

# Preparedness Plan Requirements Guidance – Grocery and Convenience Stores

UPDATED JULY 29, 2020

Businesses involving grocery stores and convenience stores include, but are not limited to, grocery stores, supermarkets, retail food-outlets, pharmacies, wholesale clubs, convenience stores, liquor stores, and gas-stations.

As required by executive orders issued by Gov. Tim Walz under the Peacetime Emergency, all businesses must develop and implement COVID-19 Preparedness Plans that addresses the hazards of COVID-19 transmission. Unless clearly indicated that an action included in the guidance is recommended, businesses should understand that the action is required if applicable to their business. In instances where the guidance uses language “to the extent possible,” the action is required but only to the extent it is possible for the business to implement the requirement.

- ✓ Businesses must address all the guidance requirements applicable to their operations in their COVID-19 Preparedness Plans and as set out in each of the components below.
- ✓ Businesses must assign a designated Plan administrator to ensure the Plan is evaluated, monitored, executed, and updated.
- ✓ Businesses must ensure the plan is posted at all the business’s worksites in readily accessible locations (or is distributed to workers electronically) to allow for the plan to be readily reviewed by all workers, as required.

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## Worker protections and protocols for all workplaces

For the purposes of this guidance, a “worker” includes all persons performing work for the business. All persons, including employees, subcontractors, independent contractors, associates, team members, vendors, delivery-personnel, contract, temporary, part-time and seasonal workers, however categorized, who are performing work at the workplace or performing work for the business, are required to be included in the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. All workers must be properly trained on and adhere to the business’s policies, protocols, and practices as outlined within this guidance.

### ENSURE SICK WORKERS STAY HOME

1. Establish health screening protocols for workers at the start of each shift (e.g. health screening survey, taking temperature). A health screening must be conducted for each business’s workers upon arrival and check-in at work. See the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)’s [Visitor and Employee Health Screening Checklist](#) ([www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf)). The checklist is also available

in Hmong, Somali, and Spanish on the [Businesses and Employers: COVID-19 web page \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html).

2. Workers must be stopped from entering the business if their responses to the health screening indicates they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or have tested positive for COVID-19 and they should be sent home immediately. If workers begin experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 while at work, they must also be sent home immediately. If workers cannot be sent home immediately, they must be isolated in a closed room or remote area of the worksite until they can be sent home.
3. Establish a protocol for workers to report, whether at home or at work, when they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, have tested positive for COVID-19 or have been in close contact with a person with COVID-19 symptoms or who has tested positive for COVID-19 and a return-to-work protocol for workers who are required to isolate or quarantine, following MDH guidance for [COVID-19 and When to return to work \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/returntowork.pdf\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/returntowork.pdf)
  - Workers who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, have tested positive for COVID-19 or have been in close contact with a person with COVID-19 symptoms or who has tested positive for COVID-19 must be instructed not to report to work until their isolation or quarantine period is completed.
4. Establish a protocol for identifying and communicating with workers who may have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 symptoms or who has tested positive for COVID-19 while at work. See Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [General Business Frequently Asked Questions \(http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html) and [CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers Responding to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\), May 2020 www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html).
  - If a worker is confirmed to have COVID-19, the protocol must include informing the business's other workers who have been in close contact with the infected worker, as well as their respective employers (where applicable), of the possible exposure to COVID-19 while at work. An individual must be designated to gather information from workers who may be sick with COVID-19 and to engage in needed communications, while ensuring the privacy of infected workers is maintained in accordance with [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission \(EEOC\) guidance \(www.eeoc.gov/transcript-march-27-2020-outreach-webinar\)](http://www.eeoc.gov/transcript-march-27-2020-outreach-webinar).
5. Establish protocols for workers to return to work, and follow MDH Guidance. [COVID-19 and When to return to work \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/returntowork.pdf\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/returntowork.pdf).
6. Provide accommodations for "high risk" and vulnerable populations. See CDC's People Who are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness ([People Who are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html)). Vulnerable workers should be encouraged to self-identify, and employers should avoid making unnecessary medical inquiries. Employers should take particular care to reduce these workers' risk of exposure.
7. Evaluate and adjust sick leave policies to reflect the need for isolation and incentivize workers who are sick to stay home. Clearly communicate sick leave policies to all workers.

## SOCIAL DISTANCING – WORKERS MUST BE AT LEAST SIX FEET APART

1. Maximize remote working: Workers who are able to work from home must work from home.
2. Stagger shifts and breaks; extend work hours and create additional shifts to reduce number of workers per shift to prevent congregating in changing rooms, entrance areas, transport areas, health screening areas, and timeclock areas.
3. Evaluate traffic patterns and “bottle-necks” to reduce crowding at entrances, in hallways, elevators, waiting areas, break areas, locker-areas, restrooms, access points, etc.:
  - Designate one way entrances and exits that facilitate six-foot distancing.
  - If time clocks are in use, consider alternatives such as phone-based apps, web-based apps or cameras to clock workers in and out.
  - Mark out six-foot distances or circles for workers to stand in while they wait to punch in, to conduct health assessments, to perform handwashing, waiting for transportation and in other areas where workers would normally congregate.
4. Avoid having workers facing each other at workstations.
5. Implement cohorting where possible. Have the same 10 workers or less work in the same area on the same shifts.
6. 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 table and chairs in break areas so they are at least six feet apart and install barriers where necessary.
  - Remove seating where you do not want workers to congregate.
  - Provide additional trash-receptacles to ensure trash is readily disposed of. Relocate trash-receptacles to minimize workers having to travel longer distances and through areas of congestion. Ensure that trash-receptacles are emptied regularly.
7. Limit numbers in restrooms or at handwashing facilities. Consider adding hand-washing facilities if necessary.
8. Ensure physical distancing in work areas, including at workstations, corridors, concession areas, production lines, cafeterias, break rooms, etc.
  - Isolate workers to certain areas of the facility (zones).
  - **Roving Workers:** Ensure social distancing is maintained while workers are engaged in “roving” activities (e.g. janitorial, security, customer service, stocking). Where activities must be performed while customers, clients, and visitors are present, workers must ensure social distancing is maintained (e.g. working in less congested areas, low-peak periods, using stanchions, placement of carts).
  - **Custodial/Janitorial:** Refer to additional guidance specific for “Janitorial and Custodial Services” for workers performing janitorial, custodial, housekeeping, and other cleaning and maintenance services.

## GROCERY AND CONVENIENCE STORES

9. Move workstations to promote social distancing. Install plexiglass barriers or stretched plastic on a frame made of non-porous material to provide a protection barrier between workers where social distancing cannot be implemented.
10. Make a six-foot line in front of desk that are used by workers.
11. Limit worker interaction across worksites unless at least six-foot distance is maintained.
  - Use walkie talkies or headphones so workers can communicate from a distance.
12. Pre-plan maintenance activities to minimize having other workers in the area.
13. Ensure there is at least six feet between participants during meetings and trainings or conduct virtual meetings. It is recommended that there are 10 people or less in a meeting.
14. Schedule virtual meetings whenever possible to avoid non-critical business travel.
15. Have in-person meetings only, if it is critical to business operations.
  - Before the meeting, send participants a summary of COVID-19 safeguards being employed.
  - At the start of the meeting, provide a verbal reminder about what is expected.
  - Arrange chairs so participants are at least six feet apart.
  - Use the largest meeting room available.
  - Limit the number of participants to 10 or fewer.
  - Open windows and doors whenever possible to make sure the business is well ventilated.

## WORKER HYGIENE AND SOURCE CONTROLS

1. Ensure workers regularly wash their hands. Ensure handwashing and/or hand-sanitizer facilities are readily available and appropriately stocked.
2. Require and allow workers sufficient time to wash their hands frequently, including arrival and departure from the workplace, before and after using the restroom, before eating and drinking, and after touching surfaces that may be contaminated.
3. Require workers to wear a face covering as required by Executive Order. As of July 25, 2020, per the Governor's Executive Order 20-81, people in Minnesota will be required to wear a face covering in all indoor businesses and public indoor spaces. Additionally, the Executive Order requires workers to wear face coverings when working in outdoor settings in situations where social distancing (*i.e.*, keeping at least 6 feet of physical distance from other individuals not in the same household) cannot be maintained. This Executive Order also requires workers, customers, or visitors to wear a face covering when a business has opted impose stricter face covering requirements than the Executive Order or when the applicable industry guidance requires wearing a face covering.

This Executive Order includes exemptions for people who are unable to wear or tolerate a face covering due to medical or mental health condition or other reasons—such as when wearing a face covering would create a job hazard. There are also situations in which a face covering may be temporarily removed. More information about face covering requirements and exemptions is available on the MDH website at [Facemasks and Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) Webpage](#)

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html#masks>). You can also visit these webpages: [Face Covering Requirements and Recommendations under Executive Order 20-81](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecover.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecover.html>) and Frequently Asked Questions About the Requirement to Wear Face Coverings (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecoverfaq.html>)

- Workers should maintain an adequate number of face-coverings during their shift to change face-coverings as they become saturated, dirty, or compromised.
  - Launder reusable face coverings before each daily use according to CDC guidelines [Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html) ([www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html)).
4. Provide protective supplies when required, including non-medical source-control face coverings, gloves, disinfectant, guards and shields to protect workers against the transmission of COVID-19 while they are working.
  5. Do not discriminate or retaliate in any way against any worker for wearing face-coverings or personal protective equipment, in accordance with Executive Order 20-54.
  6. Post “hand-washing” and “cover your cough” signs.
  7. Ensure supplies in restrooms are regularly monitored and continuously stocked.
  8. Doors to multi-stall restrooms should be able to be opened and closed without touching the handles, opening-devices or powered door-operators with the hand, whenever possible. If the door cannot be opened without touching the handle or door-operator with the hand, the business must ensure a trash-receptacle is placed by the door to ensure a paper towel can be readily disposed of when operating the door. The location and positioning of waste-receptacles should not interfere with life safety requirements (e.g. egress, evacuation, emergency equipment) or any reasonable accommodations provided under the Americans with Disabilities Act.
  9. Community drinking stations and water-fountains must not be available or used unless protocols are implemented to ensure frequent sanitation between users. Touchless water-filling stations may still be provided.
  10. Provide tissues for proper cough or sneeze etiquette and no-touch disposal bins.
  11. Ensure workers are laundering work apparel daily. Advise workers to launder according to clothing and detergent instructions.

## WORKPLACE BUILDING AND VENTILATION PROTOCOLS

**General Building Conditions:** Businesses must assess the status and capacities of the utility-systems within the building (e.g. ventilation, water-supply, sewer, gas), as well as potential issues associated with vermin, molds, and mildew, prior to putting the building into an operational status.

1. Follow established protocols for starting mechanical, electrical, plumbing, life-safety, and other systems after non-use according to the authorities having jurisdiction.
2. Assess the building for indications of pest and vermin infestation and consult a pest-control professional as appropriate.

3. See CDC's [Guidance for Reopening Buildings After Prolonged Shutdown or Reduced Operation \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html).

**Ventilation System Start-up:** Businesses must evaluate the operational capacity and increase, improve and maintain ventilation provided throughout the building.

1. Increase the outdoor air-percentage to increase dilution of contaminants, and eliminate recirculating, whenever possible, while maintaining indoor air-conditions.
2. For heating-ventilation-air-conditioning systems that recirculate air, businesses need to improve central-air filtration to at least the MERV-13 or the highest compatible with the filter rack (at least MERV-14 preferred) and seal the edges of filters to further limit by-pass around the filters.
3. Replace and upgrade air filters prior to re-occupancy.
4. Run systems on full economizer as outside air-conditions allow.
5. Consult an HVAC professional to ensure proper ventilation is maintained.

**Day-to-Day Operations:** Once systems are in a safe operational status, businesses should ensure the following practices and protocols are maintained:

1. Continuously maximize fresh-air into the workplace and eliminate air recirculation.
2. Maintain relative humidity levels of RH 40-60%.
3. Keep systems running longer hours (24/7 if possible) to enhance the ability to filter contaminants out of the air.
4. Add a flush cycle to the controls of the HVAC system and run HVAC systems for two-hours before and after occupancy.
5. Check and rebalance the HVAC system to provide negative air-pressure whenever possible.
6. Supplement ventilation-system with the use of portable HEPA filter units whenever possible.
7. Minimize airflow from blowing across people and avoid having fans blow air from one worker onto another.
8. Consult an HVAC professional or the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers to ensure proper ventilation is provided and ventilation-systems are properly maintained. See [ASHRAE's COVID-19 Preparedness Resources \(www.ashrae.org/technical-resources/resources\)](https://www.ashrae.org/technical-resources/resources).

## **WORKPLACE CLEANING AND DISINFECTION PROTOCOLS**

1. Establish a documented sanitation schedule and checklist, identifying surfaces/equipment to be sanitized, the agent to be used, and the frequency at which sanitation occurs.
2. Routinely clean and disinfect all areas, such as offices, restrooms, locker and changing rooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment, machinery, tools, controls, etc.
3. Frequently clean and disinfect all high-touch items, such as doorknobs, countertops, barriers, railings, handles, and other surfaces.

4. Clean and disinfect work-vehicles in-between the use of each worker or work-crew, before and after each use.
5. Electronic devices (e.g. light-switches, circuit-breakers) should not be cleaned and disinfected with a liquid agent. Consider covering switches/devices with a poly-covering that allows the user to manipulate the device without touching the switch, and change out the poly-covering frequently. Electronic devices must be sanitized only when disconnected from the power-source, and sanitized in accordance with the listing/labeling requirements.
6. Personal equipment, tools and phones should not be shared or, if shared, should be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
7. Avoid sharing of tools, writing utensils, keyboards, control buttons, scanners. Any shared items need to be disinfected before and after each use.
8. Designate an area for isolating workers who show symptoms of COVID-19 infection, such as a wellness area, isolated first aid station or other area where access can be restricted.
9. Perform enhanced cleaning and disinfection after people suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 have been in the facility. See CDC's [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html).
  - Close off areas visited by the ill person(s).
  - Increase ventilation in the areas visited by the ill person(s) including opening outside doors and windows in the area.
  - Wait 24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
  - Clean and disinfect all areas that may have been accessed or touched by the ill person(s), including IT equipment, such as computers, keyboard, computer mice, etc.; other commonly touched surfaces; offices, break rooms, restrooms; and vending machines or ATMs.
10. Establish communication protocols and steps to take when workers have been exposed to COVID-19 at the worksite. If a worker is confirmed to have COVID-19, inform fellow workers of their possible exposure to COVID-19 at the worksite while maintaining confidentiality as required ([General Business Frequently Asked Questions \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html)).
11. Select appropriate and ensure the needed supply of disinfectants – consider effectiveness and safety. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) List N has identified a list of products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2. See EPA's [List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 \(www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2\)](http://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2).
12. Review product labels and safety data sheets, follow manufacturer specifications and use required personal protective equipment for the product.

## **DROP-OFF, PICK-UP AND DELIVERY PRACTICES AND PROTOCOL**

1. Receive deliveries via a contactless method whenever you can.
2. Businesses must provide for contactless deliveries that promote for delivery at a doorstep, where persons maintain a distance at least six feet away while verifying receipt of the delivery between the

worker and the delivery person. Whenever possible, businesses should attempt to do everything electronically (e.g. app, phone) to eliminate the need for close contact between workers and delivery personnel.

3. Ensure equipment, materials, products, and items are being delivered, dropped off or picked up are prescheduled and coordinated. Deliveries, drop-offs, or pick-ups must be performed one load, carrier, or vehicle at a time, and multiple deliveries, drop-offs, or pick-ups should not be performed simultaneously. Delivery personnel must wait in their vehicles if another delivery, drop-off or pick-up is being performed.
4. Workers must maintain a distance six feet or greater from others during interactions while receiving or exchanging deliveries.
5. Workers must minimize the unnecessary exchanging or sharing of scanners, pens, or other tools with delivery personnel.

## COMMUNICATIONS AND TRAINING PRACTICES AND PROTOCOL

1. All workers and members of management must be trained regarding COVID-19 exposure, as well as applicable policies, procedures, practices, and protocols. The training must be provided by and paid for by the business. The training must be provided in a manner and language that each worker can understand and must be adjusted to reasonably accommodate all limiting factors present. See ["OSHA's Resource for Development and Delivery of Training to Workers"](https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3824.pdf) ([osha.gov/Publications/osha3824.pdf](https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3824.pdf)). See also Minnesota's ["Small Assemblies for Testing and Training"](https://dli.mn.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/COVID-19_training_facilities.pdf) for guidance with facilitating training for employees while addressing COVID-19 implications ([dli.mn.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/COVID-19\\_training\\_facilities.pdf](https://dli.mn.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/COVID-19_training_facilities.pdf)).
2. Businesses must ensure the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan is posted at all the business's workplaces in readily accessible locations and is shared with and reviewed by all workers.
3. Businesses must ensure the necessary or required rules and practices are communicated to all workers, and adequately enforce their provisions.
4. Businesses must ensure the necessary or required protocols and practices are communicated to all workers, including temporary, part-time, seasonal and contract workers, and ensure protocols and practices are similarly required by businesses providing temporary, part-time, seasonal and contract workers.
5. Ensure all workers, including temporary, part-time, seasonal and contract workers, are provided with and using personal protective equipment necessary to perform their work.
6. Workers must ensure they comply with and follow established rules and practices.
7. Maintain signage reminding all workers of protections and protocols, including social-distancing, hand-washing, and respiratory-etiquette.

## Helping clients, customers, and visitors minimize transmission



## Requirements

1. Post signage at the entry into the business, and provide additional messaging (e.g. web-sites, advertisements, marketing), that if customers/clients do not feel well or have any symptoms compatible with COVID-19, they must refrain from coming to the business and are strongly encouraged to stay home. They must also refrain from coming to the business, and are encouraged to stay home, if they have a household member experiencing symptoms compatible with COVID-19. Refer to CDC's [What to Do if You are Sick or Caring for Someone Who is Sick](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html) ([www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html)).
2. If customers, clients, or visitors begin to feel unwell while in the business, they must leave immediately. If a customer, client, or visitor is a member of a household group at the business, the household group must also leave. See CDC's [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers Responding to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\), May 2020](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html) ([www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html)).
3. Advise customers, clients, and visitors to wash and/or sanitize their hands upon entering the business, and to regularly wash and/or sanitize their hands while at the business.
4. Require patrons and visitors wear a face covering, when required by Executive Order 20-81. More information about face covering requirements and exemptions is available on the MDH website at [Facemasks and Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) Webpage](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html#masks) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html#masks>). You can also visit these webpages: [Face Covering Requirements and Recommendations under Executive Order 20-81](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecover.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecover.html>) and [Frequently Asked Questions About the Requirement to Wear Face Coverings](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecoverfaq.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecoverfaq.html>). Cloth face coverings are NOT a substitute for maintaining a physical distance of 6-feet from other people. For additional information about cloth face covering and how to make, wear and wash them, refer to CDC [guidance on cloth face coverings](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html) ([www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html)).
5. Make sure each piece of equipment (e.g. terminals, carts, touch-screens) is wiped down before and after each use by a customer, client or visitor, and dispose of the wipe accordingly.

## Recommendations

1. Limit the number of persons accompanying the customer/client while in the business and/or at the time services are being provided.
2. Limit the equipment, products, or items touched by the customer, client, and visitors while in business.
3. Advise and encourage customers, clients, and visitors to conduct a self-check of their body temperature the day of their appointment and/or prior to arriving to the business.
4. Unless otherwise required by other sector-specific guidance (See "Personal Care Services"), encourage customers/clients to review a screening survey that checks for COVID-19 symptoms, close contacts with confirmed cases and quarantined cases, and out of state travel. The questions would be the same as those completed by workers. MDH's [Visitor and Employee Health Screening Checklist](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf) ([www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf)).

5. Post signage at the entry into the business and provide additional messaging (e.g. web-sites, advertisements, marketing) advising customers, clients, and visitors of “high risk” for severe COVID-19 infection to strongly consider postponing the service or refraining from coming to the business. Persons who may be at higher risk for severe illness should consider delaying seeking or providing these services. (See [People Who Are at Increased Risk for Severe Illness \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html)).

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## Additional protections and protocols

### ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL FOR THE USE OF FACE COVERINGS

1. Evaluate work activities to ensure social distancing can be maintained, and identify those activities where social distancing is difficult to maintain to determine if they can be done in an alternative way. Implement additional protections and protocol for workers if social distancing cannot be maintained (e.g. barriers, partitions, face-coverings). Work activities must not be performed if adequate protective measures cannot be implemented.
2. Workers must wear a face covering that covers their mouth and nose in accordance with Executive Order 20-81. This Executive Order requires everyone—including workers—to wear a face covering in indoor businesses and indoor public spaces. Additionally, the Executive Order requires workers to wear face coverings when working in outdoor settings in situations where social distancing (*i.e.*, keeping at least 6 feet of physical distance from other individuals not in the same household) cannot be maintained. This Executive Order includes exemptions for people who are unable to wear or tolerate a face covering due to medical or mental health condition or other reasons—such as when wearing a face covering would create a job hazard. There are also situations in which a face covering may be temporarily removed. More information about face covering requirements and exemptions is available on the MDH website at [Facemasks and Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) Webpage \(health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html#masks\)](https://health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html#masks).
3. Instruct workers to:
  - Maintain an adequate number of face-coverings during their shift or work-day that allows the worker to exchange face-coverings as they become saturated, dirty, or compromised during use.
  - Launder reusable face coverings before each daily use according to CDC guidelines at [Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19 \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html).
4. Businesses must take reasonable steps to ensure that workers, customers, clients and visitors wear face coverings in accordance with Executive Order 20-81, and conspicuously post face covering policies for workers, customers, clients and visitors. Cloth face coverings are NOT a substitute for maintaining a physical distance of 6-feet from other people.
5. Ensure all persons, including customers, clients, and visitors bring their own face coverings, or offer face coverings for use.
6. Establish a protocol for accommodating workers who cannot wear a face covering due to a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability. Businesses must comply with applicable law, including civil rights laws, relating to verification of a worker’s disability or medical condition.

- If a worker is unable to use a face covering due to a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability, then the business must engage with the worker to identify and implement alternative protections as to ensure the worker, as well as other customers, visitors, and workers, maintain a similar level of protection (e.g. face-shields, isolating the worker, job-reassignment).
7. Establish protocols for addressing instances where the use of a face-covering may present a hazard to the worker, and identifying and implementing alternatives to minimize the risk to the worker. However, the business must work to identify and implement alternative protections as to ensure the worker, as well as customers, visitors, and other workers, maintain a similar level of protection whenever possible.
- For environments involving extreme temperatures (e.g. heat, cold) and/or wet environments (e.g. wet processes, rain), face shields may be considered to be used in lieu of face-coverings
  - For work-activities that may present a risk of entanglement, businesses must ensure the machine/tool is properly guarded as to eliminate the risk of the face-covering becoming entangled into the machine/tool, and that the selection and use of the face-covering protects the worker from the risk of entanglement (e.g. using ear-loops instead of tie-backs).
  - For work-activities that may present a risk of hazardous chemicals becoming absorbed and/or saturated within the materials of face-covering, the use of engineering controls (e.g. ventilation), administrative controls (e.g. work-practices), or personal protective equipment (e.g. respiratory protection) must be considered and implemented whenever possible.
8. Establish a protocol for accommodating customers, clients and visitors who cannot wear a face covering due to a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability. Businesses may not require customers to provide proof of a medical condition mental health condition, or disability, or require customers to explain the nature of their conditions or disability.
9. Establish a protocol for customers, clients and visitors who refuse to wear a face covering where wearing a face covering is required. Businesses may refuse entry or services to customers, clients, or visitors who refuse to wear a face covering when required by Executive Order 20-81 or when otherwise required by the business even if not required by the Executive Order. Refer to the documents and information available at [Facemasks and Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) \(health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html#masks\)](https://health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html#masks) for more information about what a business may or may not do to enforce face covering requirement.

## **ADDITIONAL PROTECTIONS AND PROTOCOL FOR MANAGING ACCESS AND OCCUPANCY**

1. To meet social distancing requirements in accordance with applicable Executive Orders, businesses may be required to reduce occupant capacity to ensure proper social distancing.
2. Control the flow of traffic into the establishment by ensuring that maximum capacity plans are adjusted and managed at the front door.
  - Place posters that encourage [staying home when sick, cough and sneeze etiquette](#) and good [hand hygiene](#) at entrances and throughout the workplace where they are likely to be seen. See CDCs Educational Materials ([CDCs Educational Materials](#))

<https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/tools-resources/educational-materials.html>

- Post signage in breakrooms and restrooms.
  - Use verbal announcements on the loudspeaker to remind patrons and workers to maintain six-foot distance.
3. Institute one-way movement through aisles using floor markers.
  4. Provide special store hours for seniors and vulnerable guests.
  5. Provide remote shopping alternatives for customers and set up designated pick-up area.
  6. Discourage customers from congregating.
  7. After check-out – customers will be directed to leave through a different door than they entered to lessen the potential of people passing closely to each other.

## **ADDITIONAL PROTECTIONS AND PROTOCOL FOR STAFFING**

1. Implement cohorting where possible. Have the same 10 workers or less work in the same area on the same shifts.
2. Reduce store hours to allow for proper cleaning and stocking.
3. Schedule as much stocking and deep cleaning as possible during hours the business is not open for customers.
4. If a 24-hour store, stock during the slowest period of the night.
5. Have a designated employee at all times to continuously clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces on a significantly increased schedule.

## **ADDITIONAL PROTECTIONS AND PROTOCOL FOR WORKERS AND CASHIERS**

1. Limit number of employees restocking on the floor during busy times
  - Stock off-peak or after hours.
2. Separate cashiers by not opening all registers.
  - Open every other register.
3. Install plexiglass guards or partitions at any customer worker interaction point including:
  - Checkout lanes
  - Customer service desks
  - Pharmacy
4. Move the electronic payment terminal or credit card reader away from the cashier to increase the distance between the customer and the cashier.
5. Mark six-foot distance from cashier so that customers do not crowd.

6. Use floor decals, colored tape markings, and signs to designate where customers should stand.
7. Institute no touch payment methods and practices (e.g. for credit cards, reward cards and mobile devices).
8. When cash is exchanged:
  - Have customers place cash on the counter rather than directly into your hand.
  - Place money directly on the counter when providing change back to customers.
  - Do not touch your face afterward after cash exchange.
  - Wash or sanitize hands after cash exchange.
  - Wipe counter between each customer at checkout.

## **ADDITIONAL PROTECTIONS AND PROTOCOL FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTION**

1. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as displays, shelving and reach-in refrigerator units nightly when closed to the public.
2. Frequently clean workstations, cash registers, payment terminals, door handles, tables, carts, baskets and countertops.
3. Clean employee break rooms, rest rooms and other common areas.
4. Provide disposable disinfectant wipes, cleaner, or spray so employees can wipe down frequently touched surfaces such as workstations, cash registers, credit card touch pad, door handles, conveyor belts, tables, cart handles, and countertops.
5. For bodily fluid events (e.g. vomiting or diarrhea) isolate the area of potential contamination, provide appropriate personal protective equipment to workers for clean-up and sanitize the area.

## **ADDITIONAL PROTECTIONS AND PROTOCOL FOR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**

1. Reusable bags may be used if the customer packs their own bags and six-feet of separation can be maintained with the cashier.
  - Sanitize the area after a reusable bag has been used.
2. Self-service food and beverage areas are allowed so long as the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan addresses worker and customer protections including ensuring the self-service area is monitored, social distancing is maintained, hands are being sanitized, and customers are wearing face coverings in the self-service area. Best practice would be to prepackage food ahead of time as much as possible. Refer to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture guidance [Customers Best Practices For Reusable Bags and Food Takeout Containers \(www.mda.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/inline-files/COVID-19%20Reusable%20Bags-Takeout%20Containers%20BPs%20Mar%202020.pdf\)](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/inline-files/COVID-19%20Reusable%20Bags-Takeout%20Containers%20BPs%20Mar%202020.pdf).
3. Food samples are allowed as long as the food is covered or shielded according to the Minnesota Food Code, samples are pre-portioned, the sample area is monitored by a worker to maintain social

distancing and discourage congregating, the worker is protected by social distancing and/or the use of barriers and adequate trash receptacles are provided to dispose of waste.

## **ADDITIONAL PROTECTIONS AND PROTOCOL FOR PERIMETER DEPARTMENTS (e.g. BAKERY COUNTER, DELI COUNTER, MEAT COUNTER, SEAFOOD DEPT., COFFEE BAR)**

1. Ensure workers regularly wash their hands. Ensure handwashing and/or hand-sanitizer facilities are readily available and appropriately stocked.
2. Provide protective equipment and supplies, such as source control face coverings, face-shields, gloves, hand-sanitizer, disinfectants, and provide training when required and on proper use.
3. Maintain utensils behind the counter (e.g. napkins, straws, forks), and provide according to order.
4. Provide for individually wrapped products (e.g. condiments).
5. Ensure self-service beverage machines and counters are sanitized frequently.
6. Continue to follow safety guidelines as provided by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.
7. For instore consumption refer to Minnesota’s “Industry Guidance for Safely Reopening: Restaurants & Bars” (“[Industry Guidance for Safely Reopening: Restaurants & Bars](https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/restaurants-bars.jsp)” (<https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/restaurants-bars.jsp>) for additional guidance involving food-service.

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## **Appendix A – Guidance for developing a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan**

### **General**

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\): Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV)

[Minnesota Department of Health \(MDH\): Coronavirus – www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus)

[State of Minnesota: COVID-19 response – https://mn.gov/covid19](https://mn.gov/covid19)

### **Businesses**

[CDC: Resources for businesses and employers – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html)

[CDC: General business frequently asked questions – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html)

[CDC: Building/business ventilation – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html)

[MDH: \[Businesses and Employers: COVID-19 \\(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html\\)\]\(http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html)

MDH: [Health screening checklist –  
www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf](#)

MDH: [Materials for businesses and employers –  
www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/materials](#)

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED): COVID-19 information and resources – [mn.gov/deed/newscenter/covid/](#)

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI): Updates related to COVID-19 – [www.dli.mn.gov/updates](#)

Federal OSHA – [www.osha.gov](#)

AIHA Back to Work Safely – [www.backtoworksafely.org/](#)

## Handwashing

MDH: [Handwashing video translated into multiple languages –  
www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdQuPGVcceg](#)

## Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html](#)

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing\\_sneezing.html](#)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html](#)

## Social distancing

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html](#)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html](#)

## Housekeeping

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html](#)

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html](#)

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html](#)

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): [www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2](#)

## Employees exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html](#)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html](#)

[MDH: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf)

[MDH: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/returntowork.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/returntowork.pdf)

[State of Minnesota – https://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/if-sick/get-tested/index.jsp](https://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/if-sick/get-tested/index.jsp)

## **Training**

[CDC: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html)

[Federal OSHA: www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf)

[MDH: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/about.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/about.pdf)

