



## Lab Space Configuration Guidance Content Relevant to: All Clinical & Alternative Clinical CAHCs and School Wellness Programs

Federal and State requirements for medical areas, such as OSHA, MIOSHA, CLIA, and VFC, were utilized in the development of the following space recommendations guidance for Child and Adolescent Health Centers (CAHC) and School Wellness Programs (SWP). For more information see the resources listed on page 2.

### Clean and Dirty Lab Areas

When performing lab tests and administering medications and immunizations, it is important to plan for a properly configured space to ensure prevention of infection and provide safe care to clients. Therefore, lab space should consist of a “DIRTY AREA,” and the space for medications and vaccine preparation should be a “CLEAN AREA.”

The CDC defines a “DIRTY AREA” as an area where there is a potential for contamination with blood or body fluids and areas where contaminated or “used” supplies, equipment blood supplies or biohazard containers are stored or handled.

The “CLEAN AREA” is defined as an area designated only for clean and unused equipment, supplies and medications.

*Therefore, when planning lab space:*

1. **DIRTY AREA:**  
Plan adequate space for lab testing and collection of urine, pregnancy, cultures, or blood work (centrifuge). This area will need a sink, adequate counter space for lab testing and lab equipment, a biohazard sharps box securely mounted to the wall (at or above hip level), as well as space for locked storage of lab supplies. Electrical outlets for lab testing equipment, including a refrigerator for lab test controls, is also needed.
2. **CLEAN AREA:**  
This area needs to be separated from the dirty area. At minimum, a separate area within the same lab space (i.e. a separate counter and not in a bathroom). Think about where medications or vaccines for administration will be prepared (adequate counter space for medication and vaccine preparation is needed). Secure, lockable cabinets for supplies and medications, and lockable vaccine grade refrigerators and freezers for vaccine storage are needed. A sink for hand washing should also be accessible here.



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Ideally, the DIRTY and CLEAN area will be two separate areas with a sink in each area; however, one sink in a shared lab space with separate clean and dirty areas is also acceptable. If there is only a single, long counter, a double sink could serve as a natural designation between “Clean” and “Dirty” areas. An acrylic barrier on each side of the sink could prevent splashing from occurring between these two areas.

The lab area(s) need to be secure. The lab areas must be labeled as “Clean” and “Dirty,” with a sign posted – “No food or drink or application of cosmetics.” Also, ensure that the vaccine refrigerator and freezer have a “do not unplug” sign posted near the electrical outlet containing the cords for this equipment.

### **Medical Waste**

A secure area for storage of medical waste containers is needed. This could be a locked closet. This room must be labeled as a “Hazardous Waste” area. Ideally, this is separate from other storage areas that may contain other lab and educational supplies. If this is not possible, a lockable cabinet designated for storage of hazardous waste is acceptable. The cabinet must be of an appropriate size to store multiple locked, sharps containers with triple barrier protection (sharps boxes in a hazardous waste bag, in a hazardous waste box) that are awaiting pickup from a medical waste vendor. Undercounter storage is not an acceptable area to store hazardous materials awaiting pickup.

### **Sharps Containers**

Biohazard sharps containers must be securely mounted to the wall, in the exam rooms and lab space, at hip level or higher. Regulations require labeling the container with an expiratory date no more than 90 days from date of initial use. All medical waste must be removed from the facility within 90 days.

### **Safety Equipment**

An eyewash station is required within 55 feet of all treatment areas where caustic chemicals or blood exposure is possible.

### **Resources**

For assistance with OSHA and MIOSHA requirements, please see the following references:

- [Department of Labor, OSHA Standards for Medical and Dental Offices](#)
- [Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(MIOSHA\)](#)
- [MIOSHA Standards for Doctor’s/ Dentist’s Offices \(Under “D” on A to Z Topics Index List\)](#)