

City of Austin COVID-19 Re-Opening Preparedness Plan

Updated 7/23/20 per Executive Order 20-81 requirement

The City of Austin is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our workers and the public we serve. To ensure that, we have developed a COVID-19 Re-Opening Preparedness Plan.

Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our workplaces, and that requires full cooperation among all employees. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of our employees and the public we serve. Employees are encouraged to continue to report any suggestions or concerns they have related to being at work and COVID-19.

The City's COVID-19 Re-Opening Plan, hereafter referred to as the PLAN, establishes and explains the necessary policies, practices and conditions to meet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines for COVID-19 and federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards related to worker exposure to COVID-19 and addresses:

- identification and isolation of sick employees;
- hygiene and respiratory etiquette;
- engineering and administrative controls for social distancing;
- heightened housekeeping, including cleaning, disinfecting and decontamination

Screening and policies for employees exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19

Employees have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Primary symptoms are currently identified as: fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing. Some people have other symptoms that include chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, diarrhea or loss of taste or smell. Please note: additional symptoms may be identified by the MDH, CDC or other medical professionals.

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.

- **Employees are expected to assess their health condition prior to leaving their home for work EACH DAY and before taking any temperature reducing drug.** See separate health screening checklist an employee should review each day before coming to work. If symptomatic, the employee will notify their supervisor and are to stay home from work. Employees are encouraged to call the Mayo Clinic COVID-19 hotline (507-293-9525) to determine the need for testing. If the employee believes there are extenuating circumstances that would allow them to report to work (for example, the employee has already had COVID-19, recovered, and considered unable to be a carrier of the virus) the supervisor and human resources will assess whether the employee can report to work.
- **If symptoms appear during the work day, an employee should immediately notify their supervisor and human resources that they must leave work.** If an employee becomes ill with

COVID-19 symptoms while at work, they are to call or email their supervisor and leave the premises immediately. That employee will be encouraged to call the Mayo Clinic COVID-19 Hotline (507-293-9525) to determine the need for testing. If an employee cannot immediately leave work, for example someone gave them a ride to work, they should gather their things and self-isolate outside of the building entrance until they can leave. In the event of inclement weather, ill employees should self-isolate in an unoccupied area of the building. The employee should avoid touching any unnecessary surfaces, chairs, handles, or other items while waiting in the room. Notify supervisor of the room that was used, so it can be disinfected before needing to be used again.

The following policies and procedures are guidelines and may be implemented when an employee becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms. Depending on the exact circumstances of an employee's illness, modifications may be implemented and followed on a case by case basis.

- If the employee is not tested, they may be asked to stay home for 7 days from the onset of symptoms and may return to work once fever free for 72 hours and symptom free.
- If the employee tests negative, they may be asked to stay home for 72 hours after fever is resolved and their cough improves significantly.
- If the employee tests positive, they will be asked to stay at home under the guidance of the Minnesota Department of Health in isolation for at least 7 days and 72 hours symptom free before returning to work. The MDH will give the all clear for that person to return to work.
- If an employee has come in contact with a known positive case and has been asked by the Minnesota Department of Health to quarantine for 14 days, the employee will be asked to stay at home and if able to work from home will be allowed to do so. The employee will watch for symptoms to develop and will call into the Mayo COVID-19 hotline (507-293-9525) to determine the need for testing and follow up.
- Employees will be contacted if they have been potentially exposed to an individual with COVID-19 at their workplace. Discussions will take place as to whether social distancing has been followed and the proximity and duration of contact will be reviewed to determine if it was a true exposure. Depending on the determination, employees may be required to self-quarantine.

Note: Several laws address the privacy of medical information. To assure compliance with these laws, and to respect employee privacy, supervisors MAY NOT reveal the name of the person who has reported COVID-19 symptoms or tested positive/negative with coworkers. The City, including supervisors may share the employee name only with those who absolutely need to know (i.e., potential exposure). If an employee would like others to be made aware of their situation, they should ask a coworker to share the information and not a supervisor. Supervisors should not share this information under any circumstances, even if it is widely known among a work group(s).

COVID 19 Related Leave Coverage

The City of Austin has several policies in place (some regular on-going and some temporary for COVID-19) which include: an employee's own paid annual leave – sick leave, vacation, compensatory time (where applicable), holiday leave (where applicable), FMLA, unpaid leave of absence and a special temporary sick leave donation specifically for COVID-19. Additionally, employees may be eligible for leave under the Families First Coronavirus Recovery Act (FFCRA), which may provide full or partial wages depending on the reason for the leave and eligibility. Additional information is available on the City's Intranet site, employees with questions should contact human resources.

Mayo Clinic COVID-19 Testing Hotline is 507-293-9525.

Handwashing

Basic infection prevention measures are ongoing 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 and after using the bathroom. Hand-sanitizer, as available, will be located in departments for employee use when employees are not able to wash their hands. Employees should avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

All visitors to public facilities should use hand sanitizer prior to or immediately upon entering the facility. City Hall public areas, including clerk, park and recreation administration and engineering, the public library and other public buildings upon reopening, will have public hand-sanitizer dispensers.

In the event there is a sanitizer shortage, hand washing will be used in its place.

Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze

Employees and visitors are instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing to avoid touching their face, in particular their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. They should dispose of tissues in the trash and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward. Respiratory etiquette will be demonstrated on posters and supported by making tissues and trash receptacles available to all workers and visitors. Signs will be displayed throughout buildings.

Face Coverings

Employees with public interaction, will be provided masks by the City of Austin. There are a variety of mask options available to employees. Employees may wear their own mask, if that is preferred. Homemade masks should be of good taste and not have any derogatory or inappropriate designs or language. Supervisors should review any employee provided masks for appropriateness. All mask options are reusable, depending on the circumstances of their use, surroundings, duration, etc. Cloth masks, whether City provided or personal, should be laundered on a regular basis. Blue 'surgical' type masks, although typically intended to be disposable, can be reused when worn on an intermittent or in short duration situations. They are considered source control only and could be used for a couple of days. Employees should avoid touching the front of these. KN95 masks can be reused for a longer period of time depending on the circumstances; with proper storage. KN95 masks should be stored in paper bags to prolong the life of the mask (i.e., at the end of each day). Supervisors should review

proper procedures with department personnel. Departments should contact human resources with questions.

As of July 25, 2020, per the Governor's Executive Order 20-81, people in Minnesota are required to wear a face covering in the following situations: (refer to the Order for complete list)

- In an indoor business or public indoor spaces, unless you are alone.
- When riding on public transportation, or in a vehicle that is being used for business purposes.
- For workers only, when working outdoors in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained.
- In any other business, venue or public space which has opted to require a face covering which it would not otherwise be required by the Executive Order.

There are times when a face covering can be temporarily removed, which includes in part:

- When eating or drinking in an indoor business or indoor public space.
- When testifying, speaking or performing in an indoor business or public indoor space, in situations or settings such as theaters, news conferences, legal proceedings, governmental meetings subject to the Open Meeting Law, presentations or lectures, provided that social distancing is always maintained.
- When an individual is alone, including when alone in an office, a room, a cubicle with walls that are higher than face level when social distancing is maintained, a vehicle, or the cab of heavy equipment or machinery, or an enclosed work area.
- When a public safety worker is actively engaged in a public safety role, including but not limited to law enforcement, firefighters, or emergency medical personnel, in situations where wearing a face covering would seriously interfere in the performance of their public safety responsibilities.

Exempt individuals include:

- Individuals with a medical condition, mental health condition or disability that makes it unreasonable for the individual to maintain a face covering. These individuals should consider using alternatives to face coverings, including clear face shields.
- Children who are five years old and under. Those who are under two-years old should never wear a face covering due to the risk of suffocation. Those who are at least two are encouraged to wear a face covering if they can do so in compliance with CDC guidance on *How to Wear Cloth Face Coverings*, (i.e., without frequently touching or removing the covering).
- Individuals at their workplace when wearing a face covering would create a job hazard for the individual or others, as determined by local, state or federal regulators or workplace safety and health standards and guidelines.

Wearing a Face Covering:

- Face coverings are not intended to keep the mask wearer from getting sick. People can carry and spread the virus without showing symptoms, and wearing a mask may help prevent the unknowing spread of germs.
- It is still important to maintain distance and hand washing procedures.

- Cloth face coverings should:
 - o Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
 - o Be secured with ties or ear loops
 - o Include multiple layers of fabric
 - o Allow for breathing without restriction
 - o Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape
- When removing a face mask, be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer when hand-washing is not an option, after removing the mask and placing it in the laundry.
- Use proper donning and doffing techniques to put on and take off your mask. MDH has a video that demonstrates how to do this (see link below).
- If you are using a re-usable face covering, remember to clean it often.
- If you are unable to obtain or no longer have a face covering for yourself, please a new one from your supervisor or human resources.

More information and complete list of the face covering requirements, exemptions along with links to additional information, including the above referenced video, is available on the MDH website <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html#masks>, with additionally information available through the Stay Safe Minnesota website, <https://staysafe.mn.gov/>

Social distancing

Social distancing has been implemented, as applicable, in the workplace through the following engineering and administrative controls:

- Teleworking and remote computer access
- Use of remote meeting technology while at work
- Flexible, split and staggered shifts
- Reduced hours
- Assigning employees to facilities, teams or vehicles

The continuation of the measures outlined above will be reviewed on an on-going basis per department and per position. Positions whose job duties necessitate that they have customer or co-worker collaborative work, may be required to return to on-site work activities.

Employees should maintain six feet of social distancing. Masks and gloves (where necessary) are available to employees who come into close contact with the public as part of their work duties or while working with a co-worker and not able to maintain social distance. Initially, the City will be using temporary barriers until we are able to install permanent glass barriers at the counters located at City Hall including the administration/clerk and engineering areas to reduce exposure to respiratory droplets. Plastic barriers will also be utilized throughout the library, in locations to be determined.

Employees should try to adhere to a one-person per vehicle/equipment when possible. If this is not possible, employees should wear a mask.

Social distancing signage will be posted for employees and visitors including floor signs, where appropriate, to ensure social distancing is easy and visible. Retractable stanchions, portable guards, portable panels, where appropriate, will also be utilized to support enforcement of social distancing.

Housekeeping – Cleaning and Disinfecting

Regular housekeeping practices are currently in place, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of general areas in the work environment, including restrooms, break rooms, meeting rooms, door handles, elevator panels, railings, etc. Employees should also frequently clean and disinfect high-touch areas, such as phones, keyboards, touch screens, copy/postage machines, etc. and where appropriate equipment, tools and machinery should also be disinfecting.

Employees are also expected to wipe/disinfect their personal work spaces and electronics at least once each day. These areas can be cleaned using the provided disinfectant spray or alcohol-based wipes (as available). Dry surfaces thoroughly.

Employees using vehicles and equipment are expected to wipe/disinfect door handles (inside/outside, steering wheel, seat, gear shift, radio/climate control/other knobs, glove box entry, etc.).

Employees should avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. If necessary, clean and disinfect them before and after use.

Additionally, the public counter areas and other surface spaces should be regularly disinfecting using the provided disinfectant spray throughout the day. The frequency will depend on the traffic and level of usage. Pens and other items used during public interaction will also need to be disinfecting on a regular basis. Departments should start each day with a sanitized pen bucket/basket and then when used, placed in a used bucket/basket. The items should then be disinfecting, as necessary, i.e., at the end of each work day. Protocols may differ by department, but once implemented, should be followed at all times.

Communications and training

This Reopening Plan will be communicated via postings in the work places, emailed to employees and shared by supervisors to those without email. Additional communication will be ongoing via email, City Intranet and supervisor updates to employees. Posters addressing proper hand washing, covering cough/sneeze and other reminders related to COVID-19 will be placed throughout the buildings.

Department heads and supervisors are to monitor how effective the plan is by requesting feedback and concerns from employees as well as personal observation. Modifications will be made as necessary.

Although department specific protocols may vary slightly between departments, all of the above guidelines should be utilized.

While these are guidelines in place for employees while at work, it is also important that employees continue to follow recommended guidelines and continued enhanced sanitary practices while away from work as well, for the safety of themselves and their co-workers.