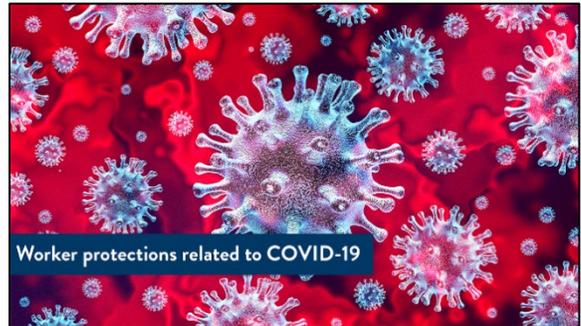


COVID-19: Protecting bait shop workers and customers

The Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) requires all employers to develop a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan to protect workers from exposure to the virus. This follows Gov. Tim Walz's Executive Orders [20-74](#) and [20-81](#) (see <https://mn.gov/governor/news/executiveorders.jsp>).

As provided in guidelines from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)), the Minnesota Department of Health ([MDH](#)) and [Stay Safe Minnesota](#), employers must ensure: social distancing for employees and customers; the use of face coverings for employees and customers; frequent and adequate handwashing; regular cleaning and disinfection of workplaces; and sick employees are encouraged to stay home. Employers must also provide basic workplace hazard education about coronavirus and how to prevent transmission, in languages best understood by employees.



Plan for effective hand hygiene, cleaning and sanitizing

- Install hand-sanitizing dispensers and disinfecting wipes at key locations for customers and workers to use.
- Require workers – and allow them the time – to wash their hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, in particular: when they arrive and depart from work; before and after they use the restroom; before eating, drinking or using tobacco; when they leave their workstation; after handling equipment or tools that may be used by others; and after handling money.
- Routinely clean and sanitize: bait containers used for transferring live bait; cash registers; credit card keypads; and other commonly touched equipment. Minimize handling money and use hand sanitizer afterward. Consider the use of gloves, such as when routine handling of money is necessary.
- Wipe down delivered stock items with sanitizer, when practical. Use gloves when handling and opening bulk containers of stock items that cannot be sanitized.
- Set up a schedule to keep handwashing supplies well stocked, handwashing areas clean and trash emptied.

Plan for effective social distancing

- Require all workers to stay at least six feet away from customers and coworkers. Require the use of and provide face coverings for those working indoors and those who are unable to social distance while working outdoors. (Review Executive Order [20-81](#) for allowed exemptions to required use of face coverings.)

- To facilitate social distancing, limit the number of customers at store entrances, throughout the store and at checkout lanes. For example: Set a specific number of customers allowed in based on the square footage and configuration of the store to allow for workers and customers to maintain social distancing.
- Mark six-foot increments using colored tape on the floor to ensure social distancing at payment counters, live bait dispensing and other high-traffic areas.
- Post large, printed, attention-getting signs that are readable from a distance (or use portable, electronic signs) to inform customers of the social distancing and hygiene practices the store is implementing.
- Prohibit the shared use of items that are not sanitized between each use.
- Require customers to use face coverings while indoors.

Ensure sick workers are not at work

- Monitor employees for signs of illness before beginning a work shift, including using health status screening and self-checking of temperatures, and require sick workers to stay home or return home if they are experiencing symptoms or have tested positive for COVID-19.
- Relax leave policies and provide paid leave for employees who are sick from or show symptoms of COVID-19 illness.
- Ensure employees know the signs and symptoms of the COVID-19 illness, such as a cough, fever, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, sore throat and muscle pain.

Payment counter considerations

- Consider installing “sneeze shields” at the checkout counter and instruct customers to stand behind them or relocate pay station keypads farther from the workers.
- Provide disposable wipes and hand sanitizer at the payment counter for employee and customer use.

Stocking shelves and cleaning surfaces

- Schedule as much shelf-stocking and deep-cleaning as possible during closing hours. If it is a 24-hour store, stock during the slowest period of the night.
- Pre-plan how stock items will be delivered, implementing a contactless method of drop-off, designating a location for drop-off outside the store.
- Designate a worker (or workers) to continually clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces on an increased schedule. Use the environmental cleaning guidelines set by the CDC (see www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html).
- When disinfecting for coronavirus, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends using the longest recommended contact time and most effective method for the surface. Be sure to follow the label directions for **food contact surfaces** when using a chemical near or on utensils and food contact surfaces.
- Provide for and ensure workers use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), such as gloves and eye or face protection (splash goggles or face shields), when mixing, spraying and wiping with chemical cleaning products.

Other protective measures

- Provide ways for workers to express their concerns about and ideas to improve safety and health.
- Alert store managers or shift supervisors of strategies for handling customers who are not following social-distancing practices, not wearing a face covering or who show signs of illness during their visit. For example, it might be helpful to move a coughing customer to a separate checkout station distant from others, offer the person a face covering or ask the person to leave the store and bring the purchased items outside to the customer.

Educate workers about how to prevent coronavirus transmission

- Teach workers the importance of social distancing, proper handwashing, the use of face coverings, covering coughs and sneezes, and avoidance of touching their nose, mouth or eyes.
- Review business protocols that will be implemented to prevent COVID-19 exposure.
- Teach workers when and how to use face coverings and the proper use of PPE, including proper methods for removing protective gloves, if used (see www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/poster-how-to-remove-gloves.pdf).
- Communicate important safety messages and updates with meetings, signs, electronic postings, apps, etc.
- Post a copy of your COVID-19 Preparedness Plan.

Workplace discrimination is always prohibited

- It is against the law for any employer to take any adverse action against a worker, such as firing or threatening the worker, for exercising their safety and health rights. Such rights include: raising safety and health concerns to their employer; participating in union activities concerning safety and health; filing a safety and health complaint; or participating in a Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) Compliance investigation.

Resources

- DLI: Updates related to COVID-19 – www.dli.mn.gov/updates; this page includes links to a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan template, instructions and guidelines
- Stay Safe Minnesota industry guidance – <https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/index.jsp>
- Stay Safe Minnesota guidance for retail businesses – <https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/retail.jsp>

Get help for your workplace

For a free workplace safety and health consultation, visit Minnesota OSHA Workplace Safety Consultation online at www.dli.mn.gov/business/workplace-safety-and-health/mnosha-wsc-free-site-safety-and-health-consultation-assistance, or contact us at 651-284-5060, 800-657-3776 or osha.consultation@state.mn.us.