

COVID-19 Universal Guidance for All Businesses and Entities

05/17/2021

This guidance applies to all business and places of public accommodation (“businesses”)—defined by Executive Order 21-11, as amended by Executive Order 21-21 and EO-23 (“EO”) from Friday, May 28, 2021 through the earlier of June 30, 2021 or until 70% of Minnesotans aged 16+ receive at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

This guidance has been updated to align with EO 21-11, 21-21, and 21-23, a CDC transmission of COVID-19 update (05/13/2021 update), and removal of face covering Executive Order requirements (05/14/2021).

The EO requires all businesses to have and implement a written COVID-19 Preparedness Plan that addresses EO requirements and applicable Stay Safe Industry Guidance. “Businesses” are broadly defined to include any entity that employs or engages workers, including owners, employees, contractors, vendors, volunteers, or interns.

- ✓ Plan templates are available on the [Stay Safe Guidance for All Business Entities website \(staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/all-businesses.jsp\)](https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/all-businesses.jsp).
- ✓ The representative responsible for implementing the Plan must sign and certify the Plan, affirming their commitment to implement the Plan. Businesses must assign a designated Plan administrator to ensure the Plan is evaluated, monitored, executed, and updated as needed.
- ✓ Each business must provide its Plan, in writing, to all workers, and the Plan must be posted at all of the business’s workplaces in locations that will allow for the Plan to be readily reviewed by all workers. If physical posting is impracticable, the Plan must be posted electronically. Plans must also be available to regulatory authorities and public safety officers, upon request.
- ✓ Each business must ensure that training is provided to workers on the contents of its Plan and required procedures, so that all workers understand and are able to perform the precautions necessary to protect themselves, their co-workers, their customers, and their visitors.
- ✓ When more than one business has authority, responsibility, or control over workers, locations, or activities, each business must coordinate their implementation of these requirements.

Recommendations to prevent the spread of COVID-19

COVID-19 spreads when an infected person breathes out droplets and very small particles that contain the virus. These droplets and particles can be breathed in by other people; land in their eyes, nose, or mouth; or land on surfaces that people touch. The risk of COVID-19 transmission increases when people gather with other households. Several key strategies can reduce the risk of getting sick or transmitting COVID-19:

- ✓ Get vaccinated. Vaccination is one of the best things you can do to prevent getting or spreading COVID-19. For more information about what you can do when vaccinated, visit [COVID-19 Vaccine \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/vaccine/index.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/vaccine/index.html).
- ✓ Wear a face covering when recommended by MDH or CDC.
 - There is no longer a statewide requirement to wear face coverings in most settings. However, other federal, state, and/or local laws may require face coverings in some settings, and businesses may set their own requirements. Additionally, Minnesota's Safe Learning Plan, along with the existing face covering guidance for schools and childcare settings, remains in effect.
 - For more information about face covering recommendations, see MDH Face Covering Requirements and Recommendations (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecover.html>) and MDH Frequently Asked Questions About Wearing Face Coverings (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecoverfaq.html>).
- ✓ If you are not vaccinated:
 - Keep at least 6 feet of physical distance from other households and follow the face covering recommendations in the above MDH resources.
- ✓ Vaccinated or not vaccinated, MDH strongly recommends that everyone:
 - Wash their hands often.
 - Follow guidance on staying home (quarantine) if you were exposed to someone who has COVID-19. People who are fully vaccinated may not need to quarantine in many situations. See [Quarantine Guidance for COVID-19 \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/quarguide.pdf\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/quarguide.pdf) for more details.
 - Stay home if they are sick. Visit [If You Are Sick: COVID-19 \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sick.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sick.html).
 - Follow testing recommendations for when they travel, have COVID-19 symptoms, or are exposed to COVID-19. Visit [COVID-19 Testing \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/testsites/index.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/testsites/index.html) for information about who should get tested and how to get a test.
 - Work from home if possible. Employers must provide reasonable accommodations as required under existing federal and state law. Employers are strongly encouraged to provide reasonable accommodations to employees with one or more members of their household who have underlying medical conditions and who are unable to be vaccinated.

Key Terms Used in this Document

✓ **Indoors**

- A space is “indoors” if the space is:
 - Between the ground or other natural surface or a floor or similar surface and an overhead barrier, including but not limited to: a canopy, cap, awning, ceiling, roof, retractable barrier, or similar structure, whether opened or closed, and
 - Bounded by a physical barrier, including but not limited to walls, partitions, retractable dividers, doorways, garage doors or windows, whether opened or closed, that cover more than 50% of the combined surface area of the vertical planes constituting the perimeter of the space.
 - Indoor spaces may be temporary or permanent, finished or unfinished. A physical barrier bounding a space may be made of natural and manufactured materials. A 0.011 gauge window screen with an 18 by 16 mesh count is not a barrier. Examples of spaces that are or can be indoor spaces include, but are not limited to, buildings, towers, stadiums, arenas, theaters, rotundas, domes, tents, pavilions, gazebos, igloos, trailers, and other enclosures.

✓ **Venue**

- A “venue” is a physical space or area used to perform activities or conduct events. A venue may be space or area that is public or private, indoors or outdoors, with defined perimeters, controlled ingress and egress, and accessible with or without a cost to an attendee. A physical space or area is a venue if the actions, conduct, or decisions of a business or other entity, including an event organizer, result in members of the public assembling or gathering in a space or area for a common or collective activity or event.

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan Requirements

Health screening, isolation, and quarantine

- ✓ **Health screening:** Establish a health screening process for all people entering the business, entity, or venue, including customers, clients, and visitors. See [Visitor and Employee Health Screening Checklist \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf).
 - Establish policies and procedures for workers to report when they have tested positive for COVID-19, are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or have been identified as a close contact.
 - Advise customers, clients, or visitors to leave the business if their responses to health screening indicate they have tested positive for COVID-19, are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or have been identified as a close contact who is required to quarantine by MDH guidance.
- ✓ **Isolation:** Require workers to stay away from work when they are sick or test positive for [COVID-19](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sick.html#stayhome). See [If You are Sick \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sick.html#stayhome\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sick.html#stayhome).
- ✓ **Close Contacts and Quarantine:** Create a system for identifying and communicating with workers who may have been a close contact or exposed to someone who has COVID-19 or COVID-19

symptoms. Ensure that workers who were exposed or identified as close contacts stay away from work for the applicable quarantine period and encourage them to be tested.

- See [Close Contacts and Tracing: COVID-19](#) (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/close.html) and [Quarantine Guidance for COVID-19](#) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/quarguide.pdf>) for more information about close contacts, exposure, when to get tested, and quarantine periods.
- See [COVID-19: When to Return to Work](#) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/returntowork.pdf>) for resources to provide to workers about returning to work.

Hand hygiene practices

- ✓ Provide instruction, signage, facilities, and supplies to encourage regular handwashing and sanitizing. See [Hand Hygiene](#) (www.health.state.mn.us/people/handhygiene/index.html).

Cleaning and disinfecting

- ✓ Establish a regular schedule and checklist for cleaning and disinfecting commonly touched surfaces (workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, doorknobs, etc.), shared items, shared equipment, and high traffic areas. Continue to perform other routine environmental cleaning according to established schedules and procedures.
 - See [Cleaning Your Facility](#) (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html) for information about when to clean, when to disinfect, and general guidance for routine cleaning.
 - Use the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) List N for 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-coronavirus-covid-19). Use as instructed to ensure effective disinfection.

Facilities, utilities, and ventilation

Ventilation is an important factor in preventing COVID-19 transmission indoors. Facility owners and operators must evaluate the operational capacity of ventilation systems and increase and maintain ventilation provided throughout the building.

- ✓ Increase the intake percentage of outside air to increase dilution of contaminants, and minimize recirculation, whenever possible, while maintaining indoor air conditions.
- ✓ In the absence of effective mechanical ventilation, increase natural ventilation as much as possible. Open windows if possible and safe to do so.
- ✓ Additional resources
 - For more detailed information about ventilation, see [ASHRAE's Technical Resources](#) (www.ashrae.org/technical-resources/resources).

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- For additional information on ventilation, see [MDH's Indoor Air Considerations \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/indoorair.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/indoorair.html).
- For re-opening buildings, see [ASHRAE Guidance for Re-opening Buildings \(www.ashrae.org/file%20library/technical%20resources/covid-19/guidance-for-re-opening-buildings.pdf\)](http://www.ashrae.org/file%20library/technical%20resources/covid-19/guidance-for-re-opening-buildings.pdf).

