

## COVID-19 Preparedness Plans

Under Governor Tim Walz's Executive Orders, businesses that are in operation during the peacetime emergency are required to establish a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. This includes both critical and non-critical businesses.

A business's COVID-19 Preparedness Plan will establish and explain the policies, practices and conditions the business will implement to meet the industry guidance for the business that are based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines, federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards and applicable executive orders related to safety and health in their workplaces. The plan should have the strong commitment of management and be developed and implemented with the participation of employees. Plans must be communicated to employees and posted at the workplace in a manner that is accessible for employees to review. The Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI), in consultation with the Minnesota Department of Health, has the authority to determine whether a plan is adequate.

A business's COVID-19 Preparedness Plan must include and describe how a business will implement the following, in compliance with the general industry guidance or the specific industry guidance applicable to your business:

1. Policies and procedures that assist in the identification of sick employees and ensure sick employees stay home;
2. Implementation of engineering and administrative protocols for social distancing;
3. Worker hygiene and source controls;
4. Workplace building and ventilation protocols;
5. Workplace cleaning and disinfecting protocols;
6. Drop-off, pick-up and delivery protections and protocols; and
7. Communications and training practices and protocols.

In addition to the above, the plan must also include protections and protocols included in specific industry guidance applicable to a business for circumstances that are typical, unique or specific to the type of business, including the situations where exposure exists for employees, clients, guests, visitors and all others. These additional protections and protocols may include, as provided in the specific industry guidance, the following:

1. Additional protections and protocols for clients, guests and visitors;
2. Additional protections and protocols for personal protective equipment (PPE);
3. Additional protections and protocol for access and assignment;
4. Additional protections and protocol for sanitation and hygiene;
5. Additional protections and protocols for work clothes and handwashing;
6. Additional protections and protocol for distancing and barriers;
7. Additional protections and protocols for managing occupancy;
8. Additional protocols to limit face-to-face interaction;
9. Additional protections for receiving or exchanging payment; and
10. Additional protections and protocols for certain types of businesses within an industry.

A business's COVID-19 Preparedness Plan must address the components included in the state of Minnesota industry guidance developed for the type of business.

# COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Associates and Meridian Services' Offices

Orion

Orion Associates and Meridian Services are committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our employees and visitors. To ensure that we have a safe and healthy workplace, Orion Associates and Meridian Services have developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. All Orion Associates and Meridian Services employees are all responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our workplaces and communities, and that requires full cooperation from all employees. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of everyone in our workplaces.

The COVID-19 Preparedness Plan is administered by Stephen Hage, Chief Administrative Officer, who maintains the overall authority and responsibility for the plan. All Orion Associates and Meridian Services employees, however, are equally responsible for supporting, implementing, complying with and providing recommendations to further improve all aspects of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. Orion Associates and Meridian Services' management staff have our full support in enforcing the provisions of this plan.

Our employees are our most important assets and Orion Associates and Meridian Services is concerned with protecting its employee's health and safety. Employee involvement is essential in developing and implementing a successful COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. We will continue to include our employees in this process by soliciting feedback from our all employees and others as we have done since COVID-19 policies and practices were implemented.

Orion Associates and Meridian Services' COVID-19 Preparedness Plan follows the industry guidance developed by the State of Minnesota, which is based upon Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines for COVID-19, Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) statutes, rules and standards, and Minnesota's relevant and current executive orders. It addresses:

- Ensuring sick employees stay home and prompt identification and isolation of sick persons;
- Social distancing – employees must be at least six-feet apart;
- Worker hygiene and source controls;
- Workplace building and ventilation protocol;
- Workplace cleaning and disinfection protocol;
- Drop-off, pick-up and delivery practices and protocol; and
- Communications and training practices and protocol.

We have reviewed and incorporated the industry guidance applicable to our business provided by the State of Minnesota for the development of this plan, including the industry guidance for Human Services and Long-Term Care. Other conditions and circumstances included in the industry guidance and addressed in the plan that are specific to our business will be updated as indicated.

## **Ensure Sick Employees Stay Home and Prompt Identification and Isolation of Sick Persons**

All Orion Associates and Meridian Services employees are 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 Meridian Services serves also have underlying medical conditions. Meridian Services is required to report all persons served illnesses and staff illnesses to the Department of Health for monitoring.

Everyone who enters the offices of Orion Associates and Meridian Services must complete a self-assessment of their health. This includes entering one of the offices after already having been in one of the other offices. No one is to enter the offices, but must contact their supervisor AND primary care physician if they 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

Anyone who has had contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, or with someone who has been told to self-quarantine by a medical professional or if one has any of the symptoms noted above, they must notify their supervisor immediately.

**Everyone entering and/or reentering Orion Associates and Meridian Services offices must have their temperature taken, using an infrared thermometer. This is to be done 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. Aim the thermometer close to the forehead
3. 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.
4. After the trigger is released, the last temperature measured will be displayed for approximately 15 seconds and the display will turn off automatically.
5. Read your temperature on the screen. If your temperature is **100.4 or greater**, you have a fever. Do NOT proceed into the program.
6. Wipe the thermometer down with a disinfectant solution.

Employees will take their own temperatures at that station provided in the entryway of the Golden Valley West office and at the station immediately inside Suite 200 at the Golden Valley East Office.

**If an employee has any of the symptoms noted above and/or a fever, they are immediately to inform their supervisor and go home. The employee is expected to contact their health care professional and follow the health care provider's advice.**

**If an employee does not have any symptoms noted above and/or a fever, they can enter the office building.**

**If an employee becomes symptomatic while at work in the offices or residential sites, they are immediately to report their illness to their supervisor. The supervisor will assist the employee to find a place to isolate until the employee is able to leave. If a supervisor is unavailable, the employee is to contact another manager/supervisor in their department. The employee's work area and any common area where they have been will be thoroughly cleaned.**

Orion Associates and 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.

Orion Associates and Meridian Services have implemented accommodations for employees with underlying medical conditions or who have household members with underlying health conditions. Employees who have underlying health conditions or household members with underlying medical conditions are to contact Human Resources. They are accommodated, as needed, on a case by case basis depending on the circumstances and their medical documentation.

Orion Associates and Meridian Services will also inform employees if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 at the workplace. Those employees should consult their physician and follow MDH guidelines to self-quarantine for the required amount of time. While Orion Associates and Meridian Services will protect the privacy of employees' health status and health information to the greatest extent possible, supervisors will need to disclose who it was who tested positive for the virus to determine which employees may have been exposed. In addition, Orion Associates and Meridian Services must report information about who has tested positive for COVID-19 and who may have been exposed to the Department of Health for the purposes of contact tracing. Only those who need to know within Orion Associates and Meridian Services will be involved in collecting and reporting this information.

## **Social Distancing – Employees Must be at Least Six Feet Apart**

Social distancing of at least six feet will be implemented and maintained between those at the Orion Associates and Meridian Services offices, including employees, people served and visitors in the workplace through the following engineering and administrative controls:

Offices Included:       Golden Valley West: 9400 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, Minnesota 55427  
  
                                  Golden Valley East: 820 Lilac Drive, Golden Valley, Minnesota 55422  
                                  including Suites 100, 150, 160, 180, 200

Hopkins: 541 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South, Hopkins, Minnesota 55343.

Social distancing helps to minimize the risk of transmission of the disease. This is a critical expectation given the possibility of one having contracted COVID-19 but being asymptomatic.

Most of the Human Resources, Finance Department and Case Management Department staff who work at the offices are currently working at home per Governor Walz's Stay Safe Plan. As Orion Associates and Meridian Services provide essential services, our residential program management are working in the residential homes as well as at the 9400 Golden Valley office. Due to the fact that most of the office staff is working from home, there is adequate space to ensure social distancing of at least 6 feet at all offices. As other employees return to the offices, the organization will take additional measures to maintain six feet in social distancing.

Shared work areas that don't allow for 6 feet social distancing may be modified with protective barriers, above face height, and work times may be staggered. A detailed back to work plan will be developed and provided to all staff when the organization is ready to begin bringing employees working remotely back to work in the office.

Travel between offices will be related to essential job duties. The same sign-in procedures and self-assessment will be expected at all offices.

Prior to entering the offices, pre-screening, self-assessment and temperature taking will be completed. All employees entering Orion Associates and Meridian Services offices will be required to wear a mask, covering their mouth and nose.

Social distancing in common office areas will be managed by limiting the number of people in the area. For example, the kitchens, conference rooms, restrooms, stairways and elevators have been posted with signs limiting the number of people in each area at any time.

Effective July 25, 2020, consistent with Executive Order 20-81, face-covering masks will be required in all Orion Associates and Meridian Services buildings. Employees may remove their masks while alone in private offices or if behind a protective shield above face height and while maintaining social distancing guidelines in accordance with the Governor's order. Masks, , covering their mouth and nose, are required at all times in all common areas in Orion Associates and Meridian Services offices.

Common Areas will be wiped down every 2 hours during the day by the Receptionists and will be thoroughly cleaned at the end of the day by a professional cleaning service.

The kitchen and kitchenette areas with the refrigerators and microwaves should be used for food storage and food warming only. Meal preparation, cooking food on the stove or in the oven, and food sharing are prohibited. Each person who uses the kitchen will wipe down the area after every use.

Orion Associates and Meridian Services will provide Personal protective equipment (PPE) for our staff including masks if needed, cleaner/disinfectant and gloves. Personal protective equipment, phones, pens, computer equipment, desks, cubicles, workstations and offices will be cleaned and maintained by each individual. Other personal work tools and equipment will not be shared and, if used by more than one person, will be cleaned and disinfected between users.

As has been done throughout the pandemic, the organization will provide a jot form for use by all employees to ask questions and provide feedback (<https://form.jotform.com/200723689415054>), which will be routed to our Chief Administrative Officer who will ensure that a response is provided. If the question is answered publicly, it will be answered without reference to the person who asked the question. All employees are encouraged to communicate any immediate concerns to their supervisors. Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are encouraged to use the on-call Chain of Command, if they cannot reach their supervisor, for any concerns related to the residential homes and the people we serve.

## Employee hygiene and source controls

Basic infection prevention measures have been implemented in the offices. Employees are to wash their hands with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds, frequently throughout the day, but especially at the beginning and end of their shift, prior to any mealtimes and after using the restroom. All others entering the offices are required to wash or sanitize their hands prior to or immediately upon entering the offices. Hand-sanitizer dispensers, with sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol, are located 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 have been implemented at our workplaces at all times. Orion Associates and Meridian Services' employees are required to wear masks, covering their mouth and nose. All employees should wear masks when entering and exiting the building, in common areas of the building or if at any time the employee is unable to maintain 6 feet distance. If an employee needs a mask, they should request one before entering the offices. Orion Associates and Meridian Services has disposable masks available at the entryways to the buildings, as well as cloth masks which are available upon request.

Residential staff are expected always to wear a mask, covering their mouth and nose, while in the residential programs. Employees may be instructed to use more Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) by their supervisor on a case-by-case basis. These would include gowns, face shields, gloves and eye shields. To the greatest extent possible, staff should use PPE while providing person care to the people we support.



Signs instructing staff to ensure handwashing and “cover your cough” have been posted in the offices. 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.

All Employees are instructed to cover their mouths and noses with their sleeves or a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and to avoid touching their faces, particularly their mouths, noses and eyes, with their hands. Employees are to dispose of tissues in the trash receptacles provided and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterwards.

### **Handwashing Best Practices**

One of the most important way to prevent the spread of any illness, including COVID-19, is frequent handwashing. Hand sanitizer may be used as an alternative only if running water is not accessible. Basic infection prevention measures have been implemented at Orion Associates and 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.

### **Workplace Building and Ventilation Protocol**

Orion Associates and Meridian Services are required to address the issues of 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 offices, air recirculation has been limited, and ventilation systems will continue to be properly used and maintained. Steps are also being taken to minimize the air flow blowing across office spaces.

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

## **Workplace Cleaning and Disinfection Protocol**

Regular cleaning and disinfecting practices have been implemented, including a schedule for routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment, vehicles and areas in the work environment, including restrooms, break and lunchrooms and conference rooms. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting are being conducted of high-touch areas, including door handles, elevator panels, copy machines and counter space.

Every employee is responsible for cleaning and disinfecting their own phones, keyboards, touch screens and desk area.

Cleaning products will be supplied at all offices that include at least 60 % alcohol so that areas are properly disinfected.

If an employee becomes symptomatic while at work in the offices or residential sites, they are immediately to report their illness to their supervisor. The supervisor will assist the employee to find a place to isolate until the employee is able to leave. If a supervisor is unavailable, the employee is to contact another manager/supervisor in their department. The employee's work area and any common area where they have been will be thoroughly cleaned.

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

Orion Associate and Meridian Services' regular practices of cleaning and disinfecting have been implemented, including a schedule for routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment,

vehicles, restrooms, lunch areas, meeting rooms and all other high-touch areas. All Orion Associates and 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.

## **Drop-off, Pick-up and Delivery Practices and Protocol**

Any deliveries to the offices will be made within social distancing protocols including drop off at the door or at the front desk. All pick-ups made at the front desks of the offices will be made in the same manner. All mail delivery between offices will be made following social distancing protocols as well as safe hygiene practices, using gloves and washing hands or using hand sanitizer per protocols. All delivery persons will be expected to wear masks, covering their mouth and nose, as they enter the buildings. The Receptionists will be behind a protective plastic screens to ensure their ability to safely provide assistance to visitors.

## **Communications and Training Practices and Protocol**

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plans are being communicated to employees on July 24, 2020 and necessary training will be provided. Additional communication and training will be ongoing by and will be conducted for new employees by the Human Resources Department. 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 supervisors or to the Chief Administrative Officer using the jot form provided (<https://form.jotform.com/200723689415054> ).

Instructions will be communicated to all employees, including temporary employees, and to independent contractors, 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, guests and visitors will also be advised not to enter the workplace 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.

All management employees are expected to monitor how effectively the program has been implemented. All 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 by July 24, 2020. It

will be updated, as necessary, by Stephen Hage, designated plan administrator. The plan will also be posted on our website for employee and the general public.

Certified by:

Stephen Hage  
June 30, 2020  
Chief Administrative Officer

# Appendix A – Guidance for Developing a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

## General

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Coronavirus (COVID-19) – [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV)

Minnesota Department of Health (MDH): Coronavirus – [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus)

State of Minnesota: COVID-19 response – <https://mn.gov/covid19>

## Businesses

CDC: Resources for businesses and employers – [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html)

CDC: General business frequently asked questions – [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html)

CDC: Building/business ventilation – [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html)

MDH: Businesses and employers: COVID-19 – [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html)

MDH: Health screening checklist – [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf)

MDH: Materials for businesses and employers – [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/materials](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/materials)

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED): COVID-19 information and resources – <https://mn.gov/deed/newscenter/covid/>

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI): Updates related to COVID-19 – [www.dli.mn.gov/updates](https://www.dli.mn.gov/updates)

Federal OSHA – [www.osha.gov](https://www.osha.gov)

## Handwashing

MDH: Handwashing video translated into multiple languages – [www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdQuPGVcceg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdQuPGVcceg)

## Respiratory Etiquette: Cover your Cough or Sneeze

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html)

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing\\_sneezing.html](https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing_sneezing.html)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html)

## Social Distancing

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html)

## **Housekeeping**

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html)

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html)

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html)

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): [www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2](http://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2)

## **Employees Exhibiting Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19**

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/returntowork.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/returntowork.pdf)

State of Minnesota: <https://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/if-sick/get-tested/index.jsp>

## **Training**

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html)

Federal OSHA: [www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/about.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/about.pdf)