COVID-19 Preparedness Plan
Guidance: Requirements for
Meatpacking Businesses

02/12/2021

Executive Order (EO) 21-07 will go into effect Saturday, Feb. 13 at 12:00 p.m. (noon) and is an amendment to EO 21-01 which does not have an end date. Meatpacking businesses must continue to comply with the requirements set forth in EO 21-01. This guidance is not affected by amendments to EO 21-01 through EO 21-07.


Frequently Asked Questions about all Executive Orders may have additional clarifications about requirements and recommendations. See Frequently Asked Questions about Stay Safe MN (https://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/stay-safe-mn/faq.jsp) or Stay Safe Guidance for Businesses and Organizations (https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/index.jsp).

There are no other updates to this document at this time.

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Executive Order (EO) 21-01

The full executive order (EO) with all requirements can be found at Executive Orders from Governor Walz (https://mn.gov/governor/news/executiveorders.jsp).

- **Social gatherings limited.** Social gatherings are limited as described on the Social Gatherings webpage (https://staysafe.mn.gov/individuals-families/social-gatherings.jsp). Most commercial activities are not considered social gatherings, so this limit will not impact most industries.

- **Masks and face coverings required.** EO 20-81, requiring face coverings in certain settings, remains in full force and effect. See Face Covering Requirements and Recommendations under Executive Order 20-81 (https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecover.html).

- **People at higher risk.** All people currently living within the State of Minnesota who are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19, as defined by EO 20-55, are strongly urged to stay at home or in their place of residence and follow the provisions of EO 20-55.

- **Work from home.** All people who can work from home must continue to do so.
**COVID-19 MEATPACKING BUSINESSES**

- **Business and activities are affected differently.** For a full listing of all business and activity requirements and limitations, see the full executive order at [Executive Orders from Governor Walz](https://mn.gov/governor/news/executiveorders.jsp). Please review the guidance below for industry-specific requirements and applicable COVID-19 Preparedness Plan Guidance Requirements.

**EO 21-01 requirements for meatpacking businesses**

For the duration of EO 21-01, meatpacking sectors must operate under the following provisions:

- ✔ Workers who can work from home must do so.
- ✔ Meetings and training sessions must be held virtually whenever possible.
- ✔ In-person meetings and training sessions must be limited to workers only and must involve as few workers as possible. In-person meetings and training sessions held indoors must not exceed 25 workers at one time. If workers can attend meeting while working from home, they must do so.
- ✔ On-premises consumption of food and beverages is allowed outdoors only, unless by workers in designated break areas. All persons must be seated whenever eating and/or drinking.
- ✔ To the extent activities are not paused by EO 20-103, the provisions in the “Preparedness Plan Requirements Guidelines for Meatpacking” below, continue to be applicable to those activities, unless revised by the above provisions and agriculture businesses must continue to comply with them.
COVID-19 Preparedness Plan Guidance: Requirements for Meatpacking Businesses

Businesses engaged in “meat-packing”, which includes the slaughtering, rendering, refining, processing, and preparing meats and meat by-products (e.g., beef, pork, poultry, seafood), are covered by this guidance and must develop and implement a COVID-19 Business Preparedness Plan that addresses the following components.

Your health and COVID-19

Any time individuals are gathering with other people, they are at risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. COVID-19 is spread through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. People with symptoms and without symptoms can spread the virus.

COVID-19 can lead to serious medical conditions and even death for people of all ages. We cannot predict who will become severely ill, although we know that older people and people with underlying health conditions are at higher risk. We do not yet know what the long-term effects of infection from COVID-19 are; even people with mild cases may experience long-term complications.

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. The masking, physical distancing, and other safety precautions included in these requirements reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19, but do not eliminate the risk entirely. We can all take these actions to protect ourselves, our families, and others throughout our communities. This applies to people who have already been vaccinated, too.

- Stay home when sick.
- Stay at least 6 feet apart from other people.
- Wear face coverings in indoor businesses and public indoor spaces and outdoors when 6 feet of social distancing cannot be consistently maintained.
- Wash your hands often.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.

COVID-19 Preparedness Plans

As required by the Executive Orders (also referred to as “EOs”) issued by Governor Tim Walz under the Peacetime Emergency, all businesses, both critical or non-critical, and other entities identified in the EO, are legally required to develop and implement COVID-19 Preparedness Plans (also referred to as “Plan” or “Plans”). Under the EO, a “business” and “businesses” include entities that employ or engage workers, including private-sector entities, public-sector entities, non-profit entities, and state, county, and local governments. “Worker” and “workers” are broadly defined by the EOS to include owners, proprietors, employees, contractors, vendors, volunteers, and interns.
For purposes of this Plan Guidance, “other entities” includes those entities identified in the EOs that are not covered by the definition of a “business” but are also required by an EO to develop and implement Plans. Other entities include places of public accommodation, establishments, institutions, facilities, venues, and organizers identified in the EOs. Plan Guidance is designed to protect workers, customers, and other members of the public from the transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19.

This Plan Guidance constitutes the “Plan Guidance” referred to in EO 21-01 and applies to all identified businesses and other entities. Businesses and other entities must develop and implement COVID-19 Preparedness Plans that address the following:

- The requirements of EO 21-01,
- The requirements included in the Requirements for All Businesses and Other Entities found at Stay Safe Guidance for All Business Entities (https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/all-businesses.jsp), and
- The requirements included in this Plan Guidance that are applicable to their business or entity.

Unless clearly indicated that an action is recommended and included under “Recommendations,” businesses and other entities should understand that the Plan Guidance imposes legally enforceable requirements. In instances where a requirement uses language “to the extent possible,” the action is required, to the extent it is possible for the business or entity to implement the requirement.

Depending on the activities engaged in by a business or other entity, it may be required to comply with additional industry or activity specific plan guidance, such as plan guidance applicable to bars and restaurants, if the facility serves food and beverages or plan guidance applicable to businesses that provide personal services, if the facility has a hair salon.

Frequently Asked Questions have been posted to respond to questions about provisions of Executive Orders and Plan Guidance. The following is a link to current Frequently Asked Questions about Stay Safe MN (https://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/stay-safe-mn/faq.jsp).

**Required Plan Sections**

Follow the requirements included in the Requirements for All Businesses and Other Entities found at Stay Safe Guidance for All Business Entities (https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/all-businesses.jsp) and the following:

1. Use of face coverings
2. Worksite access
3. Personal protective equipment
4. Temporary Labor Camps and Housing
5. Shared Transportation

**Requirements and Recommendations**
1. Use of face coverings

Requirements

✓ Require that workers wear face coverings indoors at all times, and outdoors when social distancing of 6 feet cannot be maintained. Establish procedures for overseeing compliance with face covering requirements. See Frequently Asked Questions About the Requirement to Wear Face Coverings (https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/all-businesses.jsp).

✓ Ensure that social distancing is maintained in all work areas, including at workstations, productions lines, cafeterias, break rooms, etc.

- Provide for 6 feet of physical distancing in work areas, storage areas, break areas, locker and changing areas, meeting areas, copy-rooms, parking areas, etc.

- Evaluate traffic patterns, congestion areas, bottlenecks, and choke points to reduce crowding in entrances, reception areas, information counters, hallways, elevators, waiting areas, staging areas, locker room and changing areas, doorways, corridors, janitor’s closets, sink-rooms, transport areas, time-clock areas, etc.

- Designate one way entrances and exits that facilitate 6-foot distancing.

- For businesses that use time clocks, consider alternatives such as phone-based apps, web-based apps, or cameras to clock workers in and out.

- For assembly lines, adjust line speeds so workers can maintain social distancing.

- Avoid having workers facing each other at workstations or on assembly lines whenever possible.

- Limit collective gatherings of workers to numbers that allow for social distancing, including during collective gatherings for training, meetings, and breaks.

✓ Limit the number of people in restrooms, break areas, and cafeterias to allow for social distancing. Create and designate additional break areas (including outside, when practical) for breaks and meals. Revise break times to prevent congregating in cafeterias and breakrooms. Spread out or remove tables and chairs in break areas so they are at least 6 feet apart and install barriers where necessary.

✓ Implement static assignment or grouping of work crews to the extent possible. For example, Javier, Nguyen, and Ronald always work together and are assigned to the same location or work area every day, rather than reporting to different locations or work areas throughout the week or being reassigned with different workers.

✓ Limit worker interaction across floors, buildings, campuses, worksites, etc. Use walkie talkies or headphones so workers can communicate from a distance.

- **Zones:** Establish zones throughout the facility, and designate and assign staff to work and remain in their assigned zone whenever possible.

✓ Incorporate barriers, partitions, screens, or curtains to maintain barrier protection between workers, to the extent possible, where social distancing cannot be maintained.
Recommendations

- Use staggered shifts, extended work hours, and added shifts to reduce the number of workers on the worksite.

- For office staff, consider staggered work schedules or workspace assignments to further promote social distancing by assigning cube spaces diagonal from each other (as opposed to immediately adjacent or across from each other).

- Use arrows and other signage to mark one-way traffic flows at access points, in aisles, hallways, stairways, and corridors.

- Mark access points, staging areas, loading areas, and other areas of congestion to provide for social distancing of at least 6 feet, including floor markers for distance, and marking lane lines and adjacent areas where workers may be congregating or waiting.

2. Worksite access

Requirements

- Limit access into the facility to required workers, subcontractors and their workers, delivery workers, and visitors who have appointments.

  - Ensure that perimeters allow facility access to be effectively monitored and controlled.

- Ensure that multiple workers, customers, and visitors congregating and waiting for access and/or entry have ample space for social distancing.

- Refuse entry to workers, customers, and visitors if there is any suspicion that they are sick or symptomatic and advise them to leave the business.


3. Personal protective equipment

Requirements

- Ensure workers are provided with and wear personal protective equipment that is necessary to perform regular job duties (e.g., safety glasses, goggles, face shields, hard-hats, aprons, gloves, foot protection).

  - If temperature screening is performed, and temperature-screeners must be within 6-feet of workers, temperature screeners must be provided with and wear appropriate personal protective equipment. At minimum, screeners must wear gloves, eye protection (goggles or disposable face shield that fully covers the front and sides of the face), and face covering. Ensure a gown is added if extensive contact with an employee is anticipated. If a filtering facepiece respirators, such as N95s, are required, then they must be used in conjunction with an established respiratory protection program that includes medical evaluation, fit testing, and training, in accordance with OSHA’s Respiratory Protection Standard (See 29 CFR 1910.134).

- Workers must be trained on the purpose and limitations of personal protective equipment, as well as how to properly use, put on, take off, and dispose of all personal protective equipment.
Workers must be provided with the necessary personal protective equipment and training at no cost.


4. Temporary Labor Camps and Housing

Please see the COVID-19 Universal Plan Guidance for all Businesses and Other Entities found on the Stay Safe Guidance for all Business Entities (https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/all-businesses.jsp).

5. Shared Transportation

Please see the COVID-19 Universal Plan Guidance for all Businesses and Other Entities found on the Stay Safe Guidance for all Business Entities (https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/all-businesses.jsp).