



Minnesota State System Office COVID-19 Pandemic Preparedness Plan

August 19, 2020

Minnesota State is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for our system office employees to work and serve our colleges and universities and their students. This plan was developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic utilizing guidance offered in various Emergency Executive Orders (EO) from federal and state entities including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Minnesota Departments of Health (MDH), Employment and Economic Development (DEED), Management and Budget (MMB), and Labor and Industry (DLI), as well as Unilev Management, the real estate manager of Wells Fargo Place and Inventure Properties, LLC, the real estate manager of the Quarry Center.

System office managers, supervisors, and employees are responsible for implementing and complying with all aspects of this plan. Our shared goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our workplace while providing effective service and support to our colleges and universities and the students they serve. This requires full cooperation among our employees as well as our visitors. System office managers and supervisors have leadership support in enforcing the provisions of this plan. Employees are encouraged to ask questions, raise safety and health concerns, and offer suggestions related to the plan and its implementation.

This plan is designed to reduce and where possible, minimize the potential for the spread of COVID-19, it does not eliminate it. It will evolve over time as more is learned about COVID-19 and guidance and recommendations from authorities evolves over time.

This plan outlines:

1. General principles – Our culture of responsibility for all system office employees and visitors;
2. Health screening protocol and requirements for employees and visitors;
3. Administrative and engineering controls for social/physical distancing;
4. Required use of face masks or face coverings;
5. Workplace cleaning and disinfection protocols;
6. Drop-off, pick-up and delivery practices and protocols; and
7. Communications, training and supervision practices and protocols.

1. General principles – Our culture of responsibility for all system office employees and visitors

The following principles provide the foundation for our approach in developing and implementing the system office COVID-19 Pandemic Preparedness Plan and how it will be refined over time:

1. The safety of our employees is paramount;
2. The system office has a duty to all Minnesotans to demonstrate and provide effective leadership for Minnesota State's college and universities;
3. Reliance on guidance and recommendations on best practices from federal and state health officials;

4. Responsibility to protect ourselves and the communities in which we live and work; and
5. Compassion for those at risk given the circumstances of COVID-19 including risk to physical health, but also risk to economic, social, mental, and spiritual well-being.

The outbreak of COVID-19 has underscored how our individual actions can affect those we come in to contact with and care about most. We expect system office employees to continue to take ethical responsibility for themselves, our colleagues, our friends, our family, and our communities. This responsibility calls for us to:

1. Stay at home if you are sick or not feeling well,
 - If, while at work, you begin to feel ill, immediately leave the building, go home, and seek medical attention as your symptoms warrant;
2. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds,
 - If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol;
3. Cover your coughs and sneezes;
4. Practice social/physical distancing by keeping at least 6 feet of space between other people,
5. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces;
6. Wear cloth face covering or mask where social/physical distancing (6 foot separation) cannot be maintained;
7. Take ethical responsibility for yourself, friends, family and our communities; and
8. Complete the electronic health screening tool prior to entering any Minnesota State facility. If after taking the screening tool you are not authorized to enter the facility, contact your supervisor using regular call-in procedures.

2. Health screening protocol and requirements for employees and visitors

Every employee, student, and visitor to the system office must complete the electronic health screening instrument adopted by Minnesota State each day prior to the initial entry to any college or university building or other designated confined campus space, including the system office. In the event that the electronic instrument is not available, a hard copy version of the electronic health screening instrument may be employed. Employees and students are required to answer the screening questions truthfully and correctly to the best of their knowledge.

Students who complete but do not pass the health screening are not authorized to enter the system office buildings.

Employees who complete but do not pass the health screening are not authorized to enter the workplace, and must report to their supervisor using their regular call-in procedure. In addition, if the employee is not able to telework:

- a. The employee is expected to take affirmative steps to obtain a medical diagnosis as to whether they have, or still have, COVID-19.
- b. If Paid COVID-19 Leave is available and the employee is otherwise eligible, the employee may use Paid COVID-19 Health Leave as provided in the Paid COVID-19 Leave policy, while they are taking affirmative steps to obtain a medical diagnosis.
- c. If the employee is advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine based on the provider's belief that the employee has COVID-19 or may have COVID-19, if Paid COVID-19 Leave is available and the employee is otherwise eligible, the employee may use Paid COVID-19 Health Leave as provided in the Paid COVID-19 Leave policy.
- d. If Paid COVID-19 Leave is unavailable or the employee is not otherwise eligible, the employee may use their accrued sick leave or unpaid medical leave while the employee is taking affirmative steps to obtain a medical diagnosis or while the employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine.
- e. If the employee obtains a medical diagnosis that they do not have COVID-19 (i.e., they tested negative for COVID-19 or a medical doctor or certified nurse practitioner determined that the employee does not have

COVID-19 and may return to work), they are expected to provide evidence to Human Resources of the negative diagnosis, and return to work.

- f. If the employee obtains a medical diagnosis that they have COVID-19, they are expected to return to work under the following guidance (or as directed using current MDH or CDC guidelines):

If the employee had symptoms, they are expected to return to work after:

- Their cough, shortness of breath, and other symptoms are better, and
- It has been 10 days since they first became ill, and
- They have not had a fever for at least 24 hours, without using fever-reducing medications.

Employees who refuse to complete the screening are not authorized to enter the workplace. Employees who refuse to complete the screening and who are assigned to work at the system office will be considered absent from work without approved leave and may be deemed as refusing a work directive. Such employees:

- a. Must report to their supervisor using their regular call-in procedure or an alternative procedure established by the college or university and explain the circumstances of the employee's refusal to complete the health screening.
- b. May be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.
- c. If the employee is not assigned by their supervisor to telework, the employee will be deemed absent from work without approved leave and may be placed in no-pay status until the employee returns to work after completing a health screening as required by this operating instruction or their job responsibilities no longer require screening under this operating instruction.
- d. Upon the first instance of refusing to complete the health screening, an employee may request a meeting with the system office Human Resources Office for an explanation of the health screening requirement and to present the employee's side of the story and/or explain the employee's reasons for refusing to comply. Employees will be placed in pay status for the period of the meeting. The employee may have union representation at the meeting.

Employees and supervisors should contact their supervisor or system office Human Resources with any questions regarding these resources and options.

3. Administrative and engineering controls for social/physical distancing

Social/physical distancing to reduce the potential for the spread of COVID-19 within system office spaces is being implemented through the following engineering and administrative controls:

1. Employees that can work remotely should continue to do so.
 - a. As conditions associated with COVID-19 and the need for college and university support change, some functions and tasks will return to system office spaces.
 - b. This transition will take place in stages over time, taking into account individual employee circumstances and risk factors including underlying health conditions, care of other family members underlying health conditions, availability of childcare, access to safe, reliable transportation, etc., along with and system office mission needs.
 - c. Employees who wish to come back to work will need to work with their supervisors to ensure adherence to current guidelines.
2. Employees are to stay at home if they are sick or not feeling well.
 - a. If, while at work, they begin to feel ill, they should immediately leave the building, go home, and seek medical attention as your symptoms warrant,
3. In the system office, employees are to practice social/physical distancing by keeping at least 6 feet of space between themselves and colleagues and visitors.
4. Cloth face coverings or masks must be worn as provided in paragraph 4, below. Employees should provide their own cloth mask. There will be a limited number of cloth face coverings masks at the front desk for employees and visitors.

5. Ensure any personal fans do not blow air into other office areas.
6. Be aware of and avoid spaces that could be crowded or congested including break or lunchrooms, elevators, and restrooms.
7. Meetings or gatherings of greater than 10 should be conducted virtually and in-person meetings should be extremely limited, and short in duration.
8. Conference rooms and lunchrooms will have reduced capacity due to social/physical distancing expectations.
 - a. The limit of people in the conference room will be posted on near the door; it will be approximately 1/3 its former capacity.
 - b. Restrooms will also have a much smaller capacity, the specific number will be posted on the door.
9. Vehicles will only be signed out to single occupants and must be cleaned and disinfected by the driver prior to use.

Staff and visitors should refrain from gathering in groups and confined areas, including elevators, and from using other employees' personal protective equipment, phones, computer equipment, desks, cubicles, workstations, offices or other personal work tools and equipment.

Office Services is working closely with Unilev Management to ensure administrative and engineering controls are in place for both the system office and common areas within Wells Fargo Place. Specific actions include, but are not limited to:

1. One-way traffic flow through the tower elevator lobby
2. Capacity limits in elevators
3. Non-emergency work orders to be conducted off-hours or when tenants are not present
4. The Fitness Center is opened at a reduced capacity
5. Conference room 175 is unavailable until further notice
6. Valet staff will be directing transient parkers rather than parking vehicles

Employees should share any questions or recommendations with their supervisors, system office Human Resources, or Office Services.

4. Required use of face masks or face coverings

Consistent with Executive Order 20-81, colleges, universities, and the system office will require all employees, students and visitors to wear face masks or face coverings in all buildings as well as other designated confined spaces, except in locations or circumstances exempted under EO 20-81. Additionally, face masks or face coverings are required in outdoor areas where social distancing is not possible to maintain. The required face masks/face coverings must cover both the mouth and nasal passages. Masks that incorporate a valve designed to facilitate easy exhaling, mesh masks, or masks with openings, holes, visible gaps in the design or material, or vents are not sufficient face coverings because they allow exhaled droplets to be released into the air.

Children under the age of two are entirely exempt from the face mask/face covering requirement. Children under age five, but at least two years old, are strongly encouraged, but not required to wear face mask/face coverings.

Colleges, universities, and the system office are required to post clear signage at all regular access points stating that face masks are required in all buildings and designated confined spaces.

Exceptions to the Required Use of Face Masks or Face Coverings; Consequences for Failure or Refusal to Comply

Employees who are unable to wear a face mask or face covering in a required area due to the employee's disability, as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act, should contact the human resources office or such other office that is designated by the college or university to request an accommodation.

Employees who refuse to wear a face mask or face covering in a required area, and who are not excused from the requirement, are subject to disciplinary action consistent with the procedures established in the applicable collective bargaining agreement or compensation plan.

Students who are unable to wear a face mask or face covering in a required area due to the student's disability, as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act, should contact an office designated by the college or university to request an accommodation. Students who are unwilling to wear a face mask or face covering in a required area and who are not excused from the requirement may be subject to disciplinary action under the student code of conduct and may be removed from campus.

Students in internships, clinical and other experiential learning settings may have to take additional respiratory precautions based on the specific setting, practice, and host site guidelines and expectations. Failure to follow host-site expectations may impact student eligibility for those internship, clinical, and experiential learning opportunities and may have other program, academic and/or student conduct consequences.

Compliance

Colleges, universities and the system office are required to ensure compliance with the face mask – face covering requirements established in this operating instruction by adopting the following procedures:

- The system office will publish a contact number for employees or students to report incidents of non-compliance. Each college and university will ensure that reports of non-compliance that provide credible evidence will be reviewed and initial action taken within one business day of the report.
- The system office may choose to consider establishing screening points or check-desks to enforce the face mask/face covering requirement.

Minnesota State Administrators are required to assist in achieving compliance with these face mask/face covering requirements.

5. Workplace cleaning and disinfection protocols

Wells Fargo Place

Office Services is working closely with Unilev Management to ensure the both system office and common areas within Wells Fargo Place are effectively cleaned and disinfected. Specific actions include, but are not limited to:

1. "Self-cleaning" anti-microbial button covers on all elevator call buttons, both in the elevator lobbies and inside each elevator cab. This does NOT replace what will be on-going high frequency manual cleaning with disinfectant throughout the day.
2. Hand sanitizer stations in the parking ramp and first floor tower elevator lobbies
3. "Self-cleaning" door handle sleeves on stairwell doors from the parking ramp. This does NOT replace what will be on-going high frequency manual cleaning with disinfectant throughout the day.
4. Foot pulls on common area restroom doors
5. 24-hour fresh air flush throughout the atrium and tower to purge any contaminants in the air. This is in addition to the existing three-point filtering between the outside air intake to tenant and common areas.
6. More visible cleaning of high touch surfaces

Quarry Center

Office Services is working closely with Inventure Properties, LLC to ensure the both system office and common areas within Quarry Center are effectively cleaned and disinfected. Specific actions include, but are not limited to:

1. Hand sanitizer stations will be located within the system office space. These will be near each door.
2. The building management will continue to provide cleaning throughout both common areas, to include restrooms, and within the system office space.
3. The building HVAC system has recently been updated and will be monitored to insure air filtering and air exchange is occurring within the system office space.
4. Due to limited resources for building management, staff at this location will need to be proactive in cleaning/disinfecting. For example insuring high touch surfaces in common areas are wiped down prior to use.
5. Office Services will assist with obtaining needed supplies.

Employees working at other campus locations

The staff will work with the individual campus location to obtain local guidance for standards and procedures. Office Services will assist with obtaining needed supplies.

Employees should share any questions or recommendations with their supervisors, system office Human Resources, or Office Services.

6. Drop-off, pick-up and delivery practices and protocols

Office Services is working closely with Unilev Management to ensure the safe delivery or mail and other deliveries. All mail and deliveries are held for 24 hours before being made available for distribution to system office staff.

Employees should share any questions or recommendations Office Services.

7. Communications, training and supervision practices and protocols

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan was communicated via e-mail to all system office employees on June 30, 2020. Updates to the Plan will also be communicated to system office employees via e-mail.

Prior to returning to the workplace, all system office employees are required to take the Minnesota State COVID-19 Return to Campus/Work Preparedness Plan training. This course is available through Employee Self Service/ELM.

1. Log in to the State of Minnesota [Self Service](#) site using your eight digit **State ID Number** and password. (The one you use for paycheck and insurance information.)
2. Click on the ELM tile.
3. Choose **Find Learning** under Quick Links and then search for **“Return to Campus”**
4. Choose the “Enroll” button and then use the blue “Launch” link to start the course.



This plan will periodically be reviewed and updated to reflect new guidance and information in Emergency Executive Orders (EO), federal and state entities including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Minnesota Departments of Health (MDH), Employment and Economic Development (DEED), Management and Budget (MMB), and Labor and Industry (DLI).

This plan was originally approved by the System Office Cabinet and was shared and posted throughout the

system office June 29, 2020. It will be updated as necessary.

Employees should share any questions or recommendations with their supervisors, system office Human Resources, or Office Services.

Links and Resources

Minnesota Department of Health (MDH):

- Instructional Videos for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Response: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/materials/videos.html>
- American Sign Language: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/materials/asl.html>
- Terms: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/materials/glossary.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/videos.html?Sort=Date%3A%3Adesc>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html?Sort=Date%3A%3Adesc>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/index.html>

General

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV

www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus

www.osha.gov

www.dli.mn.gov

Executive Order 20-81 regarding face masks

Handwashing

www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html

www.cdc.gov/handwashing

<https://youtu.be/d914EnpU4Fo>

Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html

www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html

www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing_sneezing.html

Social distancing

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html

www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html

Housekeeping

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html

Employees exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sick.html>

Training

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html>

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html

www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf

Plan History:

Date of initial adoption: 06/29/2020

Date & Subject of Revisions:

08/19/2020 – revised to include additional guidance on face coverings and health screening tool