

Welcome to SelClene



A guide to
working with
SelClene

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business card



Welcome to Selclene

The UK's leading domestic cleaning agency



Do not accept jobs half-heartedly. Be absolutely sure you really **want** the job before you go after it. Remember, other people are also looking for work, so please don't accept a job you don't really want and deprive someone else of the chance.

Welcome to SelClene. You have joined a very select team that takes great pride in providing an excellent service to over 10,000 households throughout the country.

Of every 100 people who apply, only a handful are chosen to be one of our workers, so you can take pride in having achieved this.

Domestic cleaning traditionally pays better than office or commercial cleaning, because you are expected to be a professional in your own right, with a high sense of personal responsibility and the ability to work on your own initiative in the client's home.

As your Agency, we find work for you using marketing techniques developed successfully over the past twenty years. In return, we expect you to provide high quality, reliable and loyal service to our clients and to take pride in your work. As a result, both you personally and all of us in SelClene will enjoy a good reputation in the local area for providing a professional and reliable service.

Please take the time to read through this booklet. It explains how things work and what you need to do.

Above all, we expect you to be **honest, reliable** and **competent** in your cleaning work for us.

Of every 100 people who apply, only a handful are chosen to be one of our workers, so you can take pride in having achieved this.

B How the Agency works



When we give you a client to contact, no one else is given the same job. If you don't make every effort to contact the client, they will complain to our office staff that no one has called them.

Please remember

You must not use bleach, or products containing bleach.

The Agency is offering you a **free job-finding service**. Clients pay us Agency fees. The more happy clients we have, the more work we can offer you. For us to work successfully, you must keep us informed about what you are doing. Please take a minute now to programme your SelClene office phone number into your phone – it will save time and trouble later!

1 Being offered a client

We call this **allocation**. We will call you to offer you suitable work based on the available times and dates and preferences you have given us. Please remember – if any of these change you need to notify us. If you decide to go for an interview we assume that you really want the client. Please only accept jobs that sound suitable.

2 Arranging an interview

You will be given the name, address and telephone number of a prospective client, with details of the days and hours required and the work that has been requested (general cleaning and/or ironing). Please call the client promptly to arrange a time and date for an interview. If you cannot contact the client within 24 hours, inform the Agency.

When you have arranged the interview, please call us with the time and date. Check if you are expected to start the same day and if so allow extra time for your visit. It goes without saying that you should attend the interview on time.

3 At the interview

You should be given a tour of the home. The client should provide a *Task Sheet* indicating the type of work required. You will find out what cleaning materials are available and where the materials are stored. Are you familiar with the equipment including any electrical equipment? If not, ask for instructions in how to use it. What regular duties are required? (eg vacuum, dusting). What irregular duties are required? (eg oven cleaning, inside fridge. windows).



4 After the interview

Immediately after the interview, call us to let us know whether you have agreed to start working for the client and if so, tell us the start date and times. Please remember to advise us again in the future if these change.

5 Arriving at the home

Always arrive on time. If you are expecting to attend the interview and start work immediately, allow 15 minutes for the interview in addition to your working time.

You may want to take some or all of the following to help make your work easier:

- A change of shoes – a pair that is comfortable to work in.
- Rubber gloves (in your own size!)
- An apron or housecoat to protect your clothes while working.

Be smartly dressed when attending interview but 'dress down' and wear practical clothes if arriving to start work.

Remember to keep a record of the start time and finish time, by recording these on the *Workers Earnings Receipt Form* (WERF), and to sign to say that you have been paid.

Some clients will ask you to clock in and clock out using *Timeline*, our automated clocking in and clocking out system. You simply call the freephone number from the clients home phone when you arrive and enter your PIN number. When you leave you do exactly the same. Using *Timeline* ensures that the client only pays the Agency fees for the exact time that you worked for that client. Please see the leaflet at the back for more instructions if your Agency uses *Timeline*, and also ask your Agency for your PIN number if you have not yet received it.

6 After your first day

As soon as you get home from your first day, call us to let us know how you got on:

- Was the assigned work completed?
- Was too much work assigned for the time available?
- Any other general comments?

It is normal for tasks on a first clean to take slightly longer than subsequent visits as you need to find out where everything is stored and get used to the layout of the house. Please don't rush a first clean due to lack of time as this is when accidents can happen. After a couple of visits you will settle into a routine and if the time the job takes needs adjusting, please let the client **and** SelClene know.

The more happy clients we have, the more work we can offer you. For us to work successfully, you must keep us informed about what you are doing.



If you get through to a client's answering machine or voicemail, always leave a short message. Otherwise the client will think no one bothered to call them.

How the Agency works

continued

7 Loyalty to the Agency

Occasionally a client may ask you to continue working for them when they have stopped paying us and are no longer a client of the Agency.

This may be embarrassing for you but it is also against the terms and conditions of their (and your) agreement with us and **will** result in legal action.

You should not be tempted to work 'privately' for any of our clients as this would be disloyal to the Agency who, after all, found you work.

The Agency carries insurance for you for any injury you might suffer while working; this cover would not apply if you were working 'privately' for a client. You may also be liable for tax and national insurance if you are no longer an Agency cleaner.

Let us know if any client offers to take you on privately and for your own safety do not be tempted to accept such offers.

Referrals

Please let us know if you know of anyone who may be free to work for SelClene. Most SelClene Agents will offer a **cash reward** for referrals, so ask your Agent for details.

C Training

Guidelines for effective cleaning

These sections are to be read in conjunction with your training.

1 Organising your work

If you organise your time and work properly, it will make your job easier and you will keep your client happy by doing more work in less time.

When you enter a room that you are about to clean, divide it into three levels:

eye level eg pictures, window ledges, switches, furniture.

ceiling level eg cobwebs, frieze or picture rail, ceiling lights, tops of doors.

floor level eg skirting boards, carpets.

Some clients may want you to use colour-coded cloths and gloves which they provide – yellow for kitchens, red for bathrooms and toilets, blue for general cleaning.

Work out your plan of action. Start at the left-hand corner and work towards the door, then go to the right-hand corner and work towards the door. Work clockwise from the door, going ‘top to bottom’ (ie ceiling, eye level and then floor level).

When the room is finished, stand at the door and look. You should see the difference!

Secure doors and windows upon departure. At all times keep your client’s keys separate from any note you may have of their address or any note you may have of their house alarm codes.

2 Cleaning routine

Generally speaking, work from the top of the house to the bottom, even when dusting. For hygiene reasons, do the kitchen first and the bathroom and toilets last, after you have done the kitchen. Washing the floor should be the last job that you do in a room.

If you organise your time and work properly, it will make your job easier and you will keep your client happy by doing more work in less time.

Checklist for all rooms except kitchen and bathroom

- 1 Remove cobwebs from ceiling and dust from frieze ledge (picture rail).
- 2 Make bed: fluff pillows, straighten duvet.
- 3 Lamps: dust and clean.
- 4 Phone: clean and wipe (use blue cloth).
- 5 Dresser: dust and polish, tidy articles on it, put items back in their original position.
- 6 Chair: fluff cushions, fold clothes if any on it.
- 7 Wardrobes: dust or clean glass doors.
- 8 Windows and ledges: wash inside windows, wash, polish ledge, polish glass clean.
- 9 Light switches: clean and buff to a smear-free finish with a **dry** cloth.
- 10 Door handles: shine and buff to a smear free finish, check for finger marks around handles and clean.
- 11 Check door for dust in grooves, ledges and panels.
- 12 Empty waste-paper bins.
- 13 Couch and chairs: take a vacuum cleaner down the recesses between seats (**do not put your hands down recesses between cushions**), fluff cushions.
- 15 Table: dust and polish (put items back in place).
- 16 Television and stereo: dust (use anti-static cloth).
- 17 Doors: wipe doors, door frames and tops of doors.
- 18 Plants: water if necessary (get permission first). **only water plants over a sink or basin.**
- 19 Magazine rack: tidy.
- 20 Radiator: dust front and back (only when radiator not in operation).
- 21 Vacuum carpet*

* Most but not all clients prefer vacuuming to be done after dusting and all other chores in the room. Be aware of individual preferences and in particular of varying performance standards of individual vacuum cleaners. Inefficient vacuum cleaners can emit more dust via their exhaust than they collect and can spoil your previous work. If this is the case, let your client know.



If you have trouble getting hold of a client, make a note of the dates and times you called and left messages.



Checklist for bathrooms

- 1 Wipe down radiator, clean shower/stall and wall tiles. Wipe and polish to a shine basin taps, basin and basin pedestal. Wipe cabinet sides and doors and polish. Clean towel rail and arrange towels neatly.
- 2 Toilet: clean round base of toilet, around and under loo seat, wipe and polish wall tiles behind and beside toilet. Wipe and polish hand-basin, taps and surrounding tiles. Replace toilet roll as necessary.
- 3 Polish taps and surfaces with a dry towel after you finish cleaning them, so they will gleam.

Checklist for the kitchen

- 1 Clean cooker: overhead fan extractor stove, hood (use yellow cloth).
- 2 Microwave inside and out, as well as the microwave dish (use yellow cloth).
- 3 Pots and pans.
- 4 Appliances: switch off at mains first.
- 5 Freezer.
- 6 Cupboards (top and bottom).
- 7 TV.
- 8 Window.
- 9 Counter tops (use yellow cloth).
- 10 Tables and chairs.
- 11 Dishes (use yellow cloth).
- 12 Cutlery (use yellow cloth).
- 13 Clean refrigerator, wipe interior clean (use yellow cloth).
- 14 Sink (use yellow cloth) and wipe and shine taps and tiles or splash backs behind sink.
- 15 Empty kitchen bin.
- 16 Clean kitchen floor.

Wherever possible waste water should be emptied down an outside drain and certainly not down the kitchen sink. If an outside garden drain is not available empty buckets etc down a lavatory prior to cleaning but do not carry dirty water upstairs. Use a street drain in preference.



We make it a rule when you accept a job, you **must** go after it. We expect you to have made contact with a client within 24 hours of being given the client's telephone number. If you have not we want to hear from you. Otherwise you risk losing us the client, who may go elsewhere to find a cleaner.

Monthly cleaning tips

- 1 Wash inside windows; this should be done in rotation so you complete a set of windows every visit.
- 2 Skirting boards in all rooms.
- 3 Clean additional tiled areas not included in regular cleaning routines.
- 4 Clean radiators – clean radiators produce more heat. Dirty radiators cost more money to run and are less efficient.
- 5 Clean blinds.

Consult client for additional 'monthly clean' items – this is not an exhaustive list. Ensure there is sufficient time to do these extra tasks. For both regular and occasional tasks, the *Task Sheet* provided by your client should be followed at all times.

What equipment should your clients provide?

The required essentials are:

- 1 Cloths and gloves for different areas (preferably colour coded for easy identification).
- 2 A first aid kit.
- 3 Safety goggles for oven cleaning and high-level dusting.

These are items your clients can either obtain through us or through their local supermarket. It's probably easier for them to order through us as we can simply post the products to them.

Under the SelClene recommended colour code you would use:

Yellow cloths and gloves

for the kitchen and food preparation areas.

Blue cloths

for general areas such as lounge, bedrooms and reception rooms.

Red cloths and gloves

for bathrooms and toilets.

There are other recommended extras which your local SelClene Agent may provide. Make sure you understand how any products supplied either by your clients or by the Agency are to be used.

D Twelve commandments of reliability

- 1 Do not accept jobs half-heartedly. Be absolutely sure you want the job before you go after it. Remember, other workers want jobs also. So do not be selfish and accept a job you don't really want as otherwise you deprive someone else of the chance to earn an income.
- 2 When we give you a client to go after, no one else is given the same job. This means you must make every effort to contact any client we give you. Otherwise we may get a complaint from your client that no one has called them. This means staff at the office have to handle complaints from clients. They moan at us not you.
- 3 Always leave a message on a client's answering machine. Otherwise the client may think no one ever bothered to call them. Never call and fail to leave a message on an answering machine.
- 4 If you have trouble getting hold of a client, start keeping a record of your calls. Keep a written note of the date and time you called and left messages. This way if they complain no one bothered to call them, you can say when you did call them.
- 5 We make it a rule when you accept a job you **must** go after it. However if there are exceptional circumstances that make you decide you do not want to go after a client you have agreed to take on, tell us. Otherwise as you are the only person given the client's name, you risk losing us the client. Not hearing from anyone they may go elsewhere.
- 6 If you take on jobs and do not go after them you are depriving other workers of the chance of getting that job. We expect you to have made contact with a client we give you within 24 hours of being given the client's telephone number. If you have not we want to hear from you.
- 7 Once you have arranged an interview with a client, tell us the date and time of the interview.

- 8 Do not fail to attend an interview. If you need to change an appointment time, phone the client and re-arrange it and tell us the new appointment date and time. All it takes to change an appointment time is one simple phone call. It is never acceptable to simply not turn up to an appointment as the client may have made a special journey back from work to meet you.
- 9 When you are given an appointment at the office for review or training, you must attend on time or telephone us if you cannot make it.
- 10 When you agree to start with a client let us know the start date and start time and how many hours you will be attending.
- 11 When working for a client, always attend on time and always work the full hours you are being paid to do. Do not leave early.
- 12 If the job can be done in less time than you are being paid for, either find something else to do extra to please the client, or suggest the client reduce your hours if there really is nothing left to do.

Key security

You must always be sure to return a client's keys when you finish with them.

The K-code

If you ever let the Agency or a client down badly, we K-code you. While you may keep the clients you already have and remain on our books, we won't give you any more work.

Once the K-code is on your file it is rarely removed. After six months, if your record with the remaining clients is good and if you can obtain new written references from your clients praising your work, the K-code may be reviewed and lifted, enabling you to get more work. If you have been K-coded for six months or longer and want more work, ask the Agency what you are required to do to get the K-code lifted.

Always treat your job seriously. You are being entrusted with **our** clients and how you behave reflects on **us** and **our** service, Be prompt, courteous and **reliable** at all times.

E Safety first



Once you have arranged an interview with a client, please tell us the date and time of the interview.

- 1 Open windows for ventilation while working (**and remember to close windows before leaving**).
- 2 Always dilute chemicals in an area where drips or spills will not cause stains or damage.
- 3 Do not use products comprising neat bleach. It is recommended all your clients use alternative products that do not contain bleach. **You must not use bleach under any circumstances.** While clients may keep bleach for their own personal use; they, and you, may not be insured for damage or injury caused by bleach.
- 4 Stick to the colour-coding systems for the use and storage of cleaning materials.
- 5 It is sensible to store all cleaning materials (such as colour-coded cloths or mops) separately, in or near the rooms where they are to be used.
- 6 When carrying cleaning equipment from room to room, make sure bottle tops are screwed on firmly and take care not to drip or spill cleaning fluids on floors, especially carpeted areas.
- 7 Look for warning signs on all cleaning products (see the last page of this book for signs that indicate dangerous products).
- 8 Chemicals can be diluted with water, but they **cannot and must not** be mixed with other substances. In addition, when diluting chemicals, it is safer to put the water in first and **then** add the chemicals.
- 9 Colour-coded gloves should be worn at all times and especially when working with any chemicals or cleaning fluids. The colour-coded gloves should be kept close to where they are used.
- 10 Broken glass must only be disposed of in a rigid container not left loose in a plastic bin liner.
- 11 The legal height limit for reaching areas to clean is no higher than your own reach, without your heels leaving the floor, unless you are using suitable equipment – ie a step ladder.

- 12 You may only use a step ladder if trained to do so. If stepping up beyond the first step you should be accompanied by another person to ensure your safety. When on your own you should follow the 'one-step-up' principle and not climb higher than one step up the ladder.
- 13 When cleaning couches and armchairs, **do not** put your hands down the sides to feel for lost or missing objects. You could be injured by any unseen sharp objects.
- 14 All electrical appliances must be disconnected from the mains before you clean them. This is especially important when using cleaning fluids, water or even a damp cloth for wiping the appliance.
- 15 Your client should provide a small first aid box for your use. Make sure you know where it is.



Statutory safety requirements

The following can only be done when you are trained in the task by the client:

- 1 Refrigerator: dusting and cleaning the back of the refrigerator.
- 2 Vacuum cleaner: emptying vacuum cleaner bag and changing filter.
- 3 All electrical equipment in a client's home: ensure your client has trained you in the proper use of any electrical equipment in their home.
- 4 Steam iron: use only as instructed according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

Checklist

Before commencing work

- 1 Wires and flexes: extra care should be taken with wires and flexes. Check vacuum flex and electric/steam Iron's flex before using the equipment. Do not run over the flex with the vacuum.
- 2 Cooker: check ceramic hob is off before cleaning. Do not leave anything on top of the hob.
- 3 Faulty equipment: if something is not working, plug another item which you know is working into the socket to check it is not the socket that is at fault. If any equipment does not work, do not attempt to fix or repair it yourself. Report it to the client and ask them to call in a qualified technician or electrician.



Safety first *continued*

Checklist **Before you leave**

- 1 Storage of cleaning materials: put all cleaning materials and equipment back in its proper place. Ensure the lids of all equipment are put on properly.
- 2 Supplies of cleaning materials: leave a note for the client when cleaning supplies are running low. Only use the correct cleaning materials.
- 3 Close all windows.
- 4 Check room to room.

Checklist **As you leave**

- 1 Put on alarm.
- 2 Lock up and make sure doors and windows are secure.

Key security

You must return keys when you stop working for the client. If you have paid a key security deposit, you will be refunded this by the client (not the Agency) once you have returned their keys. Do not lend the keys to anyone else. Never let anyone else, even a friend, child or spouse, into the client's property, for reasons of insurance and security.

F Your earnings



It is never acceptable to miss an appointment as the client may have made a special journey back from work to meet you. If you need to change an appointment time, call the client and re-arrange it and tell us the new appointment date and time.

1 Worker Earnings Receipt Form (WERF)

All our clients are legally obliged to keep a record of the hours that the cleaners have worked. You should ensure you understand how to complete this form. When money is left out for you, you should sign for it in the column marked 'signed for' and enter the date you received the money in the 'date received' column. If your client is **not** using a *WERF*, please ask them to start using the form now.

2 Timeline

Some of our clients use *SelClene Timeline*, the telephone logging system. You simply dial a freephone number from the clients house and enter your pin when you arrive, and when you finish cleaning and leave you do the same in reverse.

Using a *WERF* (and *Timeline*) help our clients to only pay Agency fees for the time they actually have a cleaner. It also helps us to work out your holiday entitlement and to ensure the our cleaners do not go over the tax threshold. It is therefore important you correctly use the time system that your client asks you to use.

3 Employed or self-employed

'Self-Assessment' and a stricter tax regime means we need to be thorough in handling tax matters. If you have registered **properly** as 'self-employed', please tell us. If you earn enough to pay tax we recommend you become 'officially self-employed'.

Being self-employed you may earn more than if you are not registered. This is because as a self-employed person you can often offset travel to and from jobs and clothing allowance plus any other relevant expenses against tax.

If you work part-time you are unlikely to earn enough to be liable for tax.

The tax allowances change every April and we monitor your income from your SelClene clients in order to ensure that you do not exceed the tax limit. It's vitally important that you adhere to the *WERFITimeline* system so we do not count your earnings on days you did not actually work.

If you wish to go self-employed we are able to offer you the relevant forms for completion.

4 The P46 form

You must complete a P46 form when you join the Agency, and statement A, B or C. Tick whichever is applicable. In most cases it is likely to be Statement 'B' unless you are a pensioner or unless you have just left school. If you feel none of boxes A, B or C apply, ask the Agency.

You must also enter:

- a Your national insurance number.
- b Your surname and first name.
- c Your home address in the 'home address' box.
- d Your date of birth.
- e Put whether you are M or F (for male or female).
- f Job title – put 'domestic cleaner'.
- g Employee (bottom section of form).

If you have another Job, you have to complete this section. Call us for advice if you need to complete this section. If you have ticked either Statements A, B or C you do not complete this section.

As long as your only job is as a domestic cleaner through an agency, then you will not have to pay national insurance.

Remember – if the amount of money you get from all of your clients in a whole tax year is less than your tax allowance and you have no other income – you will not be liable for tax.

G Holidays for cleaners

This is quite a complicated area, but don't worry – your SelClene office can help you and your clients to work it out.

The holiday year for cleaners in SelClene is the same as the calendar year: 1 January to 31 December. This has been arranged so any remaining holiday entitlement can be taken over Christmas when you are unlikely to want to work.

How much holiday am I entitled to?

Under the *Working Time Directive* you are entitled to four weeks holiday during the holiday year. This works out at one week every quarter. The Agency can advise you of your specific entitlement.

You may also be able to claim bank holidays as additional paid days as and when the Government legislation changes.

How is the holiday entitlement calculated?

It is based on the average pay and hours worked over the preceding twelve weeks for each individual client. So if you normally work four hours a week for a client, then you get four hours holiday in your thirteenth week. However if you only worked part of the previous twelve weeks then you only get holiday pro rata to the hours worked.

Example

Your regular hours are 4 hours a week but you only work 9 weeks in the last 12.

Holiday entitlement is $9/12 \times 4$ hours = 3 hours holiday.





When you are asked to come to the SelClene office for review or training, you must attend on time or telephone us if you cannot make it.

I don't want the bother of complicated calculations – can't the Agency do this for me?

With accurate records of hours worked and pay earned from each client, our computer will calculate your holiday entitlement for each client you work for. Bring or post us a copy of the *WERFs* (or ensure that you use *Timeline*) for the period and we can print out a report which you give to your client(s).

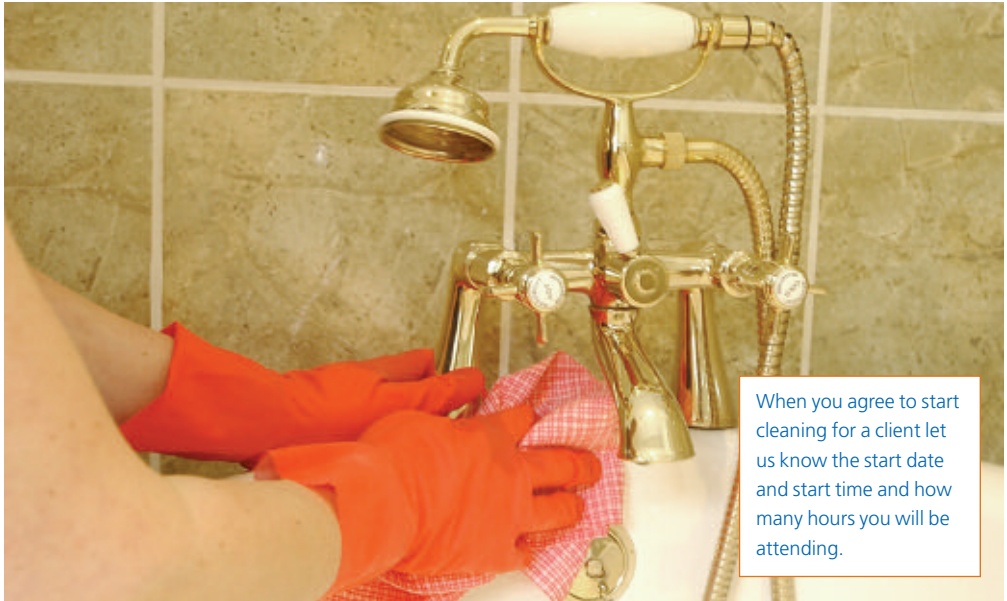
What notice is required for taking holidays?

You have to give notice equivalent to **twice** the holiday to be taken (so, taking two weeks off you would have to give your client four weeks notice). And if your client wanted to give you two weeks off, they too should give you four weeks notice. If required, the Agency will try to supply a replacement cleaner while you are away on holiday so please give us as much notice.

Can I simply take a cash equivalent to my holiday entitlement and continue working for the clients without taking holiday?

Holiday entitlement can only be taken as time off, not as pay, except when you are leaving a client. Then any accumulated holiday time can be added to your leaving pay (ie **on top of** the required one week's notice period) provided you are genuinely available to work for the duration of any holiday pay and you can work out your notice period.

If you leave without notice you will forfeit your pay for the notice period (since you will not have worked out your notice) nor will you be able to collect the holiday pay (since you will not be genuinely available to work for the duration of the holiday period having too abruptly terminated your employment).



Holidays for cleaners

continued

Can holiday entitlement be carried over from one year to the next?

No. If holidays are not claimed within the applicable holiday year, they cannot be carried forward.

If I go self-employed can I still get paid holidays?

No. You can only collect holiday entitlement under the *Working Time Directive* if you are a legitimate, genuine 'employee' of the client.

Using *WERFs/Timeline* will enable us and your client to accurately monitor the hours worked and allow you to have your full holiday entitlement.

I Insurance

We provide our clients with Insurance for damage that you may have caused to their property whilst cleaning for them. If you have broken something it is important that you tell us as soon as possible, so we can deal with any insurance claim speedily.

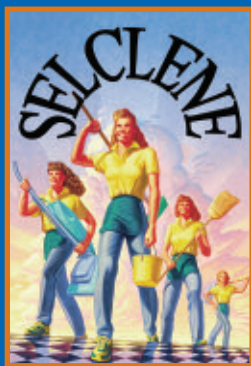
Initially, we will take all the details and then if the client puts in a claim we will ask you to write all the details down and send them to us.

We will match up the clients claim and facts with your version of the events, along with the clients estimate of the damage, and send them to the insurance company.

If you injure yourself at work whilst cleaning for a client, you must also advise us as soon as possible in order that we can take appropriate action.

When working for a client, always attend on time and always work the full hours you are being paid to do. Do not leave early. If the job can be done in less time than you are being paid for, either find something extra to do to please the client, or suggest the client reduces your hours if there really is nothing left to do.





www.selclene.co.uk