



HYGIENICALLY CLEAN HEALTHCARE
A CUSTOMER'S GUIDE
TO VERIFYING BEST
PRACTICES



TRUSTED PROCESSES | PROVEN CLEANLINESS

Introduction

Hygienically Clean Healthcare certifications – recognize a laundry facility’s dedication to cleanliness through validated processes, third-party audits, and microbiological testing.

Our certification confirms that a facility’s procedures align with hygienically clean standards and Best Management Practices (BMPs) across all healthcare sectors.

For healthcare facilities that prioritize cleanliness, it’s critical to ensure their laundry practices do not pose a risk to patient or staff health. Hygienically Clean Healthcare certification helps achieve this by verifying that the textile products laundered textiles meet strict disinfection standards. Every step of the process, from washing and drying to ironing, packing, and delivery, is conducted using validated procedures designed to meet the high cleanliness requirements critical in healthcare environments.

Facilities achieve Hygienically Clean Healthcare certification by:

- Passing a thorough audit that verifies their laundry processes meet industry best practices
- Passing microbial testing that proves their textiles meet high standards for cleanliness
- Implementing continuous improvements to enhance quality and safety

Quality Assurance

Thorough Audit Process

Hygienically Clean Healthcare certified laundries maintain a Quality Assurance (QA) outlining all key processes. This serves as a primary resource during onsite audits to assess compliance. The audit confirms that:

- Employees are properly trained
- Managers understand and follow all regulatory requirements
- The facility complies with OSHA requirements
- Operations are running efficiently and effectively

Certified facilities go above and beyond to develop, maintain and continually improve their processes – including the upkeep of their QA manual. These efforts involve multiple departments, such as:

- Administration
- Chemical Technical Service
- Customer Service
- Human Resources
- Maintenance
- Plant Operations

The QA manual serves as the central the central guide for Best Management Practices (BMPs), helping to minimize risk and prevent errors throughout the laundering process.

While linens are rarely linked to healthcare-associated infections (HAIs), maintaining hygienic standards is critical.

Our certified facilities follow strict procedures to ensure textiles remain safe, clean and ready for use when it matters most.

Best Management Practices

Auditor Verification

Hygienically Clean Healthcare auditors verify that laundries implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) – processes based on regulations and industry standards, including:

- OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1030 – Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens
- OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1200 – Hazard Communication Standard
- EPA – Selected EPA-Registered Disinfectants
- CDC – Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Healthcare Facilities
- CDC – Guideline for Hand Hygiene In Healthcare Settings
- ANSI/AAMI ST65:2013 – Processing of Reusable Surgical Textiles for Use in Healthcare
- Facilities

Best Management Practices are critical to consistently delivering textiles that meet customer expectations. These practices are the foundation of systems, policies and procedures across the facility. Adhering to BMPs may require investments, such as upgrading equipment or adjusting procedures, but the result is enhanced operation efficiency in:

Plant Facilities

- Functional separation of soiled and clean areas
- Equipment operation, maintenance and calibration

Housekeeping

- Use, cleaning and care of equipment
- Cleaning of work surfaces, stations and carts
- Selection, measurement and proper use of cleaning supplies
- Cleaning schedule

Laundry Process

- Soiled Linen Handling
- Washing Procedures
- Drying Procedures
- Transportation
- Delivery

“Hygienically Clean standards have a very large and positive impact on public health in general because they lower the overall community infectious disease risk burden.

This certification offers a serious marketing advantage versus competitor laundries who have not adopted the Hygienically Clean process.”

David F. Goldsmith – MSPH, Ph.D

*Occupational and Environmental Epidemiologist,
Milken Institute School of Public Health,
George Washington University,
Washington, D.C.*



Expertise in Laundry Science

The credibility and effectiveness of Hygienically Clean Healthcare BMPs are driven by the foremost experts in laundry science. No other group of launderers matches the depth of knowledge these certified operators have regarding the entire textile processing cycle. These operators are committed to educating healthcare professionals on the importance of linen and laundry care, through the Hygienically Clean Healthcare Community, including:

- Six C's of Handling Clean and Soiled Linen in a Healthcare Environment – Training Videos
- Handling Clean Linen in a Healthcare Environment – Policy Development Guide
- Environmental Safety in Outpatient Care – Interactive
- Textile Services – e-newsletter and Magazine

“Protecting our employees is essential to our EVS operation. It's a priority in running our department to provide a high quality workplace emphasizing safety and health. The Hygienically Clean standard ensures the management of our contract laundry has the right procedures to do this for their people. That's a good sign they're cleaning the linen properly.”

Rhonda Caldwell

Manager, Environmental Services
Deaconess Hospital, Oklahoma City, OK

Continuous Improvement

Independent Expertise

Independent experts in fields like bacteriology, infection control, nursing and healthcare, work closely with launderers to ensure the Hygienically Clean Healthcare designation maintains the highest standards. The Hygienically Clean Advisory Board plays a key role in driving continuous improvements.

Collaborative Effort

As members of TRSA, the association for linen, uniform, and facility services, Hygienically Clean Healthcare laundries work together to improve standard operating procedures (SOPs) for sorting, handling, processing, and finishing reusable linens and garments. They continuously monitor and adapt to emerging federal, state, and industry standards related to healthcare laundry. Certified laundries meet quarterly in the Hygienically Clean User Group to share updates and ensure the Advisory Board has the most current, reliable data.

Measurable Progress

Certified facilities must maintain microbial content levels below specified thresholds in routine testing, ensuring consistent quality in their processes. As factors like water quality, fabric composition and wash chemistry evolve, the quality of laundered products must be maintained or improved. Microbial testing provides the proof.



Certification Comparison

How Hygienically Clean and HLAC Evaluate Laundry Processes

The Healthcare Laundry Accreditation Council (HLAC) was formed in 2005 to introduce laundry certification to the healthcare industry. In 2012, Hygienically Clean Healthcare took this concept a step further by preserving the core elements of HLAC certification while adding additional components. These enhancements were designed to more thoroughly verify adherence to Best Management Practices (BMPs) and provide measurable data on laundry performance.

Laundry Plant Audit Verifies:

	Hygienically Clean Healthcare	HLAC
Infrastructure/Equipment	✓	✓
Housekeeping	✓	✓
Soiled Linen Handling	✓	✓
Washing and Drying Procedures	✓	✓
Transportation	✓	✓
Delivery	✓	✓

Hygienically Clean Adds Requirements For:

Routine Yeast/Mold Detection on Clean Linen	✓	x
Detection of Overall Microbial Content	✓	x
Detection of Bacteria (USP 62)	✓	x
Quality Assurance	✓	x

“Hygienically clean laundry carries negligible risk to healthcare workers and patients, as long as the clean textiles, fabric and clothing are not inadvertently contaminated before use.”

**Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)**



Process and Outcome Measures

Process Observation and Validation

Auditors evaluating facilities for Hygienically Clean certification verify that:

- The QA manual is complete and up to date
- Proper separation between soiled and clean products is maintained
- Equipment and infrastructure are kept clean and operational
- The layout of finishing equipment prevents contamination of clean laundry
- Procedures comply with all regulatory and voluntary standards

The audit provides strong evidence that a laundry facility is actively supporting infection prevention efforts in health-care settings. It demonstrates a commitment to addressing bio-burden concerns at every stage of the process.

Auditors also look for signs of a well-organized facility, including:

- No excess water on the floor
- Consistent throughput with minimal delays
- Properly functioning equipment – including time, temperature, chemistry and agitation controls

Certifying the Outcome

The quality of laundered products—their finished state—determines their value for infection control. However, achieving the quality begins with the right processing. Both processing measures and outcome evaluations are necessary for ensuring the best results. **ISO 9001:2008** and **ISO 14001:2004** emphasize that process certifications alone do not guarantee product quality. A product can only bear a certification mark once it meets specific certification standards.

To ensure the highest quality, Hygienically Clean requires laundries to routinely test for microbial content as part of the certification process. Hygienically Clean requires laundries to routinely test for microbial content as part of the certification process.

Recognized National Improvement Trend

The U.S. healthcare sector is increasingly recognizing the importance of both process and outcome measures. Across various healthcare disciplines, professionals are developing more effective methods for assessing quality by integrating both measures. Routine microbial testing of clean textiles has been a global standard for over 30 years and Hygienically Clean Healthcare has brought this proven approach to North America.

“Patient safety is our facility’s greatest concern. By using a certified laundry service, we can assure the safety and cleanliness of the textiles – that they are free of microbial load and minimize risk of infection to our customers. Hygienically Clean laundry plays a key role in both our hospital’s and nursing home’s exceptionally low rates of healthcare-associated infections.”

Maria Whitaker

Infection Preventionist
Cortland (NY) Regional Medical Center

Choosing the Right Provider

Maximizing Your Confidence

Hygienically Clean Healthcare Certified Laundries distinguish themselves from competitors by meeting the rigorous standards of Quality Assurance, Best Management Practices, continuous improvement, and both process and outcome measurement Certification should be a non-negotiable requirement for any laundry service provider you choose, as it validates the facility's:

- Competence
- Consistency
- Credibility
- Strength
- Trustworthiness

When healthcare facility managers and executives evaluate linen, uniform, and facility services options, every laundry provider under consideration should be Hygienically Clean Healthcare certified.



“In Healthcare we are inspected by outside agencies on a constant basis. There is a need for this and it keeps us up to date with ongoing changes in our industry.

To do business with a group that follows that same standard just makes sense.

We should not have to worry about our vendors.

They should bring their best foot forward and working with a laundry that is certified Hygienically Clean Healthcare gives us one less thing to worry about.

This allows us to spend our resources where we need to.”

David F. Goldsmith – MSPH, Ph.D

Director

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