

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan Optional Template for DHS Licensed or Certified Residential Services Deemed Critical Businesses during Peacetime Emergency

All businesses in Minnesota are required to have a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan that protects staff, residents and the community you serve. This template is designed to help you create a plan and recognizes the health and safety requirements already required of your program. This template is designed to assist you in meeting the unique needs of your staff and residents during this peacetime emergency.

According to Executive Order 20-48, critical businesses, including providers licensed or certified by the Department of Human Services to deliver residential services, are required to follow guidance from the [Minnesota Department of Health \(MDH\)](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Because there is currently no vaccine for this virus, you will need to operate your program for many months with the possibility that COVID-19 could be confirmed in your program. The MDH/CDC guidance is designed to prevent, mitigate, or respond to the transmission of COVID-19.

[Executive Order 20-74](#), signed by Gov. Walz on June 5, 2020, requires all critical businesses to develop and implement a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan (“**Plan**”) that describes how your business will implement, at a minimum, the following components, in compliance with MDH and CDC guidelines:

1. hygiene and source control;
2. cleaning and disinfecting;
3. screening and policies for staff and volunteers exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19;
4. screening and policies for residents exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19;
5. social distancing;
6. food preparation and meals;
7. ventilation;
8. visitors;
9. transportation;
10. communication and training about the Plan.

You must develop your Plan by June 29, 2020. Providers need to evaluate, monitor, and update their plans if necessary, on a regular basis. The Plan needs to be posted at all of the business’s workplaces in readily accessible locations that will allow for the Plan to be readily reviewed by all workers.

In order to help comply with Executive Order 20-74 requirement to develop a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan, DHS is providing this “COVID-19 Preparedness Plan Optional Template for DHS Licensed Residential Programs” (“Plan”) as a resource for you to use in creating a plan, if you do not already have one. This template should be

used with the [checklist guidelines for creating a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for licensed nonresidential services](#). The use of this particular form is optional. You may create a Plan using your own form but your Plan must address, at a minimum, the ten topics identified below.

You do not need to send the completed plan to DHS for review or approval. However, you will need to:

- notify service recipients about the plan and make it available to them upon request, and if appropriate to their parents, legal guardians, or case workers;
- train staff and volunteers on the plan and ensure they are capable of implementing it; and
- post the plan in a prominent place or make it accessible to staff and volunteers who need to review it.

NOTIFYING AND WORKING WITH MDH:

You are expected to notify MDH when there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in your program by calling 651-297-1304 or 1-800-657-3504 (Mon. – Fri., 8AM-5PM). You are expected to work with MDH and comply with their directive when given.

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN TEMPLATE:

This template should be used with the [checklist guidelines for creating a DHS Licensed Residential Services COVID-19 Preparedness Plan](#). The use of this particular form is optional. You may create your own form or use a plan you have already created, but it must cover the same ten topics.

For each required element of the Plan, there are highlights from the relevant MDH and CDC guidance as it relates to that specific topic; however, we encourage you to review the full guidance with its more detailed information to determine what is most applicable to your setting. The bullet points are followed by a space for you to explain how you are incorporating the guidance into your program within each of the content areas, if you choose to use this form as your Plan. Otherwise, you must ensure your Plan, however it is written, addresses the required element.

1. Hygiene and source controls

- Reinforce handwashing routines, after having been in a public place, prior to and after eating, after using the toilet, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Residents, staff, and visitors should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Ensure handwashing and/or hand-sanitizer facilities are readily available and appropriately stocked including by entrances.
- Provide paper towels and ensure a trash-receptacle is placed by the bathroom door so a paper towel can be readily disposed of when operating the door.

- Post handwashing and “cover your cough” signs.
- Plan for when and how facemasks will be used by residents, staff, and visitors.
- Provide staff with recommended protective supplies, such as facemasks, gloves, disinfectant, eye protection, shields, etc.
- Provide tissues for proper cough/sneeze etiquette and no-touch disposal containers.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Community drinking stations and water-fountains should not be available/used. Touchless water-filling stations may still be provided.
- Prepare for potential symptomatic or COVID-19 positive residents by having appropriate supplies.
- Sinks could be an infection source so residents should avoid placing toothbrushes directly on counter surfaces. Totes can be used for personal items so they do not touch the bathroom countertop.

PLAN FOR HYGIENE AND SOURCE CONTROLS:

Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented at our workplaces at all times. Employees are instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, but especially at the beginning and end of their shift, prior to any mealtimes, after doing personal cares with the people served and after using the restroom. All visitors to the workplace are required to wash or sanitize their hands prior to or immediately upon entering the home. Hand-sanitizer dispensers (that use sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol) are at entrances and locations in the workplace so they can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water, as long as hands are not visibly soiled.

Source controls are being implemented in our residential sites at all times. Meridian Services’ employees are required to wear masks. All staff and people we support have been supplied with masks. If you need a mask, please request one before proceeding. We do have extra masks available upon request.

Residential staff are expected to always wear a mask while in the residential programs. You may be instructed to use more Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) by your supervisor on a case-by-case basis. As much as possible, staff should be especially careful to use PPE when they can’t maintain 6 feet social distancing and while providing personal care to the people we support.

Throughout the pandemic we have also encouraged the people we support to wear masks when in the company of others. We know that some people have consistently worn masks when necessary, but others have found difficulty in accepting a mask, and others simply cannot wear a mask due to a medical condition or physical disability.

Fortunately, the mask mandate does allow for exemptions for the above stated types of reasons. The following two exemptions, taken from the MN Department of Health website apply to the people we are supporting:

Persons who have medical or other health conditions, disabilities, or mental health, developmental, or behavioral needs that make it difficult to tolerate wearing a face covering.

Any person who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, sleeping, incapacitated, or is otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance.

A full description of the mask mandate and exemptions can be found using this link: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecover.html>

While we are grateful that the State of MN recognizes the need for exemptions, we do still want to encourage the people we support to wear a mask. It might take time for some people to build up a tolerance of a mask, we might need to try different types of masks with people, and we may need to use different tools such as social stories to help people become accustomed to wearing a face covering.

Staff should ensure that persons served' personal hygiene items including toothbrushes are cleaned and maintained. They should avoid leaving personal items on the sink or where they can be contaminated.

All Employees are instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and to avoid touching their face, particularly their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. Employees are expected to dispose of tissues in provided trash receptacles and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward. Respiratory etiquette will be demonstrated on signage and supported by making tissues and trash receptacles available to all employees and other persons entering the workplace.

HANDWASHING BEST PRACTICES

One of the most important way to prevent the spread of any illness, including the Coronavirus, is frequent handwashing. Hand sanitizer may be used as an alternative only if running water is not accessible. Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented at Meridian Services at all times, including:

- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing; going to the restroom; and before eating or preparing food.

- Washing your hands before and after providing personal hygiene cares, administering medications, cleaning dirty surfaces and other instances where cross contamination may occur
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Providing coaching and encouragement to the individuals we support by actively practicing proper handwashing techniques
- Hand sanitizer dispenser at the entrance of the facility for access prior to entering all buildings and all locations.
- Access to hand sanitizer dispensers (containing at least 60% alcohol) located in common areas.
- <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/pdf/hand-sanitizer-factsheet.pdf>

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2. Cleaning and disinfecting

- Follow MDH and CDC guidance for frequent cleaning and disinfecting of your program space, especially shared spaces.
- 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.
- Ensure high-touch surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, stair rails, counters, tables and chairs, phones, keyboards, program equipment and other shared items are regularly cleaned and disinfected.
- Minimize the use of shared supplies (e.g. arts and crafts, office supplies) that cannot be sanitized and consider using designated bins for clean and used items.
- Use EPA-registered disinfectants recommended by the CDC: <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus>.
- When washing towels, bedding, and other items, use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.

PLAN FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

In the residential homes, cleaning protocols have been developed for shared areas. A sign off sheet is used to ensure compliance by all staff. Cleaning products will be supplied at residential sites that include at least 60 % alcohol so that areas are properly disinfected.

If a person becomes symptomatic while at the residential site, they will be immediately isolated if they cannot leave and go home immediately. Any area of the home where they have been will be thoroughly cleaned thereafter.

Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfecting supplies have been purchased and are available for use in the residential homes in accordance with product labels, safety data sheets and manufacturer specifications, and are being used with required personal protective equipment for the product.

If a person served is diagnosed positive for COVID-19, the residential home will be staffed with the minimum number of staff needed to safely and securely operate the residential site. Additional personal protective equipment including gowns, masks, face shields will be provided to the staff working with the sick person. Other exposed persons will be informed and tested and quarantined as indicated. A report will be made to the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). Staff will follow the recommendations of MDH and their personal physicians.

Meridian Services' regular practices of cleaning and disinfecting have been implemented, including a schedule for routine cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch areas within the home. All Meridian Services management and direct support professionals will utilize the [COVID-19 Sanitation Chart](#) to track their ongoing efforts to implement and maintain workplace cleanliness.

Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfecting supplies have been purchased and are available for use in accordance with product labels, safety data sheets and manufacturer specifications, and are being used with required personal protective equipment for the product. All direct support professionals have been trained to utilize a bleach solution consisting of a 1:10 bleach/water ratio every 1 to 3 hours, or as needed, throughout their scheduled shift. In addition, Meridian Services direct support professionals have been trained on the [Supplies and Sanitation Practices](#) and can reference this chart at any time.

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3. Screening and policies for staff exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19

- Monitor staff and volunteers for signs of illness, including using health screening questions before beginning a work shift, and require sick staff to stay home or return home if they are experiencing symptoms. You may also opt to conduct temperature screening if it can be done with proper social distancing, protection, and hygiene protocols. However, temperature screening is not required. <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf>
- Ensure sick policies are clearly communicated and supportive of staff and volunteers staying home when sick.
- Ensure staff and volunteers know the signs and symptoms of the COVID-19 illness.
- Establish protocols based on MDH guidance for when a staff member or volunteer exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19.
- Ensure that emergency contact information for staff and volunteers is up-to-date.

- Establish communication protocols for a positive COVID-19 case or potential exposure and ensure that an individual's identity is not disclosed, other than to a person authorized to receive the information.
- Notify MDH and follow their direction if a staff member or volunteer is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Have a plan for back-up staffing in case a staff member or volunteer becomes ill.

PLAN FOR SCREENING AND POLICIES FOR STAFF:

Employees have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The following policies and procedures are being implemented to assess employees' health status prior to entering the workplace and for employees to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms. Orion Associates and Meridian Services serve people who are vulnerable adults and children. Meridian Services residential sites are congregate long-term care facilities and as such are considered especially vulnerable to the spread of the coronavirus. Many of the people we serve through Meridian Services also have underlying medical conditions. We are required to report all persons served' illnesses and staff illnesses to the Department of Health for monitoring.

Everyone that enters a Meridian Services home must complete a self-assessment of their health. Do NOT proceed and contact your supervisor AND primary care physician if you are experiencing the following symptoms;

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath
- Severe Difficulty Breathing
- Persistent Chest Pain or Pressure
- New confusion or inability to rouse
- Chills
- Headache
- Muscle Pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste and smell
- Gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- Unusual or abnormal symptoms

- If you have had contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 or someone who has been told to self- quarantine by a medical professional or if you are showing these symptoms, you must notify your supervisor immediately.

Take your temperature before entering any Meridian Services site-wait 30 minutes after eating, drinking or exercising.

- How to take your temperature using an infrared thermometer
 1. Turn the thermometer on by pressing the power button
 2. Press and continue to hold down the trigger to take temperature readings. The unit will take temperature readings while the trigger is pressed and held.
 3. After the trigger is released, the last temperature measured will be displayed for approximately 15 seconds and the display will turn off automatically.
 4. Read your temperature on the screen. If your temperature is 100.4 or greater, you have a fever. Do NOT proceed into the program.
 5. Wipe the thermometer down with a disinfectant solution.
 6. Meridian Services Residential Staff must document their temperature on their timecard.

If you do have symptoms present and/or a fever, you must immediately inform your supervisor and go home. You must contact your health care professional and follow his/her advice.

If you do not have any symptoms present you can proceed to enter the residential site.

If you become ill while at work, you should immediately report your illness to your supervisor. Your supervisor will assist you in finding a place to isolate if you are delayed in leaving your work site.

All Meridian Services' program management and direct support professionals should follow the chain of command and the weekend on-call and attendance line contacts as posted, available and required for all staff.

Meridian Services have implemented leave policies that promote employees staying at home when they are sick, when household members are sick, or when required by a health care provider to isolate or quarantine themselves or a member of their household. Meridian Services has modified their attendance policy and has informed all Meridian Services' employees to stay at home if they are sick with any COVID-19 like symptoms.

The following temporary modification will be made to the Meridian Services' occurrence policy for the residential facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This modification will be effective Monday

June 15, 2020 until further notice. If an employee has symptoms of COVID-19, the employee should stay home and call the attendance line to report the absence at least 4 hours prior to your shift, if possible. The employee will not need to use an occurrence. The employee will be asked to contact their physician or the Department of Health and request a COVID-19 test. The employee is to report the results of the test to their supervisor. If an employee's test is negative, the employee will return to work for their next shift. If the employee's test is positive for COVID-19, the employee will be asked to self-quarantine for 14 days. The employee will not need to use occurrences for any time missed due to COVID-19 testing or illness.

Accommodations for employees with underlying medical conditions or who have household members with underlying health conditions have been implemented. Employees who have underlying health conditions or household members with underlying medical conditions are asked to contact Human Resources. They are accommodated as needed on a case by case basis depending on the circumstances and their medical documentation.

Meridian Services will also inform employees if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 at their worksite. We recommend those exposed consult their doctor and follow MDH guidelines to quarantine for the required amount of time. We also report all positive cases and people exposed to the Minnesota Department of Health.

If you have had contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 or someone who has been told to self- quarantine by a medical professional or if you are showing the above symptoms, you must notify your supervisor immediately.

The following additional assessment and quarantine information has been added as an update 12/2020 per MDH and CDC guidelines.

All staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 are excluded from working for at least 10 days and must be fever and symptom free for 24 hours.

If staff live with someone who has tested positive, they should immediately be excluded from work until they are tested or until they quarantine. Quarantine is recommended for 14 days.

It is recommended that when a person served or staff person tests positive for COVID-19 that everyone who had contact in the home gets tested at 5-7 days.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is determined to begin 48 hours before the person who tested positive experienced symptom on-set or if asymptomatic, 48 hours before the testing date.

Staff exposed to COVID-19 at their work site will be asked the following questions:

- 1) Were you wearing a mask at all times? If not, when did you remove your mask?
- 2) Were you within 6 feet of the person testing positive and for how long?

Low Risk Assessment

If the exposed staff person was wearing a mask at all times, and they were not within 6 feet of the positive person for more than 15 minutes total during the entire shift, they will be considered low risk.

Low risk with a coworker is defined as present in the same indoor environment but staff did not have prolonged close contact and everyone was wearing a mask.

Prolonged close contact is defined as closer than 6 feet for greater than 15 minutes total during their shift or in a 24 hour period.

Staff persons assessed as low-risk will be allowed to continue to work, monitoring for symptoms for 14 days.

High Risk Assessment

High risk with a person served is prolonged close contact for greater than 15 minutes without a face mask and other PPE (eye protection, surgical face mask, gown and gloves).

Staff should wear surgical masks, gowns, gloves and goggles when assisting the person served with personal care and for all contact within 6 feet.

High risk with a positive coworker is direct contact with infectious secretions (being coughed on) without wearing all PPE (eye protection, face mask, gown and gloves) and/or prolonged close contact, within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes total for the entire shift or 24 hours, without masks.

People who are assessed as high-risk exposures will be excluded from work and expected to follow the quarantine guidelines below.

Quarantine with live-in

If a person served tests positive, the house may quarantine using the live-in model to protect the other residents, the community and as many staff as possible.

Quarantine guidelines for staff:

The CDC and MDH generally recommend quarantine for those working and living in long term care for the full 14 days. Staff are protected from being required to return to work within the 14 day quarantine period by Minnesota law if they are high risk.

Staff who have had a high-risk exposure to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 may discontinue quarantine and return to work without testing if they have had no symptoms after 10 days. Staff must wear a surgical face mask or N95 mask (not a cloth mask) during the remaining 4 days when they are within 6 feet of any other person and when doing personal care with a person served. This can be considered when faced with staffing shortages and when the staff person agrees to these conditions.

Quarantine can be discontinued after 7 days if the person has no symptoms and has tested negative within 48 hours of the 7 days. (Testing on day 5 or 6). Staff must wear a surgical face mask or N95 mask, not a cloth mask, during the remaining 7 days at all times and when they are within 6 feet of any other person and when doing personal care with a person served. This can be considered when faced with staffing shortages and when the staff person agrees to these conditions.

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4. Screening and policies for residents exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19

- Monitor residents for signs of illness, including using a health screening tool such as this: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf>.
- Ensure residents know the signs and symptoms of the COVID-19 illness.
- Establish protocols based on MDH guidance for when a resident exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19 to limit exposure.
- Ensure that emergency contact information for residents is up-to-date.
- Establish communication protocols for positive COVID-19 cases or potential exposure and ensure that an individual's identity is not disclosed, other than to a person authorized to receive the information.
- Notify MDH and follow their direction if a resident is diagnosed with COVID-19.

PLAN FOR SCREENING AND POLICIES FOR RESIDENTS:

Ongoing education about the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 will occur with all persons served. Direct Support Professionals and Management will review the signs and symptoms during all health screenings, and remind persons served to ask for help or call 911 if necessary.

A health screening will be conducted with all persons served twice each day, once in the morning and once in the evening. The persons temperature and oxygen levels will be taken, and the following will be assessed during the screening:

- Is the person experiencing chills?

- Does the person have a new cough?
- Has the person experienced shortness of breath?
- Does the person have a new sore throat?
- Is the person experiencing new muscle aches?
- Does the person have a new headache?
- Is the person experiencing new loss of smell or taste?

If the person has a fever, if their oxygen levels are less than or equal to 90%, or if they are experiencing any of the above listed symptoms, the chain of command and the nursing department will be notified immediately. Guardians will also be notified. We will contact the physician for the person with a fever or other symptoms of COVID-19. The person served will be taken to a local testing site if that option is available to them.

If a person served tests positive for COVID-19, the Minnesota Department of Health will be notified as well as the staff persons who may have been exposed. The person will be quarantined in their home per MDH guidelines.

The outcomes of all health screenings will be recorded on the “Routine Vital Signs Monitoring” form in each person’s Medication Administration book.

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5. Social distancing

- Gatherings of residents and staff in the facility should be carefully considered and redesigned, as necessary, to reduce prolonged close contact among staff, residents, and families.
- Common areas and other areas of congestion should be marked to provide for social distancing of at least 6-feet.
- Consider using visual aids (e.g., painter’s tape, stickers, signs) to illustrate traffic flow and floor markers for where to stand for appropriate spacing to support social distancing.
- Rearrange seating spaces to maximize the space (at least 6 feet) between people. Turn chairs to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other) to reduce transmission caused from virus-containing droplets (e.g., from talking, coughing, sneezing).
- For larger programs, whenever possible, refrain from intermixing groups. If intermixing of groups is necessary, limit the number of groups that intermix and keep records of staff and residents that intermix.
- Stagger breaks to maximize social distancing.
- Hold meetings remotely, if possible.
- Staff and volunteers should also maintain social distance when interacting with each other.

- Staff should limit entering residents’ rooms as much as possible to reduce potential for cross-contamination, unless required for supervision.
- Ensure that beds are spaced out as much as possible. Consider placing residents’ beds head to toe in order to further reduce the potential for viral spread.
- Provide for physical distancing in restrooms or limit restroom capacity. Mark off areas for where to wait to use the restroom.

PLAN FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING:

Social distancing of at least six feet will be implemented and maintained between employees, people served when possible and visitors in the home through the following engineering and administrative controls:

Because our services are essential services, our residential program management are working in the residential homes as well as at the 9400 Golden Valley office. Because the majority of the workforce is still working from home, there is adequate office space to ensure social distancing of at least 6 feet at all offices. As other employees come back to the offices, we will take additional measures to maintain six feet in social distancing.

Prior to entering the residential sites, pre-screening, self-assessment and temperature taking will be completed.

Common areas and social distancing will be managed by limiting the number of people in the area, for example in the kitchen, stairway and living room areas. Persons served and employees will be cued as reminders to social distance.

Face-coverings have been required of all residential staff at all sites throughout the pandemic. Managers, Directors and Administrators are monitoring for compliance and are providing re-training to staff who are not wearing masks.

Effective 7/25/2020, consistent with Executive Order 20-81, face-covering masks are required in all Meridian Services residential sites. Employees may temporarily remove their masks while alone in private offices in accordance with the Governor’s order.

Common Areas will be wiped down every 1-3 hours during the DSP’s shifts.

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6. Food preparation and meals

- Prohibit food (including condiments) and beverage sharing between residents.
- Stagger meal times to maximize social distancing.

- Maintain consistent groups during meal times.
- If meals are served family-style, plate each meal to serve it so that multiple people are not using the same serving utensils.

PLAN FOR FOOD PREPARATION AND MEALS:

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Meridian Services will take care to use best practices in food preparation in order to keep the household safe and healthy for staff and persons served. Food and beverage sharing between persons served and between employees will be prohibited. Mealtimes will be staggered, or persons served may eat in their bedrooms if they choose. Staff will eat in separate rooms of the home to avoid group meals and to maintain social distancing. Food will be prepared and dished up by one staff person who is wearing gloves instead of passed around family style. This is to avoid multiple people using the same utensils and handling the same dishes.

7. Ventilation

- Work to maximize the amount of fresh air being brought in, limit air recirculation and ensure ventilation systems are properly used and maintained.
- Take steps to minimize air flow blowing across people.

PLAN FOR VENTILATION:

Operations of the Orion Associates and Meridian Services' office and residential buildings include necessary sanitation, assessment and maintenance of building systems, including water, plumbing, electrical, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

The maximum amount of fresh air is being brought into the workplace, air recirculation is being limited, and ventilation systems are being properly used and maintained. Steps are also being taken to minimize air flow blowing across people.

Orion Associates and Meridian Services maintain inspections of all systems and are in compliance with all commercial requirements. The residential homes are also inspected at least annually and are maintained in compliance with requirements for foster care facilities.

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8. Visitors

- Visitors should be screened for COVID-19 symptoms prior to entrance. <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf>

- Provide visitors with hand sanitizer or access to a handwashing area, and facemasks if available.
- Encourage social distancing between residents and their visitors.
- Whenever possible, visits should occur outdoors or in a visiting room close to the facility entrance. Visitors should limit interactions to those individuals that they are visiting.
- Clean and disinfect the visiting room after each visit.
- Encourage residents to wash their hands after interacting with a visitor.

PLAN FOR VISITORS:

Although the spread of COVID-19 remains of great concern, MDH is now recommending that providers develop a process to recognize essential caregivers/family members where appropriate. MDH has noted, and we would agree, that while technology can help decrease loneliness for some people receiving services, technology is not a sustainable replacement for in-person contact. Accordingly, we will begin to allow a family member/essential caregiver of the person's choosing entry into the homes with adherence to the following criteria:

- 1) Visitors will contact management at the home at least 24 hours in advance of the potential visit to communicate the time that they would like to visit to ensure that there are not multiple visitors at one time. This will also allow the home time to coordinate efforts to ensure playful distancing with higher risk people living in the home. We are asking that visits not exceed three hours.
- 2) All visitors will have their temperature taken when arriving at the home and participate in a basic self-assessment regarding any potential symptoms of COVID-19 and any recent exposure to someone diagnosed with COVID-19.
- 3) All visitors will wash their hands with soap and water or utilize hand sanitizer when entering the home.
- 4) All visitors will wear a mask for the duration of their visit, and practice social distancing of six feet with staff and other people living in the home. Visitors should confine their interaction to the person they are visiting.
- 5) The area in the home where the visit occurred will be cleaned and disinfected after the visit.

Although we are changing our policy so that essential caregivers may visit in the home, we hope that during the summer months, visitors will arrange to take the people we serve for a walk, a drive or other safe excursion outside of the group home. You are welcome to visit with the person outside of the home at the picnic table or in the yard. Our expectation is that everyone will practice social distancing during these visits.

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9. Transportation

- Plan for the use of facemasks when providing transportation.
- Take precautions when using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- Limit the number of residents in the vehicle and ask them to spread out to maintain social distancing as much as possible.
- Do not have air recirculated while in a vehicle.
- Remind residents to wear a facemask or face covering, wash their hands, and follow social distancing guidelines while they are away.

PLAN FOR TRANSPORTATION:

All staff will wear facemasks when providing transportation. All persons served will be asked to wear masks while in the vehicle. The number of people in the vehicle will be limited in an effort to maintain social distancing. Windows will be at least partially lowered to prevent recirculated air in the vehicle.

Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfecting supplies have been purchased and are available for use in accordance with product labels, safety data sheets and manufacturer specifications, and are being used with required personal protective equipment for the product. All direct support professionals have been trained to utilize an alcohol solution consisting of at least 60% alcohol

Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidance for Non-emergency Vehicles

- Vehicles will be cleaned thoroughly prior to each use with persons served and after use of the vehicle with each person served
- Employees will utilize an alcohol disinfectant spray bottle containing 60% alcohol
- Employees will disinfect all frequently touched surfaces including but not limited to:
 - Door handles, seat belts, seats, locks, steering wheel, radio controls, windows, lifts, lift straps

- Employees will record completion on the vehicle cleaning chart available in each vehicle binder

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10. Communication and training about the plan

- Provide a copy of this plan to all of your staff, contracted service providers, and volunteers.
- Provide training to all staff and volunteers on how to follow the plan, ensure they are capable of implementing it, and update them on any changes to the plan.
- The plan must be available to the Commissioner and posted in a prominent place and readily accessible to staff who need to review it.
- Explain in plain language the parts of the plan relevant to the residents and, as appropriate, parents, guardians, legal representatives, and case managers. Provide them with resources to follow the plan.
- Staff with concerns about their employer's COVID-19 Preparedness Plan or questions about their rights should contact MNOSHA Compliance at osha.compliance@state.mn.us, 651-284-5050 or 877-470-6742.

PLAN FOR COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING ABOUT THE PLAN:

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plans are being communicated to the appropriate employees and necessary training provided. The plan will be posted at the sites and sent to the employees individually and posted on our website. Additional communication and training will be ongoing and will be conducted for new employees by the Human Resources Department and by program management. Training will be provided to all employees who did not receive the initial training and prior to initial assignment or reassignment. All employees are encouraged to ask questions of their managers or to the chief administrative officer using the jot form provided.

Instructions will be communicated to all employees, temporary employees, subcontractors, vendors and outside technicians about protections and protocols, including: 1) social distancing protocols and practices; 2) drop-off, pick-up, delivery practices; 3) practices for hygiene and respiratory etiquette; 4) recommendations or requirements regarding the use of masks, face-coverings and/or face-shields by employees. All employees and visitors will also be advised not to enter the worksite if they are experiencing symptoms or have contracted COVID-19. All employees, visitors, vendors, subcontractors will need to self- assess their health, take their temperature and wash their hands upon entry to all offices and residential sites.

Managers and supervisors are expected to monitor how effectively the program has been implemented. All management and employees are to take an active role and collaborate in carrying out

the various aspects of this plan, and update the protections, protocols, work-practices and training as necessary. This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan has been certified by Orion Associates and Meridian Services' officers and is posted throughout the workplace and made readily available to employees. It will be updated as necessary by Stephen Hage, designated plan administrator. The plan will also be posted on our website for case managers, guardians and the general public.

Please use the following link to address questions you may have of the organization.

<https://form.jotform.com/200723689415054>

ck or tap here to enter text.