



COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Access North

Access North is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our workers, volunteers and consumers. To ensure we have as safe and healthy workplace, we have developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Leadership and 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 among our employees, leadership and consumers. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of our workers and workplaces.

Leadership and employees are responsible for implementing and complying with all aspects of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan.

Our employees are one of our most important assets. We are serious about safety and health at Access North. Employee involvement is essential in developing and implementing a successful COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. We have involved our employees in this process by engaging with each other at weekly Covid-19 conference calls and weekly staff meetings in all departments. Our COVID-19 Preparedness Plan follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines, federal OSHA standards related to COVID-19 and Executive Order 20-48, and addresses:

- hygiene and respiratory etiquette;
- engineering and administrative controls for social distancing;
- cleaning, disinfecting, decontamination and ventilation;
- prompt identification and isolation of sick persons;
- communications and instructions for consumers;
- communications and training that will be provided to all employees; and
- management and supervision necessary to ensure effective implementation of the plan.

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. The following policies and procedures are being implemented to assess workers' health status prior to entering the workplace and for workers to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms.

- Employees have been instructed to report fever, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat or inability to taste or smell to their supervisor.
- Work plans will involve an on-going strategy for both remote and on-site work in each office to prevent a concentration of staff in the offices at any one time.
- "No touch" thermometers will be available at every office location and employees will have their temperature taken upon entry into the building. Employees will all play a role by rotating responsibility and each taking their turn to take temperatures. An employee taking temperatures will wear gloves, mask and face shield.
- Face shields will be issued to all staff and should remain in their possession and labeled with their name.

- Employees should avoid using commonly shared office equipment such as pens, staplers, etc. whenever possible.
- Masks are required to be worn by all staff whenever in the office or common areas (masks can be removed when working alone in their personal offices).
- Masks are required to be worn whenever traveling in a vehicle if more than one person is present. No more than 2 people per vehicle are currently allowed to travel together.
- If someone becomes symptomatic while at work they must immediately contact their supervisor and Cathy Baudeck-RN/Infection Control. A symptomatic employee should attempt to safely exit the building & prevent further human contact. A thorough cleaning of the employee's office space and points of contact throughout the office must be planned & coordinated by the supervisor.
- Meeting rooms should be used by as few people at any one time that allows for social distancing.
- Lunch breaks will be taken within personal offices if possible. For employees without an office, the lunch room can be used but must be cleaned & sanitized when finished by that employee.
- Employees working directly with consumers can utilize office meeting spaces as long as proper social distancing guidelines are followed. Meeting with consumers and job applicants should be by appointment or scheduled. No office drop-in or unscheduled appointments are allowed at this time.
- Whenever scheduling interviews or appointments, proper preparations must be taken to communicate expectations with the applicant or consumer regarding social distancing.
- All ramp and home modifications should be planned with the homeowner and completed with no direct contact with the homeowner or assuring that proper social distancing is observed. Work in any consumer home will involve the use of masks, gloves, coveralls as appropriate, foot covers, and the use of comprehensive sanitary precautions.
- If volunteers or Department of Corrections staff or volunteers are used for ramps they also need to wear masks when working with other staff unless appropriate social distancing can be performed.
- Temperatures will be taken daily of all maintenance and ramp staff.
- If staff is going into stores, or facilities, masks should be worn and hands should be sanitized when re-entering the vehicle.
- Assistive technology installations will follow a similar no-contact install procedure. Ideally, installs can be supported using technology as teaching and guidance to the consumer. AT equipment from the lending library can be shipped or dropped off at the home by staff but should be coordinated with the consumer.

Office Visitor/Consumer Procedure

- Service consumers and job applicants can access the offices by appointment between the working hours of 8:00 am – 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday.
- Currently offices remain closed to the general public for drop in traffic. This practice will continue and will be reevaluated quarterly by Leadership.
- Once offices reopen, it will be in a limited fashion (anticipated in late summer). Office hours open to the general public will be limited to 8:00 am – 12:00 pm and by appointment for the remainder of 2020. Note: the exception will be Duluth which will have office hours open to the general public of 12:00-4:30 pm.
- Each office reception area will have a plexi-glass shield and instructions for social distancing within the lobby/reception area.
- Visitors to the office will answer a short series of questions relating to their current health status.
- Temperatures will be taken of anyone entering the Office.

Scheduling Appointments:

Access North offices will be open to consumers and others by appointment only. Each office will have meeting spaces set up for the appropriate number of people allowed (tables, chairs, etc.):

- Hibbing - Green Room, Board Room or Large Conference Room
- Duluth - First Floor Conference Room (behind reception)
- Brainerd - Conference Room
- Walker - Conference Room

You are responsible for scheduling all your appointments on the Google calendars for the appropriate room.

IL Specialists and Qualified Professionals will be responsible for scheduling appointments and following the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan: All PPE is stocked in the supply room in the Hibbing office. Hand sanitizer, surface sanitizer spray, paper towels, face masks (cloth and paper), face shields, gloves, alcohol wipes, and sanitizing wipes (when available). Management staff from other offices are responsible to stock their offices with needed supplies. All Access North staff will be responsible to wear masks, use hand sanitizer, wash hands and follow proper procedures as listed in the plan. Please review expectations with the consumer when scheduling appointments. This way, everyone will be on the same page upon arrival:

- Provide the person with a number to the office or your cell phone and be ready to meet them at the front door.
- Advise them that they should come alone unless an advocate* or interpreter is needed for the appointment. Encourage the use of a conference call if a group meeting is needed. Discourage family members or others joining the meeting to ensure proper safety guidelines.
 - *An advocate is someone who is necessary in assisting consumers meet their goals, such as an ARMHS worker, or is needed for as an extension of that person to be independent, such as a DSP.
- Notify them ahead of time that Access North requires that everyone wear masks. Let them know that we will have masks available if they do not have access to one.
- Notify them that we will be taking their temperature and asking them a few health-related questions
 - Have you been feeling well?
 - Is anyone sick within your home?
 - Have you been knowingly exposed to someone confirmed positive for Covid-19?

Have you been experiencing any of the following?

- Fever or chills
- Dry cough
- Congestion or runny nose (not related to allergies)
- Tiredness
- Muscle or body aches
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell

- An unusual rash

If answering “Yes” to any of these questions, the appointment will have to be rescheduled and encourage the person to contact their healthcare provider.

- Inform them there will be hand sanitizer available and we ask they use it upon arrival.

When your appointment arrives:

- Make sure you are available and meet them at the front door with face masks and hand sanitizer available.
- Ask questions provided to consumer on their health and exposure.
- Provide a mask if they do not have one, the consumer should keep this mask and they will not be reused. Take temperature. A no touch thermometer will be available. Face shields will be available for use when taking the temperature. If temperature is 100.4 or higher the appointment will need to be rescheduled.
- Provide hand sanitizer for use upon entering the building and throughout the appointment.

If the person has an advocate or interpreter they must follow all of the same procedures prior to entering the building.

Once the above has been completed they may enter the building and go straight to the scheduled meeting room. The tables will be set up for individuals to sit at least 6 feet to align with safe social distancing.

The meeting room must be immediately and properly sanitized after all appointments, this will be the responsibility of the person who scheduled the appointment. Sanitize tables, chairs, pens, door knobs, computer or any other items used during the appointment. Doorways and breezeways must also be sanitized focusing on interior and exterior door handles, push bars, doorbells, automatic door opener, etc.

Consumer computers will be available to use by appointment only. The same procedures listed above apply for computer use.

Leave Guidelines

Access North has implemented leave policies that promote workers 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.

The FMLA entitles eligible employees to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons under the same terms and conditions as if the employee had not taken leave. Eligible employees are entitled to:

Twelve work weeks of leave in a 12-month period for:

- the birth of a child and to care for the newborn child within one year of birth;
- the placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child within one year of placement;
- to care for the employee’s spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition;
- a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her job;

- any qualifying emergency arising out of the fact that the employee’s spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on “covered active duty;” or
- Twenty-six work weeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin to the employee (military caregiver leave).

The employee may be required to provide a physician statement and a request for leave of absence if they miss more than three consecutive days of work.

Accommodations for workers with underlying medical conditions or who have household members with underlying health conditions have been implemented (see ESST and Federal Cares Act guidance).

Paid Time Off (PTO) is available for eligible employees according to your employment handbook or policy.

City of Duluth Earned Sick and Safe Time – This paid time off is earned by employees whenever they work in city limits of Duluth. For every 50 hours worked, employees earn one hour of paid leave to use for:

Caring for themselves or a family member due to a physical or mental health condition or illness

Attending a doctor’s appointment or seeking preventative care

Caring for themselves, a family member, or a roommate for reasons related to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Employee Rights under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) as stated below:

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA or Act) requires certain employers to provide their employees with paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. These provisions will apply from April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. ► PAID LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS Generally, employers covered under the Act must provide employees: Up to two weeks (80 hours, or a part-time employee’s two-week equivalent) of paid sick leave based on the higher of their regular rate of pay, or the applicable state or Federal minimum wage, paid at: • 100% for qualifying reasons #1-3 below, up to \$511 daily and \$5,110 total; • 2/3 for qualifying reasons #4 and 6 below, up to \$200 daily and \$2,000 total; and • Up to 12 weeks of paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave paid at 2/3 for qualifying reason #5 below for up to \$200 daily and \$12,000 total. A part-time employee is eligible for leave for the number of hours that the employee is normally scheduled to work over that period. ► ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES In general, employees of private sector employers with fewer than 500 employees, and certain public sector employers, are eligible for up to two weeks of fully or partially paid sick leave for COVID-19 related reasons (see below). Employees who have been employed for at least 30 days prior to their leave request may be eligible for up to an additional 10 weeks of partially paid expanded family and medical leave for reason #5 below. ► QUALIFYING REASONS FOR LEAVE RELATED TO COVID-19 An employee is entitled to take leave related to COVID-19 if the employee is unable to work, including unable to telework, because the employee:

1. Is subject to Federal, State, or Local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID 19
2. Has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID 19
3. Is experiencing COVID 19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis
4. Is caring for an individual subject to an order described in (1) or self-quarantine as described in (2)
5. Is caring for his or her child whose school or place of care is closed (or child care provider is unavailable) due to COVID 19 related reasons
6. Is experiencing any other substantially-similar condition specified by the US Department of Health and Human Services.

Access North has also implemented a guideline for informing workers if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 at their workplace and requiring them to quarantine for the required amount of time. Access North will provide employees with a “Notice of Workplace Exposure to a Communicable Disease” when we have been notified that one of our employees has been diagnosed with coronavirus.

Access North will keep all medical information confidential and will only disclose it on a need-to-know basis.

Handwashing

Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented 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 restroom. All visitors to the workplace will be required to wash or sanitize their hands immediately upon entering the facility. Hand-sanitizer dispensers (that use sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol) are 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.

Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze

Employees and visitors are being instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and to avoid touching their face, in particular their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. They should dispose of tissues in provided trash receptacles 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, customers and visitors. Infection Control guidelines will be posted in the lobby areas of each office location.

Social distancing

Social distancing of six feet will be implemented and maintained between employees, volunteers and visitors in the workplace through the following engineering and administrative controls: A strategy of telework will continue to be utilized throughout 2020 and reevaluated for effectiveness after that. A specific plan by office location will be developed. Each conference room/lunch room/reception area will be set up to successfully implement social distancing.

Common use such as copier and employee mailbox locations should observe social distancing and will have infection control procedures posted. Each person using the copier is responsible for sanitizing touch points on the equipment.

Cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation

Every employee will share in the responsibility of office cleanliness and sanitization. Immediately upon the use of a conference room, break room, etc., each employee will have the responsibility to clean the area thoroughly. Regular housekeeping practices are being implemented, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment, and areas in the work environment, including restrooms, break rooms, lunch rooms and meeting rooms. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted in high-touch areas, such as phones, keyboards, touch screens, controls, door handles, railings, copy machines, etc.

Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfectant supplies have been purchased and are available for use in accordance with product labels, safety data sheets and manufacturer specifications and are being used with required personal protective equipment for the product. Surfaces that must be sanitized will be sprayed and wiped off with a paper towel. Gloves should be worn when sanitizing any area and disposed of on completion of the process.

Management staff from other offices can obtain all sanitizing products from the Hibbing supply room and are responsible to stock their offices with the needed supplies.

Communications and training

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan was provided to all employees and training was provided. Additional communication and training will be ongoing and provided to all workers who did not receive the initial training. Instructions will be communicated to customers and visitors about: how to ensure social distancing between the consumers and employees; required hygiene practices; and use face masks whenever in the offices. Employees, consumers and volunteers will also be advised not to enter the workplace if they are experiencing symptoms or have contracted COVID-19. The Leadership Team will monitor how effective the program has been implemented. Leadership and employees are to work through this new program together and update the training as necessary. This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan has been certified by the Leadership Team and is posted throughout the workplace. It will be updated as necessary.

Certified by:

Donald Brunette/Executive Director

