



BIOSECURITY GUIDELINES FOR POULTRY ABATTOIR INSPECTORS AND WORKERS

With the increasing spread of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in poultry and its potential transmission to other animal species, it is critical for abattoir employees and inspectors to adopt effective biosecurity measures to minimize the risk of disease spread. The information below explains what to do before, during, and after visiting an abattoir, especially in slaughter and processing areas, to help prevent disease spread.



Before Leaving for the Abattoir

- Wear clean work clothes, and ensure your inspection tools are clean and disinfected.
- Store tools in a clean, sealed container to prevent contamination during transport.
- Ensure your vehicle is free of visible dirt, feathers, or organic material, particularly on the tires, floor mats, and undercarriage.
- Keep disinfectant spray and wipes in the vehicle for on-the-go cleaning.
- Take along Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):
 - Reusable coveralls or dedicated workwear.
 - Disinfectable boots (rubber boots are ideal) or boot covers.
 - Gloves (disposable or reusable).
 - Hair covering (if required by the facility).
 - Mask (if required by the facility or for personal protection).

Upon Arrival at the Abattoir

- Enter through the designated entry point for biosecurity clearance.
- Change into the required PPE, including clean coveralls, gloves, and boots.
- Use disinfectant boot washes at the facility to clean your boots before entering the clean or processing areas.
- Wash or sanitize your hands before entering the processing area.

During Inspection

- Use your own tools for inspection, ensuring they are clean and disinfected before and after use.
- Minimize direct contact with carcasses to what is necessary for inspection.
- Use goggles or face shields and protect your mucous membranes (eyes, nose and mouth) from splashes. If handling multiple carcasses, use disposable gloves or wash reusable gloves thoroughly between tasks.
- Ensure tools are free of visible organic material during and after the inspection.
- Clean and disinfect tools as needed during the inspection process, especially when moving to different sections of the facility.
- Stay within designated areas for your tasks and avoid unnecessary movement between clean and dirty areas.
- Comply with the facility's disinfection stations when moving between the barn, slaughter floor and processing areas.

At the End of Inspection

- Remove and discard gloves and boot covers in the designated disposal bins provided by the facility.
- If using reusable gear, wash and disinfect boots and gloves before leaving the facility.
- Disinfect all tools using approved disinfectants before packing and storing them.
- Wash exposed skin surfaces (face, arms and hands).
- Disinfect your boots again before leaving the abattoir.

Returning Home

- Check your vehicle for organic material (e.g., feathers, dirt) and remove it before leaving the abattoir.
- Use disinfectant wipes or spray on high-contact areas such as the footwells and door handles.
- Wash your coveralls and other reusable gear right away to keep your family and pets safe from exposure.
- If doing a home wash, use hot water with detergent and disinfectant, and dry clothing on the high heat setting.
- Store clean gear separately from used items to prevent cross-contamination.

Human Health Considerations

- While the risk to humans is low, some strains of avian influenza can infect humans. Pets and/or other animals in the home showing signs of illness should be evaluated.
- Seek medical attention if you develop flu-like symptoms after working in an abattoir. Avoid working with animals as much as possible if you have flu-like symptoms.
- Ensure your seasonal influenza vaccination is up-to-date to minimize the risk of co-infection.
- If you notice biosecurity gaps at the facility, correct or report them to the appropriate authority to ensure compliance with national standards for biosecurity and human safety.

Additional resources are available from PHAC and CCOHS (e.g. [Avian influenza A\(H5N1\): Prevention and risks - Canada.ca](#) and [CCOHS: How to Protect Yourself from Avian Influenza A\(H5N1\) at Work](#)).