

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 are concerned with protecting our 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 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 positive COVID-19 tests and staff positive COVID-19 tests to the Department of Health for monitoring.

- 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.

Plan Update May 17, 2021: Temperature taking at office entryways has been discontinued. Employees should continue to self-monitor for the symptoms of COVID-19. 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 seek COVID-19 testing.

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 your supervisor is unavailable, the employee is to contact another manager/supervisor in their department. Their work area and any common area where they will be thoroughly cleaned thereafter.

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. Employees who have underlying health 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.

An employee who tests positive for COVID-19 will be asked if they want their identity to be kept private or if they are willing to share their identity. Orion Associates and Meridian Services will inform other employees if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 at the workplace. The identity of the person who tested positive will only be provided with that person's consent. While Orion Associates and Meridian Services will protect the privacy of employees' health status and health information to the greatest extent possible, the employee's supervisor will need to disclose who it was who tested positive for COVID-19 to other upper management personnel 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 Minnesota Department of Health for the purposes of contact tracing. Only certain Orion Associates and Meridian Services personnel will be involved in collecting and reporting this information.

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 updated assessment and quarantine information was added December 2020 in accordance with CDC and MDH 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 before returning to work.

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

It is recommended that when a staff person tests positive for COVID-19 that everyone who had contact 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).

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 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 their exposure is 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. 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. This can be considered when faced with staffing shortages and when the staff person agrees to these conditions.

Plan Update May 17, 2021: Fully vaccinated employees may not be required to quarantine for 14 days following a high-risk exposure. People are considered to be fully vaccinated 2 weeks following their final COVID-19 vaccine dose. Vaccinated employees who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 should self-monitor for COVID-19 through day 14. If you are exposed to a person who tests positive for COVID-19, the organization’s designee for contact tracing will ask you to indicate your vaccination status and if potentially exempt from quarantine to show your vaccination card. This information will be kept confidential and separate from other documents in your personnel file.

Plan Update June 21, 2021: Vaccinated people are not required to wear masks or social distance, while those who are unvaccinated must continue to wear masks and social distance. As an organization, we have implemented these recommendations and guidelines as work rules for our office staff.

Our process for requiring mask wearing will be as follows:

- 1. Signs will be posted reminding unvaccinated employees to wear masks and social distance.**
- 2. If you are unvaccinated and are not wearing a mask, an administrator may ask you if you are vaccinated and remind you that you are required to wear a mask.**
- 3. If additional follow up is required thereafter, a Human Resources representative will contact you.**

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 2nd 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.

Plan Update 6/21/2021: Staff who are fully vaccinated are not required to social distance. Staff who are unvaccinated are required to social distance and may ask their supervisors to move work spaces to ensure 6 feet distance.

Common Areas will be wiped down throughout the day and will be thoroughly cleaned at the end of the day by a professional cleaning service.

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. 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 continue to be properly used and maintained. We have made the decision to pursue additional upgrades to our HVAC systems in the offices that have become available in response to COVID-19. These upgrades are not required; however, the organization has chosen to invest in them to further protect the health and safety of our employees. There have been delays in product availability due to COVID-19. These upgrades will be installed as soon as possible.

Plan Update May 17, 2021: Golden Valley East now has the additional protection of Bi-polar Ionization modules for ventilation. The Hopkins and Golden Valley West buildings will be completed once this product becomes available for installation.

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 routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment, vehicles and areas in the work environment, including restrooms, break and lunchrooms and conference rooms. Every employee is also responsible for cleaning common areas and objects after use including microwaves, counter space and copy machines.

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 your supervisor is unavailable, the employee is to contact another manager/supervisor in their department. Their work area and any common area 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 offices in accordance with product labels, safety data sheets and manufacturer specifications, and are being used with required personal protective equipment for the product.

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 were originally communicated to employees on July 24, 2020 and necessary training provided. Additional communication and training has been 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 has been posted throughout the workplace and made readily available to employees by email. 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
Chief Administrative Officer

Plan Issued: June 30, 2020.
Plan Updated: December 20, 2020
February 21, 2021
May 17, 2021
June 21, 2021

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

Minnesota Department of Health (MDH): Coronavirus – 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

CDC: General business frequently asked questions – 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

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

MDH: Health screening checklist – www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf

MDH: Materials for businesses and employers – 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

Federal OSHA – www.osha.gov

Handwashing

MDH: Handwashing video translated into multiple languages – 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

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

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

Social Distancing

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

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

Housekeeping

CDC: 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

CDC: 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

Employees Exhibiting Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19

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

MDH: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html

MDH: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf

MDH: 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

Federal OSHA: www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf

MDH: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/about.pdf