



## COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Access North

### Updated Plan Guidance-9/1/2021

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 monthly All-Staff meetings and weekly department meetings. 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 updated 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. Employees should not report to work if experiencing these symptoms.
- Quarantine if you have been in [close contact](#) (within 6 feet of someone for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with someone who has COVID-19, unless you have been [fully vaccinated](#). People who are fully vaccinated do NOT need to quarantine after contact with someone who had COVID-19 unless they have [symptoms](#). Anyone experiencing symptoms should not come to the office and should immediately inform their supervisor. However, fully vaccinated people should get tested 3-5 days after their exposure, even if they don't have symptoms and must immediately wear a mask & social distance indoors for 14 days following

exposure or until their test result is negative. Please reach out to your supervisor to explore options to work remotely if an exposure occurs.

- Individuals **who have not been fully vaccinated and have symptoms or has COVID-19 or who were in close contact (within 6 feet for over 15 minutes) with someone with COVID-19** are to stay home and not come to the office/meet with Consumers until 10 days after symptom onset (or if no symptoms, 10 days after close contact exposure OR 7 days if negative test (tested after 5 days from exposure) and no symptoms, but still monitor for 10 days), with at least 24 hours of no fever and improvement of symptoms without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Please reach out to your supervisor to explore options to work remotely if an exposure occurs.
- If an employee has COVID-19 or recently been closely exposed to someone with COVID-19, the people who may have been in close contact (within 6 feet for over 15 minutes) with that employee will be notified of possible exposure. Confidentiality of the individual will be maintained as much as possible.
- Masks are now **required to be worn & social distancing is required for fully vaccinated or unvaccinated staff or volunteers due to the new highly transmissible Delta variant** whenever in the office, common areas or shop.
- Masks are **now required to be worn for fully vaccinated and unvaccinated staff** whenever traveling in a vehicle if more than one person is present.
- Meeting rooms should continue to allow for social distancing of 6' for all staff.
- Work schedules will now involve a **hybrid strategy for both remote and on-site work** in each office to prevent a concentration of staff in the offices at any one time. Please consult your supervisor for specific work scheduling changes.
- Lunch breaks can now be taken within the lunch room for fully vaccinated staff but it must be left in a clean & sanitary condition. Social distancing is still required in the lunch room and throughout the building.
- Employees working directly with consumers can fully utilize office meeting spaces but should continue to allow for social distancing. Masks are now required whenever working directly with consumers.
- All ramp, home modification and assistive technology installs should be planned with the homeowner and staff must follow masking and social distancing guidelines. Home modification work in any consumer home will involve the use of masks, gloves and may involve coveralls as appropriate, foot covers, and the use of comprehensive sanitary precautions.
- Employee log sheets will continue, but taking temperatures will no longer be required while in any of the offices.

## Office Visitor/Consumer Procedure

- Service consumers and job applicants can access the offices by appointment at any time between the working hours of 8:00 am – 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday.
- Offices have now reopened with limited hours to the general public for drop in traffic. The offices will now observe the following schedule Monday through Friday: Hibbing: 8:00am – Noon, Duluth: Noon-4:30pm, Walker: 10:00am – 2:30pm, Brainerd: TBD. We anticipate a full reopening of the offices later in the summer as the state reaches a 70% vaccination rate or what is now commonly referred to as “herd immunity” but may be delayed due to the highly transmissible Delta variant.

## Scheduling Appointments:

Access North offices will be open to consumers and others by appointment at any time. Consumers will be informed that masks and social distancing is now required due to the highly transmissible Delta variant.

***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 if doors are locked (outside of new office hours).
- Advise them that masking and social distancing is now required for fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people.
- Confirm that they are feeling well.

Once the above has been completed they may enter the building and go straight to the scheduled meeting room. The meeting room must be properly cleaned after all appointments, this will be the responsibility of the person who scheduled the appointment. Please leave the room in a clean and sanitary condition.

Consumer computers will be available to use by appointment only.

## 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 end September 30, 2021. ► **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.

## 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 6' will continue to be required for all staff.

## **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

