COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for DHS Licensed or Certified Residential Services Deemed Critical Businesses during Peacetime Emergency

Date Developed: June 29, 2020

According to Executive Order 20-48, critical businesses, including providers licensed or certified by the Department of Human Services to deliver residential 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. Because there is currently no vaccine for this virus, you will need to operate your program for many months with the possibility that COVID-19 could be confirmed in your program. The MDH/CDC guidance is designed to prevent, mitigate, or respond to the transmission of COVID-19.

*Executive Order 20-74, signed by Gov. Walz on June 5, 2020, requires all critical businesses to develop and implement a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan ("**Plan**") that describes how your business will implement, at a minimum, the following components, in compliance with MDH and CDC guidelines:*

1. *hygiene and source control;*
2. *cleaning and disinfecting;*
3. *screening and policies for staff and volunteers exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19;*
4. *screening and policies for residents exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19;*
5. *social distancing;*
6. *food preparation and meals;*
7. *ventilation;*
8. *visitors;*
9. *transportation;*
10. *communication and training about the Plan.*

NOTIFYING AND WORKING WITH MDH:

DHS states licensed providers 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). Providers are expected to work with MDH and comply with their directive when given. Dependable' s Human Resource Department or Designee will be responsible for contacting MDH regarding confirmed COVID-19 cases upon knowledge.

Other Resources:

This plan was developed in conjunction with the checklist guidelines for creating a DHS Licensed Residential Services COVID-19 Preparedness Plan.

Hygiene and source controls

- Reinforce handwashing routines, after having been in a public place, prior to and after eating, after using the toilet, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Residents, staff, and visitors should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Ensure handwashing and/or hand-sanitizer facilities are readily available and appropriately stocked including by entrances.
- Provide paper towels and ensure a trash-receptacle is placed by the bathroom door so a paper towel can be readily disposed of when operating the door.
- Post handwashing and "cover your cough" signs.
- Plan for when and how facemasks will be used by residents, staff, and visitors.
- Provide staff with recommended protective supplies, such as facemasks, gloves, disinfectant, eye protection, shields, etc.
- Provide tissues for proper cough/sneeze etiquette and no-touch disposal containers.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Prepare for potential symptomatic or COVID-19 positive residents by having appropriate supplies.
- Sinks could be an infection source so residents should avoid placing toothbrushes directly on counter surfaces.

PLAN FOR HYGIENE AND SOURCE CONTROLS:

All Dependable staff will complete training on proper hygiene, how to reduce to the spread of COVID-19 and how access/request and donn and doff PPE properly. Staff have written directions and visual CDC fliers/posters to reference should they have questions about hygiene and source control. Items such as hand sanitizer, all PPE, hand soap, paper towels will be provided to licensed settings.

Unlicensed settings will be provided needed PPE for scheduled shifts. They will be responsible for purchasing hand soap, hand sanitizer and paper towels for their own home. For unlicensed settings, CDC flier/posters are provided if they choose to post with in their own home.

Should a site or individual/staff need PPE, they will contact the Designated Coordinator or on call manager prior to running out of the needed supply. PPE needs are tracked at the site. It is the responsibility of the employee and the Designated Coordinator to communicate with each other on supply needs on a regular and ongoing basis. If a site, individual or staff who typically does not require PPE (gloves, surgical masks, face shields) suddenly does due to personal cares or positive COVID case, Dependable will arrange for PPE for the site/staff/individual.

PPE use:

Cloth face coverings are provided to staff and individuals in settings where no personal cares are required and social distancing is able to be maintained. Staff are always required to wear their cloth face mask during their scheduled shift.

Surgical masks, gloves and eye protection are provided (as supply allows) to locations and sites that require personal cares.

If there is a COVID positive case in a licensed or unlicensed setting, PPE to cover shifts worked will be provided (gloves, masks, gowns, and face shields). In unit based, PPE will only be provided for scheduled shifts, not for 24-hour care. PPE will be distributed as supply allows.

Individuals are encouraged to wear a cloth masks if they can safely do so when staff are present, when leaving the home, or when there are visitors present. Individuals will be taught how to put on and take off the cloth mask. Individuals are encouraged to wash hands after returning home from a public place, prior to eating, using the bathroom, after using a tissue, sneezing, coughing or touching others.

Visitors to licensed sites are required to wear a cloth mask during their visit and wash hands/use hand sanitizer upon their arrival. For unlicensed settings, this recommendation is strong encouraged.

For licensed settings, each individual will have their own tote or space for personal care items that they can store in their rooms. For unlicensed settings, this will be shared as a recommendation to follow in their own home.

1. Cleaning and disinfecting

- Follow MDH and CDC guidance for frequent cleaning and disinfecting of your program space, especially shared spaces.
- Establish a documented sanitation schedule and checklist, identifying surfaces/equipment to be sanitized, the agent to be used, and the frequency at which sanitation occurs.
- Ensure high-touch surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, stair rails, counters, tables and chairs, phones, keyboards, program equipment and other shared items are regularly cleaned and disinfected.
- Minimize the use of shared supplies (e.g. arts and crafts, office supplies) that cannot be sanitized and consider using designated bins for clean and used items.
- Use EPA-registered disinfectants recommended by the CDC: https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus.
- When washing towels, bedding, and other items, use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.

PLAN FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

All Dependable staff will complete training on how and what to clean daily. Each site that has 24-hour support has a posted cleaning list that identifies surfaces to be cleaned, a schedule, and checklist for staff to initial once completed. The Designated Coordinator will ensure that cleaning is being done as assigned. Appropriate and approved EPA-registered cleaning supplies will be purchased by Dependable

for licensed settings. A list of these products will be provided to unlicensed settings as well. For unlicensed settings, these recommendations will be strongly encouraged. It is important to note, some individuals or families, based on the service, may refuse access to certain parts of their home for cleaning or they may refuse to purchase certain cleaning agents.

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

- Monitor staff and volunteers for signs of illness, including using health screening questions before beginning a work shift, and require sick staff and volunteers to stay home or return home if they are experiencing symptoms. You may also opt to conduct temperature screening if it can be done with proper social distancing, protection, and hygiene protocols. However, temperature screening is not required. https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf
- Ensure sick policies are clearly communicated and supportive of staff and volunteers staying home when sick.
- Ensure staff and volunteers know the signs and symptoms of the COVID-19 illness.
- Establish protocols based on MDH guidance for when a staff member or volunteer exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19.
- Ensure that emergency contact information for staff and volunteers is up-to-date.
- Establish communication protocols for a positive COVID-19 case or potential exposure and ensure that an individual's identity is not disclosed, other than to a person authorized to receive the information.
- Notify MDH and follow their direction if a staff member or volunteer is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Have a plan for back-up staffing in case a staff member or volunteer becomes ill.

PLAN FOR SCREENING AND POLICIES FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS:

All Dependable staff will be trained on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and how to report to Dependable if they are experiencing these symptoms. All Dependable staff will monitor themselves for signs of COVID-19 prior to entering the workplace, this includes Administrative staff that are entering the Dependable office or completing a site visit. If they do have symptoms, they will NOT enter the workplace and will contact their supervisor immediately. If staff shows signs of COVID-19 they will be relieved from shift immediately and they will consult with Human Resources and their clinic for the need for possible testing. If there is a COVID-19 confirmed case; staff, individuals/families at that site within 48 hours of the exposure will be notified that they were exposed. The person who has tested positive will not be identified to peers, individuals, or families to maintain privacy of that individual. Either Human Resources or the Designated Coordinator will communicate a positive exposure with the parties that need to be informed. For staff that have a COVID-19 related absence they are encouraged to contact Human Resources to discuss benefits such as FFRCA or other time off policies that could be available to them. Prior a staff returning to work after a confirmed COVID-19 positive case, they will consult with Human Resources and their Doctor. Dependable will reference current MDH and CDC guidelines on employees returning to work after COVID-19

to ensure we are following current rules and guidance. Human Resources or Designee will contact MDH with positive cases of either individuals supported or staff.

3. Screening and policies for residents exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19

- Monitor residents for signs of illness, including using a health screening tool such as this: https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf.
- Ensure residents know the signs and symptoms of the COVID-19 illness.
- Establish protocols based on MDH guidance for when a resident exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19 to limit exposure.
- Ensure that emergency contact information for residents is up-to-date.
- Establish communication protocols for positive COVID-19 cases or potential exposure and ensure that an individual's identity is not disclosed, other than to a person authorized to receive the information.
- Notify MDH and follow their direction if a resident is diagnosed with COVID-19.

PLAN FOR SCREENING AND POLICIES FOR RESIDENTS:

Individuals have their temperature checked and documented at least once daily. Staff also monitor for other signs such as cough, shortness of breath, chills, muscle pain, and sore throat. At each licensed setting there are CDC fliers and posters explaining with simple language and pictures what COVID-19 is and how to prevent the spread. These fliers and posters will be made available to unlicensed settings as well. Ongoing discussions with individuals about social distancing, hygiene and wearing masks (if safely able) will occur. If an individual shows signs and symptoms of COVID-19 they will be quarantined from their housemates as best we can while supporting the persons understanding of the disease and working with in the space of the home. Dependable will consider things like; limiting a shared bathroom and eating in their room. We will notify the family/guardian, the health care provider and social worker. Once consent for a COVID-19 test is given we will bring the person to be tested. If the individual tests positive for COVID-19 we will again, quarantine the best we can with the persons understanding, staff will wear all the necessary PPE (surgical mask, gloves, gown and eye protection), clean the space, and limit contact from others. The Designated Coordinator will communicate with the staff scheduled to support the person that they have tested positive and review support needs to successfully limit the spread and also provide comfort to the individual. They will also notify the housemates teams that their loved one was exposed without sharing by whom. In a COVID-19 positive home all individuals will be encouraged to quarantine, no visitors will be allowed during this time and daily activities such as going to the store or other places will be put on hold. In an unlicensed setting, the above directives will be the same. However, the person or family may choose to cancel staff if they have tested positive and, in that case, Dependable would not able to ensure that individuals were quarantining or following MDH/CDC recommendations.

4. Social distancing

- Gatherings of residents and staff in the facility should be carefully considered and redesigned, as necessary, to reduce prolonged close contact among staff, residents, and families.
- Common areas and other areas of congestion should be marked to provide for social distancing of at least 6-feet.
- Consider using visual aids (e.g., painter's tape, stickers, signs) to illustrate traffic flow and floor markers for where to stand for appropriate spacing to support social distancing.
- Rearrange seating spaces to maximize the space (at least 6 feet) between people. Turn chairs to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other) to reduce transmission caused from virus-containing droplets (e.g., from talking, coughing, sneezing).
- For larger programs, whenever possible, refrain from intermixing groups. If intermixing of groups is necessary, limit the number of groups that intermix and keep records of staff and residents that intermix.
- Stagger breaks to maximize social distancing.
- Hold meetings remotely, if possible.
- Staff and volunteers should also maintain social distance when interacting with each other.
- Staff should limit entering residents' rooms as much as possible to reduce potential for cross-contamination, unless required for supervision.
- Ensure that beds are spaced out as much as possible. Consider placing residents' beds head to toe in order to further reduce the potential for viral spread.
- Provide for physical distancing in restrooms or limit restroom capacity. Mark off areas for where to wait to use the restroom.

PLAN FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING:

All team meetings are held via Teams meeting or other secured remote option. Gatherings of individuals, family or staff is discouraged however the balance of need to address mental health or behavioral concerns and looking at the whole person is important, so gatherings are not forbidden. If gatherings do occur, we encourage these to happen in an open-air setting when possible and all parties maintain social distancing guidelines. After gatherings occur parties involved will be encouraged to practice hand washing and hygiene protocols. If an open-air gathering is not possible, social distancing must occur and masks must be worn. A thorough cleaning of the space in licensed settings must be done after the visit and hand washing/hygiene protocol will occur. Staff will follow the cleaning check list for post visit guidance on what to clean. In unlicensed settings, cleaning post visit, will be strongly suggested.

The Dependable office is currently not open to guests, individuals or staff at this time. This includes the social gathering such as game night and cooking club. Administrative staff are able to come for short periods of time to access the printer, scanner, fax but they are encouraged not to stay. The office space has social distancing markers on the floor as well as throughout the sitting space that Administrative staff must follow.

5. Food preparation and meals

- Prohibit food (including condiments) and beverage sharing between residents.
- Stagger meal times to maximize social distancing.
- Maintain consistent groups during meal times.
- If meals are served family-style, plate each meal to serve it so that multiple people are not using the same serving utensils.

PLAN FOR FOOD PREPARATION AND MEALS:

Direct Care staff will follow Dependable's Policy and Procedure on Universal Precautions and Sanitary Practices. In licensed settings, staff will serve meals from the kitchen rather than family style at the table. Items such as condiment bottles, salt, pepper will not be kept on the table for all parties to access. If these are needed or requested, staff will serve the individual(s). These recommendations will be shared with unlicensed settings as well.

6. Ventilation

- Work to maximize the amount of fresh air being brought in, limit air recirculation and ensure ventilation systems are properly used and maintained.
- Take steps to minimize air flow blowing across people.

PLAN FOR VENTILATION:

When possible windows in a licensed setting will be opened to allow for fresh air to flow through the home. Homes can use fans to circulate air through the home and will ensure the air is not blowing across other people. In licensed setting humidity levels will monitored and kept between 40-60%. If humidity is above 60% the HVAC will be run. In licensed homes (not apartments) Dependable will use HEPA filters. These recommendations will be shared with unlicensed homes and settings as well.

7. Visitors

- Visitors should be screened for COVID-19 symptoms prior to entrance. https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf
- Provide visitors with hand sanitizer or access to a handwashing area, and facemasks if available.
- Encourage social distancing between residents and their visitors.
- Whenever possible, visits should occur outdoors or in a visiting room close to the facility entrance. Visitors should limit interactions to those individuals that they are visiting.
- Clean and disinfect the visiting room after each visit.
- Encourage residents to wash their hands after interacting with a visitor.

PLAN FOR VISITORS:

For any visitors at a licensed setting, we ask that all visits are pre-scheduled with the Designated Coordinator and a health screening occur within 24 hour of the visit. The Designated Coordinator or Oncall Coordinator will conduct the health screening over the phone. If they visitor has any signs/symptoms of COVID-19 they will not be able to visit the home until they are tested and cleared of any COVID-19 symptoms or are symptom free for 72 hours without taking any fever reducing medications. If there are any symptomatic individuals at the home or positive case of COVID-19 at the home, visits will be on hold. Visitors will be asked to wash hands and use hand sanitizer prior to entering to the home or having an open air gathering with staff or an individual. They will be asked to bring their own mask to wear during visits. If gatherings do occur, we encourage these to happen in an open-air setting when possible and that all parties maintain social distancing guidelines. After gatherings occur parties involved will be encouraged to practice the hand washing and hygiene protocols. If an open-air gathering is not possible, social distancing must occur and masks must be worn. A thorough cleaning of the space must be done, and hand washing/hygiene protocol will occur. Staff will follow the cleaning check list for post visit guidance on what to clean. In unlicensed settings, these recommendations will also be shared and encouraged.

8. Transportation

- Plan for the use of facemasks when providing transportation.
- Take precautions when using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- Limit the number of residents in the vehicle and ask them to spread out to maintain social distancing as much as possible.
- Do not have air recirculated while in a vehicle.
- Remind residents to wear a facemask or face covering, wash their hands, and follow social distancing guidelines while they are away.

PLAN FOR TRANSPORTATION:

Staff will wear face masks when transporting others in their own car or Dependable vehicle. When possible, individuals will be spaced in the vehicle to allow max distance between each other and limited individuals will be transported at once, as well as limited trips. Individuals will be encouraged to wear their masks when in the vehicle, if able to safely do so. Staff will be trained on how to run the vehicle's air flow system and not recirculate air within the vehicle. When possible, staff will be encouraged to lower windows slightly to allow outside/fresh air in. Dependable owned/leased vehicles will have a professional cleaning schedule as well as a cleaning checklist after each use that the driver will be responsible for maintaining. The Designated Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that the vehicle cleaning list is being completed and maintained. Dependable staff vehicles in unlicensed sites will be the responsibility of the driver to wipe down after each use with approved cleaner.

9. Communication and training about the plan

- Provide a copy of this plan to all of your staff, contracted service providers, and volunteers.
- Provide training to all staff and volunteers on how to follow the plan, ensure they are capable of implementing it, and update them on any changes to the plan.
- The plan must be available to the Commissioner and posted in a prominent place and readily accessible to staff who need to review it.
- Explain in plain language the parts of the plan relevant to the residents and, as appropriate, parents, guardians, legal representatives, and case managers. Provide them with resources to follow the plan.
- Staff with concerns about their employer's COVID-19 Preparedness Plan or questions about their rights should contact MNOSA Compliance at osha.compliance@state.mn.us, 651-284-5050 or 877-470-6742.

PLAN FOR COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING ABOUT THE PLAN:

All Dependable Employees will be trained on this plan at the inception and as any changes occur. This plan will be posted on our website for full access by Employees, Person Served Team Members, and public view. This plan will also be posted at all licensed sites and at the Dependable office. As changes occur to the plan, notification to the Person Served Team Members will occur in a timely manner.