



COVID-19 Preparedness Plan – DHS-Licensed Non-Residential Programs

(SUD, RULE 29, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES)

According to Executive Order 20-48, critical businesses, including providers licensed or certified by the Department of Human Services to deliver nonresidential services, are required to follow guidance from the [Minnesota Department of Health \(MDH\)](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The MDH/CDC guidance is designed to prevent, mitigate, or respond to the transmission of COVID-19.

This plan was developed using the “COVID-19 Preparedness Plan Optional Template for DHS Licensed or Certified Nonresidential Programs” (“Plan”) template provided by DHS. NHCFS will evaluate, monitor, and update Plans as necessary, on a regular basis. Strategies may be modified slightly for successful implementation at each licensed site.

1. Hygiene and source controls

NHCFS PLAN FOR HYGIENE AND SOURCE CONTROLS

- Staff required to wear a mask outside of personal office and if another staff or client is in their office; clients wear mask when inside the office. *Client will need to inform NHCFS if s/he has a medical condition for which wearing a mask is not recommended by the CDC.*
- Disposable facemasks available for staff/clients.
- Drinking fountains are shut down; coffee stations shut down.
- COVID-19 supply preparedness boxes available from NHCFS nursing department in the event there is a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.
- Hand sanitizer stations at each entrance, in each office, at reception desk, in each conference rooms; extra hand sanitizer on-site.
- Tissues in each office, at reception desk, in each conference room; extra tissues on-site.
- ‘Cover your cough’ signs posted throughout the building, ‘hand washing’ signs posted in bathrooms.
- Trash can near door in bathrooms.
- Travel: NHCFS follows guidance from the CDC and MDH, and Executive Orders from the MN Governor’s Office regarding travel restrictions.
- In light of the COVID pandemic, the CDC and MDH have announced the importance of receiving a flu vaccination for the 2020-2021 year. Nursing staff has provided/will continue to provide resources of organizations in our communities who will be administering flu vaccinations this year.

2. Cleaning and disinfecting

NHCFS PLAN FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTING:

- No shared office supplies among staff: supplies removed from mail rooms/conference rooms; encourage staff to tie a pen around their neck to prevent setting pen down and someone else picking it up.
- Clean and dirty pen containers at entrance(s) and reception desk to be used for check-ins.
- Toys/Activities cleaned/sanitized before and after each supervised visit; families may bring toys to use during the visit.
- Staff cleaning:
 - In charge of cleaning own office with wipes and/or bleach water
 - Personal use of bathroom use wipes and/or bleach water to clean bathroom after use
 - Personal use of mail room use wipes and/or bleach water to clean bathroom after use
 - Conference rooms – staff that uses conference room must wipe down after use
 - Reception areas – disinfectant spray; will be assigned daily to staff on-site
 - Client Bathroom – disinfectant spray; will be assigned daily to staff on-site
 - Personal use of breakroom use wipes and/or bleach water to clean bathroom after use
- Offices are cleaned weekly by a cleaning service.

3. Arrivals and departures

NHCFS PLAN FOR ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES:

- Clients wait in their vehicle or outside the building until directed to enter. See 5. *Screening and policies for service recipients exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19*, below.
- Clean and dirty pen containers at entrance(s) and reception desk to be used for check-ins.
- Therapist will schedule next appointment (instead of admin staff) to avoid clients congregating at the reception desk.
- Instructions (i.e. do not enter if experiencing symptoms, wear a mask, etc.) are posted on each entrance.
- Where applicable, identify which entrance is to be used for clients, staff. Bemidji office: Main entrance will be only entrance utilized by clients; the side entrance remains locked (signage posted instructing clients use front entrance).
- Individuals accompanying the client to the visit are required to stay in their vehicle, or in the therapy office (if clinically appropriate and approved).

4. Screening and policies for staff and volunteers exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19

NHCFS PLAN FOR SCREENING AND POLICIES FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS:

- Symptoms of COVID-19 educational materials posted around the building.
- Staff take temperature and complete Health Screening Checklist at employee entrance; put in Director's mailbox. *If staff has a temperature over 100.4 OR presence of symptoms on the checklist, s/he cannot continue into the building; s/he is instructed to return home and call their Supervisor/Director.
- NHCFS will follow the appropriate MDH guidance [i.e. *COVID-19 When to Return to Work*] to determine when an employee may return to work when s/he has symptoms and is tested for COVID-19, does not have symptoms and is tested for COVID-19, etc.
- Staff are not expected to self-quarantine if another person living in his/her home has been instructed to self-quarantine due to possible exposure.

CONFIRMED COVID-19

- If a staff is diagnosed with COVID-19, the staff person is responsible to immediately notify their immediate supervisor that s/he was confirmed positive. The supervisor, or designee, is responsible for notifying the Human Resources Director and the Compliance Director (*to complete OSHA requirements*).
- Staff from the COVID-19 Task Force (i.e. Program Director, QA Director, HR Director, Nursing, etc.) will facilitate action steps to be taken, including notification to MDH (if required and/or not yet reported) and coordinating contact tracing of staff and clients.
Additional information regarding contact tracing is included at the end of the Plan under the heading 'Notifying and Working with MDH'.

5. Screening and policies for service recipients exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19

NHCFS PLAN FOR SCREENING AND POLICIES FOR SERVICE RECIPIENTS:

- Procedure for screening clients:
 1. Call office when arrive and stay in car, admin staff will complete the COVID-19 health screen
 2. Admin will notify therapist when client is clear for appointment
 3. Therapist will walk outside to take client temperature and get client
 4. Client put mask on
 5. Use hand sanitizer at front door
 6. Therapist schedule your next appointment
 7. Client leaves and therapist wipes down own office

- If client has a temperature over 100.4 OR presence of symptoms on the checklist, s/he cannot continue with the appointment; appointment will be rescheduled, a telehealth appointment may be offered/recommended.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 educational materials posted around the building; CDC and MDH resources will be provided to clients upon request.
- If a client is diagnosed with COVID-19, the staff person receiving this information will notify the NHCFS Nursing Director (or designee) that a client was confirmed positive (client identify will not be disclosed). The Nursing Director(or designee) will facilitate action steps to be taken, including notification to MDH, if not yet notified.

6. Social distancing throughout the day

NHCFS PLAN FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING:

- Waiting areas/common areas closed.
- Staff coordinate with one another when scheduling groups so they do not overlap.
- Groups facilitated outdoors; if raining, cancel unless there is appropriate space inside to facilitate the group while maintaining social distancing.
- Group size limited to 10 people, including staff.
- No shared offices.
- Bemidji office: back bathrooms for staff only; clients use front bathrooms.
- Staff that are able to work from home are encouraged to do so.
- Provide services via telehealth when client is amenable to this type of service provision.

7. Food preparation and meals

NHCFS PLAN FOR FOOD PREPARATION AND MEALS:

- Food/Meals are not prepared for clients at these facilities/programs.
- Staff encouraged not to share food/drinks with one another.
- Staff to wipe down areas in staff kitchen/break room after use. (*see staff cleaning under 2. Cleaning and disinfecting, above*)

8. Face coverings

NHCFS PLAN FOR FACE COVERINGS

- Per the Executive Order 20-81 from the MN Governor's office, a face mask or covering is required to enter NHCFS facilities.

- Signs are posted on the entrances and throughout the facility instructing persons to wear a face covering per the Executive Order.
- Staff required to wear a mask outside of personal office and if another staff or client is in their office; clients wear mask when inside the office. *Client will need to inform NHCFS if s/he has a condition for which wearing a mask is not recommended by the CDC; proof or explanation of medical condition, mental health condition, or disability is not required.*
- Facemasks available for staff/clients.
- Facemasks must be worn by all staff and clients facilitating and participating in group.
- Nursing staff will provide training to staff on the appropriate way to put on and take off a face covering.

9. Ventilation

NHCFS PLAN FOR VENTILATION:

- Staff encouraged to open office windows for fresh air, weather-permitting.
- Facility HVAC systems are regularly maintained.
- Air purifiers have been placed in some of the larger conference rooms. Staff are directed to discuss use of air purifiers with their immediate supervisor.

10. Communications and training

NHCFS PLAN FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND TRAINING:

- All agency staff have access to the COVID-19 preparedness plans via NHCFS IT network Share Drive; staff will explain relevant sections of the plan to clients, as needed and appropriate, and provide clients with resources to follow the plan (i.e. face mask).
- The QA Director updates agency staff of changes made to the Plan via email; email includes a summary of the updates and a copy of the updated Plan.

MODIFICATIONS TO MENTAL HEALTH CENTER CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

The Commissioner of Human Services has temporarily modified certain requirements for certified mental health centers, determining these modifications necessary to provide flexibility to providers, mitigate the spread of the virus, and protect the health and safety of clients and staff. NHCFS has implemented the following:

- A mental health professional is not required to be onsite at each satellite location if:
 - The center has other methods for a mental health professional to supervise the services provided at each location, such as telephone and video; and
 - The mental health professional documents that, in their professional judgement, services can be safely and effectively provided with this type of supervision.
- Case consultation meetings are not required to occur twice a month if the center has and follows an alternative process for consultation that must include a meeting once a month.
- A mental health professional may provide the required client-specific supervisory contact to a mental health practitioner via telephone or video communication instead of face-to-face.
- Requirements for multidisciplinary peer reviews of the annual caseload of each mental health professional scheduled during the peacetime emergency are temporarily suspended.
- Requirements for multidisciplinary staff ratios and amounts of hours of mental health professionals are temporarily suspended.

MODIFICATIONS TO SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER TREATMENT LICENSING REQUIREMENTS:

The Commissioner of Human Services has temporarily modified certain requirements for licensed substance use disorder treatment programs, determining these modifications necessary to provide flexibility to providers, mitigate the spread of the virus, and protect the health and safety of clients and staff. NHCFS has implemented the following:

- Programs may temporarily suspend group counseling or limit the attendance of clients or staff at sessions if they are unable to accommodate requirements for social distancing or other community mitigation strategies. If programs continue to provide therapy or counseling services in a group setting, programs are encouraged to limit group sizes to no more than ten people total, including clients and staff, based on recommendations from MDH and CD to limit group activities and maintain social distancing.
- Comprehensive assessments may be completed by telephone or telehealth.
- A counselor, recovery peer, or treatment coordinator may provide treatment services from their home via telephone or video communication (telehealth) to a client in their home.
- Programs may document a client's verbal approval of a treatment plan in the client file instead of requiring the client's signature.
- Nonresidential programs are not required to have at least one staff person present at the program is first aid and CPR certified.
- Annual job performance evaluation requirements are temporarily suspended.

COMPLIANCE WITH EXECUTIVE ORDERS:

NHCFS staff are expected to comply with all Executive Orders from the MN Governor's office pertaining to COVID-19.

NOTIFYING AND WORKING WITH MDH:

You are expected to notify MDH when there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in your program by calling 651-297-1304 or 1-800-657-3504 (Mon. – Fri., 8AM-5PM). You are expected to work with MDH and comply with their directive when given.

The QA Director, or designee, will notify MDH of a positive case in the program, if required (meets the definition of an ‘outbreak’ for the facility/industry type) and/or not yet reported; and be the primary contact for MDH in facilitating and reporting contact tracing information, if needed. NHCFS will follow MDH guidance and instruction regarding contact tracing.