June 03, 2021 v6

Minnesota West Community & Technical College

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

Minnesota West Community and Technical College is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all our employees, students, guests and visitors. To ensure this Minnesota West has developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 throughout our employees, students and communities; this will require full cooperation. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of all persons on our campuses.

The COVID-19 Preparedness Plan is certified by the College President, who maintains the overall authority and responsibility for the plan. However, we are all equally responsible for supporting, implementing, complying with and providing recommendations to further improve all aspects of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. Minnesota West Community and Technical College leaders and supervisors have our full support in enforcing the provisions of this policy.

We are serious about safety and health and keeping our employees and students safe. Your involvement is essential in developing and implementing a successful Campus COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. We encourage both employees and students, through the student senate, to submit change and/or make additional recommendations to the Safety Administrator.

Minnesota West Community and Technical College’s COVID-19 Preparedness Plan follows the guidance developed by the state of Minnesota, which is based upon Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), Office of Higher Education (OHE), Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) statutes, rules and standards and Minnesota’s current executive orders.

Ensure sick employees and students stay home and prompt identification and isolation of sick persons

Employees and students have been instructed to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The following policies and procedures are being implemented to assess health status prior to entering Minnesota West campuses and to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms. All employees, students and guests will perform a self-screening prior to entry each day.
While the vaccine has proven to be very effective it is not 100%. There have been cases of vaccinated individuals contracting COVID-19, these are called Breakthrough Cases. Whether you are fully vaccinated or not you must report any of the following conditions while completing the self-screening process:

- A fever (100.4°F or higher), or a sense of having a fever or feeling feverish (chills, sweating).
- A new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition.
- A new shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition.
- A new sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition.
- New loss of taste or smell.
- New muscle aches that you cannot attribute to another health condition and that are not caused by a specific activity (such as physical exercise).
- A new headache that you cannot attribute to another health condition.
- Vomiting or diarrhea that you cannot attribute to another health condition.
- Are you under evaluation for COVID-19 (e.g., waiting for the results to confirm infection)?
- Have you been diagnosed with COVID-19 and not yet cleared to discontinue isolation?

If you have any of the above symptoms or combination of symptoms as outlined below you are not allowed to enter campus and should contact your Supervisor or Instructor. Contact your healthcare provider to schedule a test.

Symptoms consistent with COVID-19 fall into two groups:

- **More common symptoms** are **one or more** of these:
  - fever of 100.4°F or higher
  - new onset and/or worsening cough
  - difficulty breathing
  - new loss of taste or smell

- **Less common symptoms** are **two or more** of these:
  - sore throat
  - nausea
  - vomiting
  - diarrhea
  - chills
  - muscle pain
  - excessive fatigue
  - new onset of severe headache
  - new onset of nasal congestion or runny nose

If experiencing only **one** symptom from the list of **less common** symptoms:

1. Evaluate that symptom and determine if the person is well enough to stay on campus.
2. If no, they should stay home or be sent home and consider an evaluation from a health care provider or COVID-19 testing.

3. If evaluated and/or tested they can return to campus 24 hours after the symptom has improved.

If experiencing **one more common** symptom or **at least two less common** symptoms:

1. Person stays home or is sent home.

2. Person with symptoms should be seen by a health care provider for a COVID-19 test.

3. If the person does not seek a medical evaluation, they must stay at home in isolation for at least 10 days from the time their symptoms started until symptoms are improved and no fever for 24 hours without fever reducing medications.

4. If the person receives an alternate diagnosis to explain the symptoms, they can then return to campus 24 hours after symptoms have improved or as directed by a health care provider.

5. If the person tests negative for COVID-19, they can return to campus 24 hours after symptoms have improved.

6. If the person tests positive for COVID-19, they must stay at home in isolation for at least 10 days from the time the symptoms started until symptoms have improved and no fever for 24 hours without fever reducing medications.

Some work settings, **like health care**, have different rules about quarantine.

Use of sick leave

If your employer allows you to take time off for your own illness, your employer must also allow you to take time off to care for an ill minor child, adult child, spouse, sibling, parent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandchild, grandparent or stepparent in accordance with your applicable employment contract. Under current law, this provision may not apply to all employees and all employers. [https://mn.gov/mmb/assets/1337-sick-leave_tcm1059-124681.pdf](https://mn.gov/mmb/assets/1337-sick-leave_tcm1059-124681.pdf)

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Under the federal FMLA, covered employers must provide employees job-protected, unpaid leave for specified family and medical reasons, which may include COVID-19 where complications arise. Employees on FMLA leave are entitled to the continuation of group health insurance coverage under the same terms as existed before they took FMLA leave. [https://mn.gov/mmb/segip/humanresources/fmla.jsp](https://mn.gov/mmb/segip/humanresources/fmla.jsp)

Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

The FFCRA requires certain employers to provide employees with expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. The expanded family and medical leave provisions of FFCRA apply to
certain public employers and to private employers with fewer than 500 employees. Small businesses with fewer than 50 employees may qualify for exemption from the requirement to provide leave due to school closings or child care unavailability if the leave requirements would jeopardize the viability of the business as a going concern. Also, health care providers and emergency responders can be excluded.


Accommodations for workers with underlying medical conditions or who have household members with underlying health conditions have been implemented. Individuals with disabilities have the right to request “reasonable accommodations” from employers that are subject to the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or the Minnesota Human Rights Act. If you have a disability that affects your risk for contracting COVID-19 or being harmed if you do contract the virus, you have the right to request a reasonable accommodation from your employer. Examples of reasonable accommodations include: teleworking; paid, sick, unpaid leave; staggered work schedules; and changing workstations to practice social distancing.

When requesting a reasonable accommodation, describe the nature of the accommodation requested and how it will assist you in performing the essential functions of your job.

**Minnesota West Community and Technical College** has also implemented a policy on informing employees and students if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 while on campus.

In addition, a policy has been implemented to protect the privacy of workers’ health status and health information. During a pandemic, employers may not ask employees who do not have known or apparent influenza symptoms whether they have a medical condition the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says could make them vulnerable to influenza complications. Under no circumstances may an employer make decisions based on stereotypes or bias. If employees voluntarily disclose to their employer that they have a medical condition or a disability that places them at higher risk of COVID-19 complications, the employer must keep this information confidential. Employers may not assume employees with known medical conditions or disabilities are at heightened risk of complications from COVID-19.

Under a state health law, if you have contracted or been exposed to COVID-19 and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) recommends you stay home (isolate or quarantine yourself), your employer may not discharge, discipline or penalize you for missing work. This protection also applies if you need to care for a minor or adult family member for whom MDH recommends isolation or quarantine. (The adult family member must have a disability or be a vulnerable adult.)

**Cloth face covering**

Consistent with [Executive Order 21-11](http://example.com/executive-order-21-11), colleges, universities, and the system office strongly recommends that all employees, students and visitors who have not been fully vaccinated wear face masks or face coverings while on campus anywhere social distance cannot be maintained.
Social distancing – whenever possible maintain three to six feet apart

Social distancing is being implemented on campus through the following engineering and administrative controls:

1. Maintain social distancing by keeping at least 3 feet (6 where possible) of space between people.
2. Wearing a cloth face covering by those not vaccinated is strongly encouraged.
3. Classrooms and common areas have been arranged to facilitate 3 to 6 feet separation.
4. Clear barriers have been placed at work stations and in offices as needed.
5. Signs and floor markings have been placed throughout the campuses to aid in maintaining the 6 feet separation.
6. Employees are encouraged to give “friendly verbal reminders” when necessary.
7. Class schedules will be modified to reduce traffic in common spaces

Personal hygiene

Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented at our campuses at all times. Employees, students and visitors 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 time on campus, prior to any mealtimes and after using the restroom. Hand-sanitizer dispensers (that use sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol) are at entrances and locations throughout the facilities so they can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water.

Employees, students and visitors are instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and to avoid touching their face, particularly their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. 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 throughout the facilities.

Building and ventilation protocol

Operation of campus facilities includes necessary sanitation, assessment and maintenance of building systems, including water, plumbing, electrical, heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems. All campus HVAC systems are set to continuously maximize fresh-air into the workplace and eliminate air recirculation. They maintain relative humidity levels of RH 40-60% and are kept running as long as possible to enhance the ability to filter contaminants out of the air. Flush cycles have been added to the controls of the HVAC system to run for 2-hours before and after occupancy. The HVAC systems will be checked and rebalanced as needed to provide negative air-
pressure whenever possible and supplemental ventilation-system with the use of portable HEPA filter units will be use if needed. Diverters are installed to minimize air-flow from blowing across workstations wherever possible.

These protocols are in accordance with the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers and are implemented to ensure proper ventilation is provided, and ventilation-systems are properly maintained. See ASHRAE’s COVID-19 Preparedness Resources (https://www.ashrae.org/file%20library/technical%20resources/covid-19/ashrae-reopening-schools.pdf).

Cleaning and disinfection protocol

Regular practices of cleaning and disinfecting have been implemented, including a schedule for routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment, tools and machinery, vehicles and areas in the campus environment, including restrooms, break rooms, lunch rooms, meeting rooms and drop-off and pick-up locations. Frequent cleanings and disinfecting are being conducted of high-touch areas, including phones, keyboards, touch screens, controls, door handles, elevator panels, railings, copy machines, credit card readers, delivery equipment, etc.

The primary product being used by MN West Community & Technical College Facilities Department is Hillyard brand QT TB, a Quaternary disinfectant proven to be one of the best and shortest contact time on the market against the corona virus.

Cleaning and disinfecting procedures will be performed on all campuses throughout the day with emphasis on high touch areas mentioned earlier in this document. At any point throughout a given day facilities staff will be available, upon immediate request, to perform additional disinfecting and sanitation services if required.

Facilities Department products (Hillyard QT TB) mentioned earlier, will be made available to all staff and faculty upon request so that every attempt is made to sanitize at all times by anyone needing the proper product. Additionally, all forms of hand sanitizer will be made available both in dispenser form and in more portable pump bottle form.

In the event that a member of the staff or faculty has been diagnosed with Covid-19 every attempt will be made to identify all areas of a campus that may have been accessed and possibly contaminated. Those areas will be immediately cordoned off and the facilities team will, with the appropriate PPE, thoroughly clean and disinfect those areas with the appropriate products.

Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfecting 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.
Communications and training practices and protocol

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan will be communicated electronically via email and the college website, and verbally by the supervisors and instructors. Training will be provided to employees through ELM and to students by their instructor. Additional communication and training for changes, updates and new employees will be provided by the Safety Administrator.

Leaders, supervisors and faculty are expected to monitor how effective the program has been implemented and are expected 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 reviewed by the Minnesota West Community and Technical College leadership and the plan will be posted on the college website, throughout the workplace and made readily available as needed. It will be updated as necessary by the Safety Administrator.

Certified by:

[Signature]

Minnesota West Community & Technical College President

6/03/2021