection • Airborne Isolation • Tuberculosis • Hospital Associated Pneumonia (HAP) • Ventilator-associated Event (VAE)
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infection Prevention Risk Assessment • Hierarchy of Controls • Control Measures • Bloodborne Pathogens • Hand hygiene 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgical Site Infection (SSI) • Non-critical Device Reprocessing • Semi-critical Device Reprocessing • Critical Device Reprocessing
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Precautions • Transmission-based Precautions • Personal Protective Equipment 	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment of care • Environmental Services • Laundry • Waste Management
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required Notification • Identify, Isolate, Inform • Injection Safety 	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning (HVAC) • Construction & Renovation • Water Management
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveillance • Catheter-associated Urinary Tract Infection (CAUTI) • Central Line-associated Bloodstream Infection (CLABSI) 	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Programs • Occupational Health • Antimicrobial Stewardship • Quality Improvement • HAI/AR Programs
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multidrug-Resistant Organisms • Outbreaks • <i>Clostridioides Difficile</i> Infection 	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Development • Infection Prevention and Control Rounding • Staff Education & Training • Audit & Feedback • Using Surveillance Data

Resource Utilization

Numerous resources are available to guide infection prevention practices across various professional platforms. However, this guide focuses on highlighting primary resources that are both free and widely accessible to everyone. There are a variety of agencies and organizations that provide professional resources for IPs and IPC practice. Some resources are regulatory, which means you are REQUIRED to follow their standards. Other resources provide information to influence practice and provide recommendations for best practice. Below are some common examples that you may encounter in your practice.

Federal/Regulatory

- ✓ Center for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS)
- ✓ The Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- ✓ The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- ✓ Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- ✓ The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

Guidelines

- ✓ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- ✓ Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS)
- ✓ Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)
- ✓ National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)
- ✓ Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion (DHQP)
- ✓ National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN)

Recommended Practices

- ✓ Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc. (APIC)
- ✓ Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN)
- ✓ Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation (AAMI)
- ✓ Certification Board of Infection Control and Epidemiology (CBIC)
- ✓ Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA)

SURVIVAL
90-DAY
GUIDE