



## WHITE PLAINS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT Home to Work Protocol

### (How to Avoid Spreading Bed Bugs)

Bed bugs are not going away anytime soon. They continue to spread in our communities. Anyone can get bed bugs in their home. Getting rid of them may take time, so protect yourself, those at work and school by following this guide!

Infestations do not usually occur in school buildings, but students and staff may bring a hitchhiker into the building on any given day. An infestation is considered evidence of bedbugs in all stages of the life cycle-eggs, nymphs, discarded casings. A single bug is usually just that - a single bug.

#### **Practice infestation control**

**Start your day bed bug free.** Treat your belongings for bed bugs and isolate them from the rest of the home. You will not transport a bed bug into the workplace and your child will not bring bed bugs to school. Treat items that are worn, such as clothing, coats, and shoes. Also treat and isolate things carried from the home, such as bags, papers, books, backpacks, and equipment.

#### **Handy materials to have:**

- Large zippered storage bags (XXL)
- Access to a clothing dryer or Laundromat
- Airtight plastic containers large enough for coats, shoes and bags
- A hair dryer in good condition
- An iron and a towel (hot iron items under a towel to kill bed bugs and eggs)
- Containers to save samples of bugs you find for identification

#### **Isolate items from bed bug affected areas:**

It is very important to isolate clean items from bed bug activity to avoid accidental spread. Once your things have been "sanitized," they should be stored and ready to use.

- Have enough zippered storage bags on hand for all items needed during the day or have containers large enough for items
- Transfer clean items directly to clean bags or containers
- Keep these items stored away from sleeping areas
- Prepare to launch your day from this point.

#### **Use your dryer**

Clothing and coats, backpacks, laptop bags, sturdy shoes, slippers and purses can be made bed bug-free by placing things into a dryer that is hot enough to kill all life stages of bed bugs.

**Washing is not needed and not enough to kill bed bugs alone.**

# WHITE PLAINS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Home to Work Protocol

### Test the dryer for the right level of heat:

- Place 2 or 3 dry towels into the dryer
- Set the dryer on high for 20 minutes
- After 20 min open the hot dryer quickly and place a meat thermometer inside for 60 seconds and shut the door
- Check the thermometer - it should read over 125°F, enough to kill bed bugs
- If not, increase heat level or the length of time for heating in the dryer and dry for two hours at 115° F
- If over 115°F is not possible, use a different dryer or a commercial Laundromat
- If the target temperature is reached place items into the dryer set for the same heat and length of time; this will kill and remove bed bugs from your belongings
- Do not over stuff the dryer, make sure items are tossing and turning



**Heat over 125°F is the most reliable way to kill bed bugs!**

### What to do with papers and books:

Papers and books that are essential and must leave the home should always be kept away from bed bug infested areas. Store paper and books in airtight zipper bags or containers. If items are exposed to bed bugs, take the following precautions:

- Place individual books or small piles of paper or files into heavy-duty, gallon-sized or larger, zipper bags
- Keep items like this in warm areas; warmth will make the bed bugs more active and helps to kill them through dehydration
- If bed bugs are present they will usually become obvious in the corners of the bag
- If you see bed bug activity, leave the items encased in zipper bags for at least 3 months
- You can also thoroughly inspect and crush any bugs or eggs that are found
- Large zippered bags are available in the school nurse's office



### Have a "clean zone" for protection

While treating bed bugs, it will be necessary to create a clean zone (an area free of bed bugs). This helps to isolate belongings needed for each day and allows you to dress and prepare for the day. The clean zone may be in a bathroom, the kitchen, or the area by the front door. A clean zone can also be created in the middle of a room by placing a clean white sheet down on the floor and standing on that.

To maintain the clean zone, do not bring items that may have bed bugs into the clean zone. Place the white sheet into a dryer to maintain it as bed bug-free.

Make the switch into bed bug-free clothing by removing clothes that may have bed bugs, placing them away from the clean zone and showering or dressing. Dress only in the clean zone where clean clothes are kept.

# WHITE PLAINS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Home to Work Protocol

During general movements through the home while dressed in clean clothes you are unlikely to pick up bed bugs if you avoid contact with the bed and other furniture. Once you are dressed, do not sit down. Make dressing the last thing you do before leaving, if possible. Have a set of frequently washed lounging clothes for spending time in the home or during cleaning. Coats, shoes, bags and belongings should be isolated in the clean zone.

### Isolate clean items to keep them clean!

#### Babies, toddlers and school-age children

All children who live in a household that is dealing with bed bugs should be free of bed bugs before leaving the home.

Infants and toddlers who attend child care or other programs are at risk of transporting bed bugs both to and from the child care center. Some considerations include:

- Diaper bags should be emptied and treated as other bags and placed into a hot dryer
- Items to be carried in the diaper bag should come from a clean area - diapers and other supplies should be isolated from bed bug activity
- Dress the child in bed bug-free clothes immediately before leaving the home
- Strollers and car seats should be steamed or heated to ensure they are bed bug free. Use a hand-held steamer or hair dryer.

Diaper bags have lots of hiding spots for bed bugs!



#### Keep bed bugs out of schools

Bed bugs are showing up in schools, especially K-5. School age children are vulnerable to the stigma of bed bug infestation. It is very important to help a child avoid bringing bed bugs into the classroom.

- Backpacks, coats and shoes are very likely routes of bed bug movement; these should be heated in the dryer if available and stored in a clean bag or container
- Use the clean zone for dressing
- School books and papers can transfer bed bugs; they should always be stored away from infested areas, and kept in zippered bags or containers when not in use
- If books or papers are exposed to bed bugs, thoroughly inspect each item
- Freeze items for 2 weeks to kill adult bed bugs by placing in a zip-lock bag in the freezer
- If buying new clothing, shoes or bags, keep these things isolated in plastic bags until needed to prevent contact with bed bugs
- If a bedbug is found in a classroom, do not move the students or their belongings out of the room to avoid moving bugs to other areas

# WHITE PLAINS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Home to Work Protocol

### Prevent the spread to your home

The risk of picking up and bringing a bed bug from the workplace or school to the home is low. But precautions should be taken.

If you **know** you have been exposed to bed bugs:

- Inspect your clothing for bed bugs
- Adult female bed bugs are the only ones able to begin an infestation; they are highly visible!
- Eggs are very unlikely to be picked up in one place and deposited in another.
- Place your personal belongings (i.e. purse, coat, etc.) in a sealed plastic bin or zip-lock baggie as soon as you arrive in your classroom/office
- Isolate bags and accessories carried into bed bug area in sealed bags
- Upon returning home, remove clothing in a safe area (such as the bathtub or a white sheet with the edges rolled inward) and place all coats, clothing and shoes into a sealed bag to be placed into a dryer as described above; if you use the sheet, put that in the dryer as well
- Put on clean clothing

If you **do not** believe you have been exposed to bed bugs:

- Inspect your clothing for bed bugs; adult female bed bugs are the only ones able to begin an infestation
- They are highly visible
- Eggs are very unlikely to be picked up in one place and deposited in another
- Keep a heightened awareness about bed bugs, learn the signs and inspect your clothing and belongings regularly
- Keep your belongings in a sealed plastic bin or baggie during the school day to avoid taking bugs home

### For even more bed bug information, see:

The New York State IPM Program's bed bug resources at [www.nysipm.cornell.edu](http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu) (click on "What's Bugging You" and "bed bugs").

The US Environmental Protection Agency Bed Bug Clearinghouse website:  
[www.epa.gov/bedbugs/bedbug-clearinghouse.html](http://www.epa.gov/bedbugs/bedbug-clearinghouse.html)