COVID-19 Preparedness Plan
Guidance: Requirements for Meatpacking Businesses

04/15/2021

Executive Order (EO) 21-11 began Saturday, March 13 at 12:00 p.m. (noon) and does not have an end date. Effective Wednesday, March 31, 2021 at 11:59 p.m., larger venues, restaurants, gyms and pools will be able to expand their occupancy per the Stay Safe Guidance. Effective Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at 11:59 p.m., the requirement to work from home shifts to a strong recommendation.

For guidance related to meatpacking businesses refer to the Stay Safe Guidance for Food and Agriculture Businesses (staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/food-agriculture.jsp).

The Stay Safe MN website may be updated with Frequently Asked Questions about the Governor’s Executive Orders and related industry guidance. These Frequently Asked Questions may also include clarifications to the requirements and recommendations in Executive Orders and guidance. See Frequently Asked Questions about Stay Safe MN (mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/stay-safe-mn/faq.jsp) or Stay Safe Guidance for Businesses and Organizations (staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/index.jsp).

Updates to this document include changing “work from home” requirement to strong recommendation and including requirement for providing reasonable accommodations to workers (See Page 2).

Requirements under Executive Order (EO) 21-11

The full executive order (EO) with all requirements can be found at Executive Orders from Governor Walz (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, except as amended by EO 21-11. In addition, Executive Order 20-81 allows industry guidance to establish additional face covering requirements for each sector, businesses
must comply with additional face covering requirements set forth in this document and other applicable industry guidance. See Face Covering Requirements and Recommendations under Executive Order 20-81 (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.** Effective April 15, 2021, working from home is strongly recommended, and businesses are strongly encouraged to allow employees to work from home when possible. Employers must provide reasonable accommodations as required under existing federal and state law. Employers are strongly encouraged to provide reasonable accommodations to employees with one or more members of their household who have underlying medical conditions and who are unable to be vaccinated.

- **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 (mn.gov/governor/news/executiveorders.jsp). Please review the guidance below for industry-specific requirements and applicable COVID-19 Preparedness Plan Guidance Requirements.

For the duration of EO 21-11, meatpacking sectors must operate under the following provisions:

- Ensure the protections implemented for their workers are outlined in a written COVID-19 Preparedness Plan, which addresses the businesses industry-specific requirements below.
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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.

Prevent the spread of COVID-19

The requirements and recommendations in Preparedness Plans will help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and are based on the core principles below. Following the requirements and recommendations will reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 but will not eliminate it. COVID-19 is primarily spread through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. Anytime people gather, the risk of spreading COVID-19 increases for everyone.

The best way to reduce your risk of getting sick from or spreading COVID-19 is to:

- wear a face covering,
- keep at least 6 feet of physical distance from people not in the same household,
- people who are sick or exposed to someone with COVID-19 must stay home, and
- wash hands often.

COVID-19 vaccine is being administered across Minnesota. Get vaccinated when it is your turn. Even after a person has recovered from COVID-19 or is fully vaccinated they should still continue to stay distanced, wear a mask that fits well, wash their hands often, and follow other precautions. For more information, see the MDH COVID-19 Vaccine webpage (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/vaccine/index.html).

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 EOs, are legally required to develop and implement COVID-19 Preparedness Plans (also referred to as “Plan” or “Plans”). Under the EOs, 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 21-11 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 21-11,
- The requirements included in the Requirements for All Businesses and Other Entities found at Stay Safe Guidance for All Business Entities (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 (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 (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
COVID-19 MEATPACKING BUSINESSES

Ensure that social distancing is maintained in all work areas, including at workstations, production 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.
- Businesses must follow the operational guidance for retail businesses for any retail aspect. See Stay Safe Guidance for Retail Businesses (staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/retail.jsp).

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 (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 (staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/all-businesses.jsp).