



# Bed bug management rules

## Rules regarding the management and prevention of bed bugs applicable to all shared facility accommodation approval holders as of 1 July 2025.

To ensure consistency across the Bundaberg Region, Bundaberg Regional Council's Environmental Health Services have created a standard list of bed bug management rules to replace individualised bed bug management plans and Council's Bed Bug Management Plan Guideline.

These rules are based on the *Industry Code of Best Practice for Bed Bug Management (2022)* and include requirements for prevention, management and post-treatment measures to prevent the reoccurrence of infestations, as well as record keeping templates for records required by the rules.

To assist businesses in implementing the new bed bug management rules, the rules have been broken down into five key requirements:

1. Inspect and monitor
2. Prevention measures
3. Measures to manage infestations
4. Post-treatment measures
5. Education

## What does this mean for your business?

As these rules replace individualised bed bug management plans, businesses will need to cease using their individualised plan and commence the implementation of all procedures outlined in this document as of 1 July 2025.

New additional standard condition 24 on approvals issued under *Subordinate Local Law No. 1.11 (Operation of Shared Facility Accommodation) 2011* requires that –

"The approval holder must adhere to the most recent version of Bundaberg Regional Council's Bed Bug Management Rules, with regard to the operation of the approved premises."

Failure to comply with these rules may result in compliance action taken under *Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2011, Section 11(1)* as it is an offence for a holder of an approval to fail to comply with a condition of their approval. This may result in a maximum penalty of 50 penalty units.

## Do I need to stop using preventative measures that are not listed in this document?

No, you may continue to implement additional preventative measures not listed in this document (e.g. bed bug traps, sealing of holes throughout premises, additional pest control treatments, etc.). Council's Environmental Health Services encourage additional measures of prevention if you have found these are working at your premises.

You must however ensure that these additional measures do not contradict the requirements of these rules and ensure that all rules below are followed in conjunction with your additional measures.

If you have any questions about additional preventative measures, please contact Council's Environmental Health Services on **1300 883 699** or via email to **[brchealthandenvironment@bundaberg.qld.gov.au](mailto:brchealthandenvironment@bundaberg.qld.gov.au)**

## Importance of bed bug management in accommodation

Bed bugs can survive and travel burrowed into the crevices of luggage, clothing and linens. Therefore, accommodation premises are at a greater risk of bed bug infestations. Often causing intense discomfort, allergic reactions, skin infections and psychosocial effects, bites from bed bugs can pose a major impact on guests. Operators of accommodation premises must therefore take all practicable measures to prevent the occurrence of bed bugs and manage infestations promptly when they arise.

## Bed Bug Management Rules

**Purpose:** Council's Bed Bug Management Rules have been developed to ensure consistency in regulating bed bug infestations, prevent bed bug infestations occurring, ensure infestations are managed according to best practice and to reduce the risk of reinfestations in shared facility accommodation premises within the Bundaberg Region.

**Note:** These rules must be read in conjunction with the accompanying definitions (see Appendix A).

### How to implement these rules

1. You must keep a copy of the most recent bed bug management rules on-site at all times, in a location that is easily accessible by all staff members at your premises.
2. You must maintain records as required throughout the bed bug management rules (including all records detailed in Appendix B).
3. You must ensure all procedures detailed in the bed bug management rules are followed and, where required, documented.

### Approval holders must

1. **Inspect and monitor** the approved premises for any signs of bed bugs by:
  - (a) Ensuring the bed bug complaints register (see Appendix B) is always available to all guests (e.g. by placing the register on a pin board in a common room or on the reception desk); and
  - (b) Ensuring a staff member or operator checks the bed bug complaints register daily and if bed bugs are reported in the register or via an alternative means, organising for an inspection of the relevant room to be conducted in line with rule 1(c)(iii).

- (c) Conducting inspections of relevant rooms, within a reasonable timeframe, each time –
    - i. A guest checks out; and
    - ii. A guest is scheduled to check in (inspection must be completed prior to check in occurring); and
    - iii. Any person (including guests or staff) believes that they have identified signs of bed bugs in a room; and
    - iv. Notification is received by an authorised person (this may include notification of a specified frequency at which you must inspect a room/s); and
  - (d) Conducting all inspections in accordance with Bundaberg Regional Council's bed bug inspection checklist; and
  - (e) Completing Bundaberg Regional Council's bed bug inspection checklist for each room inspected each time an inspection occurs; and
  - (f) If any signs of bed bugs or bed bug eggs are identified, conducting inspections of surrounding rooms and areas to determine the extent of the infestation; and
  - (g) Subject to rule 1(f), if a surrounding room is found to be infested, subsequent surrounding rooms must then be inspected until such time as a room is found with no evidence of bed bug activity, or until all rooms have been searched (whichever scenario occurs first).
2. Take all practicable measures to **prevent** bed bug occurrence including by:
    - (a) In extension of additional standard condition 25, thoroughly cleaning rooms either weekly or prior to a new guest occupying a room (whichever of these frequencies is most applicable to your business); and
    - (b) When cleaning rooms in line with rule 2(a), ensuring that all cleaning tasks in the cleaning for the prevention of bed bugs checklist (see Appendix B) are completed; and
    - (c) Removing any unwanted/disused items from the premises as they are identified; and
    - (d) Sealing any holes, cracks, crevices or other locations that could provide harbourage for bed bugs and can reasonably be sealed; and
    - (e) If a hole, crack, crevice or other location cannot be reasonably sealed, implementing an alternative measure to prevent the harbourage of bed bugs in such locations; and
    - (f) Only purchase furniture, fixtures and fittings for the premises that cannot harbour bed bugs or can be easily and effectively cleaned and searched for bed bugs; and

- (g) Ensure that all beds are fitted with a mattress protector designed to prevent the harbourage of bed bugs (see definition bed bug mattress protector in Appendix A).

Note: the mattress protectors must not be the type that are pre-treated with insecticide as this may impact guests.

3. **Manage infestations** by completing the following steps in the order they are written:

- (a) Advise all guests staying in the affected room of the presence of bed bugs; and
- (b) Provide large plastic bags to all guests assigned to the affected room and ensure that all luggage and personal belongings are placed in the plastic bags while still in the affected rooms; and
- (c) Seal the plastic bags of luggage in a way that prevents bed bugs from escaping or entering (the 'gooseneck closure method' is recommended as detailed in Appendix A – Definitions); and
- (d) Place all linen (including sheets, bedding, fabric mattress protectors, pillowcases, and pillows) in a sealed plastic bag (an alginate bag is recommended for this purpose) within the room, ensuring –
- Bags of linen from impacted rooms are clearly marked and are kept in a different location to bags of linen from unaffected rooms; and
  - Bags of linen from impacted rooms are not to be stored in corridors or other high traffic areas as this increases the risk of bed bugs spreading; and
- (e) Wash all linen from affected rooms in hot water (water must be a minimum of 60 degrees to ensure both bed bugs and eggs are killed); and
- (f) Do not place linen back into affected rooms until all steps in section 3 and 4 have been completed; and
- (g) Vacate affected rooms and relocate affected guests, to other rooms that are not impacted by bed bugs; and
- (h) Vacuum floors of affected rooms using a vacuum with a disposable dust bag; and
- (i) Using a crevice nozzle, vacuum all cracks and crevices in affected rooms to remove any dirt, dust and other debris prior to application of any chemicals, to increase the effectiveness of treatment; and
- (j) Apply an insecticide (chosen insecticide must be specified as appropriate for the treatment of bed bugs as per the current Industry Code of Best Practice for Bed Bug Management) to

the contents of the vacuum bag, then seal the bag and dispose of in general waste; and

- (k) Sterilise any solid parts of the vacuum in hot water; and
- (l) Assess mattresses for the presence of bed bugs; and
- (m) Press adhesive side of sticky tape onto any parts of mattresses where bed bug activity has been observed, to remove bed bugs from the mattresses; and
- (n) Dispose of tape into a bag and seal using the gooseneck closure method; and
- (o) Ensure a professional pest controller treats affected rooms as soon as possible, by at a minimum –
- Applying an insecticide dust capable of eradicating bed bugs; and/or

Note: dusts may be ineffective if vacuuming will occur in the affected areas, however, dusts can be particularly effective for crevices that will not be vacuumed such as electrical areas, wall voids, carpet edges and under straight edges.

- Applying an aerosol insecticide capable of eradicating bed bugs; and

Note: aerosol insecticides should be used in conjunction with other formulations as they may have limited residual action against resistant bed bugs and eggs.

- (p) Ensure that smoke generating insecticides (commonly known as insecticide bombs) are not used as these can be ineffective as they are unlikely to penetrate all harbourage areas; and
- (q) Ensure a professional pest controller treats adjoining rooms even if no bed bugs are seen (eggs may be present); and
- (r) Ensure a professional pest controller reapplies insecticide and ensure that the reapplication occurs no sooner than 14 days after the initial treatment; and

Note: reapplication is an important step as treatments are often incapable of killing eggs. In Bundaberg's climate, bed bug eggs may take between 14 and 18 days to hatch. Therefore, by reapplying insecticide more than 14 days after the initial treatment, the likelihood of a reinfestation occurring is reduced as any bugs that have hatched since the initial treatment will likely be eradicated by the second treatment before they can lay eggs themselves.



4. Take all practicable measures **post-treatment** to prevent reoccurrence of bed bug infestations including by:
  - (a) Ensuring affected rooms remain vacated until such time as a minimum of two treatments have been conducted (please refer to rule 3) and written confirmation is provided by the treating pest controller that the rooms are no longer affected by bed bugs; and
  - (b) Ensuring that treated rooms are not vacuumed until at least 14 days after treatment; and
  - (c) Removing all past signs of an infestation including dead bed bugs and items affected by blood spotting.
5. **Educate:**
  - (a) Staff by –
    - i. Providing appropriate training to employees that includes the provision of all training components listed in Bundaberg Regional Council's bed bug management staff training checklist (see Appendix B); and
    - ii. Ensuring both the staff member being trained and the staff member training sign the bed bug management staff training checklist (see Appendix B) upon the completion of training; and
    - iii. Ensuring a copy of Council's Bed Bug Management Rules is on-site and easily accessible to staff at all times; and
  - (b) Guests by –
    - i. Advising guests upon their arrival or in correspondence confirming their booking/ stay, of the following –
      - (a) How to avoid bed bugs, in line with Council's Bed Bug Management Rules; and
      - (b) How to recognise bed bugs; and
      - (c) How to report bed bug activity using the bed bug complaints register (see Appendix B).

## Appendix A – Definitions

**Reasonable timeframe:** If check out occurs on a weekday, a reasonable time is defined as 12 hours. If check out occurs on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday or Public Holiday, a reasonable time is defined as the next business day (Monday to Friday).

**Relevant rooms:** In the context of rule 1(c)(i), a relevant room refers to the room recently vacated, and in the context of rule 1(c)(iii), a relevant room refers to the room that the person believes is impacted by bed bugs.

**Can reasonably be sealed:** In the context of rule 2(d), a hole, crack, crevice or other location is deemed to be able to be reasonably sealed if an authorised person requests the repair or sealing of the hole, crack, crevice or other location via written notice.

**Bed bug mattress cover:** An impervious mattress encasement capable of fully enclosing a mattress and preventing the harbourage of bed bugs within the mattress and cover materials. In the context of these rules, bed bug mattress covers must not be affected by insecticide chemicals prior to purchase.

**Gooseneck closure method:** Commonly used to seal asbestos bags, this method ensures that no content within the bag can escape (including bed bugs). To create a gooseneck closure, you will need to:

1. Twist the top of the bag until the twisted section is approximately 15 cm in length (at a minimum)
2. Wrap tape around the twisted section (duct tape is commonly used)
3. Fold the twisted and taped section of the bag in two so that it has doubled back on itself
4. Tape the folded sections together

## Appendix B – Records



Available on Council's website  
[bundaberg.qld.gov.au/Business/Licences-permits-and-approvals/Shared-facility-accommodation](https://bundaberg.qld.gov.au/Business/Licences-permits-and-approvals/Shared-facility-accommodation)

- Bed bug inspection checklist
- Cleaning for the prevention of bed bugs checklist
- Bed bug complaints register
- Pest control register
- Bed bug management staff training checklist