MPCA COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

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Note: COVID-19 is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation. Information in this document is current as of the effective date. Please refer to the Preparedness Plan on the Lorax for the most current version.

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Introduction

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our employees and the Minnesotans we serve. To ensure that, we have developed the following Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 which requires full cooperation among employees and management. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of all persons in our workplaces.

Safety and health is the upmost priority in returning employees to the workplace. Employee involvement is essential in developing and implementing a successful COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. Our Preparedness Plan follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines and federal OSHA standards related to COVID-19 and addresses:

- Hygiene and respiratory etiquette;
- Engineering and administrative controls for social distancing;
- Housekeeping – cleaning, disinfecting and decontamination;
- Prompt identification and isolation of sick persons;
- Communications and training that will be provided to managers and employees; and
- Management and supervision necessary to ensure effective implementation of the plan.

Returning employees to the workplace will be gradual and coordinated with Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB). At a minimum, it will involve the following key elements:

- A phased return of employees to the workplace. All efforts will be flexible and have the ability to stop and return to telework or other service provision methods as necessary.
- Continued telework by employees whose job duties can be performed through telework.
- Appropriate and effective cleaning, disinfecting, and building operations at facilities.
- Continued reassignment or redeployment of employees to fulfill agency priority services.
- Continuation of social distancing practices in the workplace.

Management and employees, including partner agencies sharing buildings and workspaces, are responsible for implementing and complying with all aspects of this plan. MPCA and MNIT managers and supervisors have full support of the MPCA Commissioner and MNIT offices in enforcing the provisions of this plan.

Roles and responsibilities

**MPCA Incident Command System (ICS) Team**

The ICS Team and sub-teams will identify which priority services will return to the workplace first, ensure plans to return employees to the workplace are implemented consistently across the agency, and direct mitigation strategies used to limit the potential spread of the disease through:

- Establishing return to workplace goals. This includes identification of priority services to return in what capacity and updating these goals as conditions change and as additional services can return to normal.
- Developing return to the office protocols at the agency to optimize operations while protecting the workforce.
- Monitoring implementation of the return to workplace goals and work to mitigate issues and irregularities.
- Setting the operational tempo and delegating tasks to return employees to the workplace.
- Tasking relevant employees to operationalize decisions in compliance with enterprise guidance and any applicable executive orders.
- Identifying organizational and employee risk and monitoring and mitigating the impact on the agency and services.
- Managing internal requests for redeployment and requests to and from the State Redeployment Center.
- Selecting, training, and scheduling the personnel necessary to conduct daily health screenings for staff entering the MPCA office buildings.
- Defining procedures and responsibilities for cleaning/disinfecting.
- Completing an after action review (AAR).
- Staffing needs and staff selection for the ICS Team

Division Director (DD) and Assistant Division Director (ADD)
DDs and ADDs will identify critical staff shortages and make requests to the ICS Team for internal and external redeployment. DDs and ADDs will discuss waiver/hiring freeze exception requests per MMB and agency protocols.

Human Resources (HR)
HR will coordinate redeployment requests and assignments, process and maintain COVID-19 leave records and reports, maintain COVID-19 telework agreement records and reports, process hiring freeze exception requests, manage redeployment efforts (internal and external), follow MMB Guidelines in informing leadership and staff of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 illnesses, and advise the ICS Team and management when return to the office actions may require the agency to follow MMB’s contract waiver procedure. Human Resources will continue performing vacancy filling responsibilities for internal/agency only job postings or those with an approved hiring freeze exception waiver from MMB.

Finance and Budgeting
The financing and budget staff is responsible for procurement of needed goods and services and seeking reimbursement as appropriate from available sources, and will provide COVID-19 cost coding instructions and track and analyze related expenditures for management review.

Facilities
Facilities will assess each facility’s layout and operations and make recommendations to the ICS Team as the agency plans for returning employees to the workplace. Facility related considerations may include: space and workflow, infection control measures, cleaning and sanitizing, signage, safety and security measures, and other relevant operations.

MNIT
MNIT serves as a member of the ICS Team, supports staff in teleworking and returning to the office, and assists in managing use and return of IT equipment. MNIT management and employees working in the MPCA offices are responsible for implementing and complying with all aspects of this plan.
Managers and Supervisors
Managers and supervisors will obtain necessary training for themselves and ensure staff have appropriate training, PPE, and have been trained on PPE use before returning to the office, field work, or inspection work and develop schedules that support social distancing and provide for adequate staff coverage. Performance of individual employees will be handled through typical supervisor responsibilities regardless of work location.

Emergency Readiness Section
Emergency Readiness Section is responsible for ensuring health screening and safety training occurs, supporting selection of personal protective equipment, identifying suitable products for disinfection and sanitation, COVID-19 cleanup in the event an employee becomes ill within the offices, and other emergency operations.

Managing work

Supervisor Responsibilities

1) Supervisors continue to be responsible for their supervisory responsibilities as identified in their position description. This includes, but is not limited to, managing work and performance among their employees consistent with normal work goals, collective bargaining agreements and plans, and state and agency policy. See also the “For supervisors and managers” page of the Lorax.

2) Supervisors are responsible for notifying their manager, ADD, and DD of critical staff shortages.

3) The existing Administrative Policy regarding Hours of Work (found on the Lorax) continues to apply. Supervisors may consider flextime¹ and reduced work schedules (working less than the normally scheduled workday or pay period) in order for employees to cover child care, manage internet use, and for other COVID-19 related reasons. The appropriate leave type may be used to supplement reduced work schedules.
   a. Work schedules must provide adequate staff coverage during the agency business hours of 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday.
   b. Consult HR regarding schedule requests outside the agency’s Hours of Work policy. Supervisors must demonstrate how exception/s to the policy supports safety and social distancing efforts.

4) Supervisors will set telework expectations and schedules with staff consistent with the Agency’s telework policy, update existing telework agreements or create COVID telework agreements for all staff who will continue to telework, complete a telework worksite checklist if an agreement is not already in place, and send these completed telework documents to HR. Supervisors and employees will complete telework training in ELM.

¹ Flextime is a set work schedule, in which employees select their starting and ending times within the band width (6:30 AM to 6:00 PM) and core hours (9:00 AM to 3:00 PM).
5) Supervisors will consult the ICS Team to identify employees coming into the office and may develop opposing schedules or staggered schedules to spread responsibility/provide relief to staff in the office and maximize social distancing. Supervisors may not be able to accommodate all employee scheduling requests. Business needs may require a management change to schedules such as the start and end times on days employees work from the office.
   a. Employees identified on exemption lists approved by MMB (prior to completion of this plan) or by the ICS Team may continue to enter offices as assigned (see Appendix E: Phased Return to the Office).
   b. For employees not identified on an exemption list but with reason to come into the office beyond Item 6.b. below, the supervisor will submit a request through the COVID-19 email box for consideration by the ICS Team. The request must include justification for the return to the office and proposed schedule if needed to meet social distancing requirements (e.g., opposing schedule from adjacent workspace if distance requirements not met). The ICS Team will consult with the Space Planner to confirm if workspace meets social distancing requirements.

6) Supervisors are responsible for contacting the appropriate Division Business Support/ Facility Support Supervisor or Regional Manager/Regional Office designee to fulfill teleworking staffs’ requests for materials from the office.
   a. For smaller items: the Business Support/Facility Support Supervisor or Regional Office designee may make arrangements for items to be mailed to the employee, as long as employee can describe what is needed and the available Business Support employee can find it. Employees must complete a release of home address form, [https://lorax.pca.state.mn.us/news/covid-19-updates](https://lorax.pca.state.mn.us/news/covid-19-updates) so that the service center/regional office is authorized to mail materials to employees’ home addresses.
   b. For larger items: the employee will submit a request through the COVID-19 email box (copying their supervisor) to coordinate picking up items from the offices (e.g., chairs, tools, monitoring equipment, monitors, larger quantities of office supplies, and other needed work items). Varidesks, as a wellness feature and not an ergonomic feature, are prohibited from being removed from the office. The person managing the COVID-19 email box will coordinate with the appropriate in-office staff, notify the employee if the request can be fulfilled, and provide any further coordination requirements.

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2 Opposing schedule is defined as time in and out of the office on different days (e.g., telework MTW and work in the office ThF) or weeks to manage social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff on this schedule must be set up to easily move between the office and home (e.g., have a laptop computer that comes back and forth or a home computer set up for work).

3 Staggered schedule is defined as varying start and end times within a given day to minimize contact going in and out the door during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staggered schedules should be developed in coordination with the employees to the extent possible (e.g., to cover child care needs due to COVID-19); remain within the agency’s bandwidth (6:30 AM to 6:00 PM) unless an alternate is specifically requested by the employee; and consider work weeks for balancing for MAPE, hours of work per day for AFSCME, and shift differential for both MAPE and AFSCME. Contractual language requires a notice period to change work schedules; consult your HR consultant for more information.
7) Supervisors are responsible for communicating the requirements of this plan, monitoring employee compliance, ensure staff attend appropriate training, and when applicable implementing disciplinary procedures for staff not following this plan.

Employee Responsibilities
1) Employees are expected to work the hours and locations specified by their Supervisor. Employees may request amended hours through their Supervisor.
2) Employees who are teleworking are responsible for ensuring they are responsive to emails, telephone calls and leadership work direction.
   a. Complete and submit a telework tracking form to their supervisor every pay period unless specifically exempt because of the level of detail provided in daily time tracking. Work units exempt from telework time tracking are: Industrial Air Permitting, Site Remediation and Redevelopment Section, Municipal Wastewater Section, Municipal North Central Regional Unit, Municipal Metro Regional & Infrastructure, and SE/SW Regional Unit.
   b. Obtain supervisory approval before working outside normal work schedule (opposing, staggered, or flex schedules). Pre-approval for incurring shift differential and overtime still apply.
   c. Track COVID-19 time and/or leave consistent with MMB guidance or policy.
   d. Teleworking employees with need for materials or equipment from the office should make these requests through their Supervisor as outlined in the Supervisor Responsibilities, see item 6 under Supervisor Responsibilities above. For any equipment brought home, the employee must complete an Equipment Checklist (found on the Lorax: https://lorax.pca.state.mn.us/faqs-about-mpcas-covid-19-response) and submit to their supervisor.
3) Employees can receive support available through the state Employee Assistance Program, Life Matters, at 651-259-3840 or 1-800-657-3719 or www.mylifematters.com (password: stmn1).
4) Employees are responsible for following this plan. Employees who fail to follow the plan could be subject to disciplinary action.

St. Paul Building Sub-tenant Responsibilities
In St. Paul, MNIT and BWSR should follow their internal protocols for requesting materials and submit notification to the MPCA COVID-19 email box (covid19.pca@state.mn.us) when larger items will be picked up or removed from the building to assist with coordination.

Considerations for identifying employees to return to offices

Returning to work in MPCA offices will occur in phases or waves and may move both forward (more in the office) and backward (more moved back to telework) in accordance with guidance from MMB and the Governor and risk of COVID-19 infection at an individual office. The following list outlines the priorities the ICS Team will consider when identifying employees to return to the offices:

- Those whose jobs are not conducive to telework full- or part-time;
- Those with jobs that can be done using social distancing and other risk mitigation strategies;
- Those with telework problems (IT issues, poor Internet connection, self-identified home distractions);
- Those who have similar work that can be split between a minimum number of employees in an office, while other employees continue to telework (e.g., half a unit of permit writers alternate work locations or office time);
- Those with program backups (small programs with no backup/redundancy should remain teleworking longer);
- Those providing backup and relief for others who must be in the office (e.g., skeleton crew);
- Those whose work hours can be staggered to decrease interaction between employees;
- Functionality of work/are we meeting our normal work goals and objectives and are people able to perform their tasks effectively and sustainably wherever they are; and
- A small number of leaders to provide support to employees in the buildings.

Notwithstanding directives from MMB or the Governor’s office, the ICS Team will consider occurrences in COVID-19 infections in MPCA facilities in determining if employees in the offices should return to teleworking in some or all facilities.

**Screening for COVID-19**

The following procedures are being implemented to assess health status of people prior to entering the offices and for employees to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms.

1) The MPCA expects employees to stay 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. Employees are encouraged to stay informed of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 ([https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)) and to self-monitor for these signs and symptoms. These expectations include leadership and staff of partner agencies such as MNIT (support agency with offices in the St. Paul building) and BWSR (sub-tenant in St. Paul).

2) All State of Minnesota employees, visitors, maintenance staff, and vendors who enter a MPCA office will undergo health screening in the form of a Health Questionnaire and potentially temperature screening consistent with Minnesota Management and Budget guidelines and using the appropriate Tennessean notice. Health screening will occur daily upon initial entry into a PCA facility. Screening does not apply to vendors, process servers, or public simply dropping mail, petitions, or packages at front doors or dock in St. Paul who are in an office for ten minutes or less.

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4 The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) recently reissued its guidance, “Pandemic Preparedness in the Workplace and the Americans with Disabilities Act,” to specifically address the current COVID-19 pandemic. In its reissued guidance, the EEOC confirmed the COVID-19 pandemic permits employers to measure employees’ body temperatures before allowing them to enter the worksite, so long as such screenings are implemented on a nondiscriminatory basis, and all information gathered is treated as confidential medical information under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Additionally, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued guidance recommending workplaces located in communities with minimal to moderate COVID-19 risk implement regular health checks, including temperature screening.
a. Visitors, maintenance staff, and vendors who do not pass the health screening will not be allowed to enter the building.

b. Employees who do not pass the health screening will not be allowed to enter the building. The person conducting health screenings is empowered with the authority to tell the employee to go home. Employees who do not pass the health screening should go to step 2 below.

c. As per MMB Guidance Body Temperature and Health Screening in Office Settings, April 25, 2020, any information gathered from the health screening will be treated as confidential medical information. Specifically, the identity of individuals exhibiting a fever or other COVID-19 symptoms, individuals’ temperature readings, individuals’ responses to the screening questions, and completed Screening Forms will be kept confidential and may only be shared with agency HR, Safety Director, members of agency management with a business need to know, or others as provided by law. The completed Screening Forms are health records, will be kept consistent with retention records in a locked file cabinet or secure electronic file, and will not be stored in employee personnel files.

3) Employees, including MNIT employees and BWSR staff in the St. Paul office, who are identified as being symptomatic of a contagious disease while in the MPCA offices or doing associated field work, becomes symptomatic after being in the office or doing associated field work, has household members exhibiting signs of contagious disease, has COVID-19 symptoms or diagnosed with COVID-19, or has been required by a health care provider to isolate or quarantine themselves or a member of their household will be directed by their supervisor to leave the facility immediately or to stay home.

a. An employee who meets any of these criteria will report this information to their supervisor immediately via phone and email and identify any locations visited and other employees they may have come in contact with throughout the course of the workday. If the supervisor is unavailable, the employee may contact Human Resources directly as per item b. below. If the employee becomes symptomatic while in the office (or does not pass the health screening) and does not have immediate transportation home, they must isolate in conference room 104 in St. Paul or designated location in a Regional Office. Face masks and gloves will be provided the symptomatic staff.

b. Supervisors will provide information from item a. above to Kellie McNamara and/or Vonnie Phillips in Human Resources (or appropriate MNIT or BWSR HR contact) as soon as possible after hearing from the employee. Human Resources will direct the employee as to the appropriate leave type to use depending on the situation and any additional guidance from MMB. Human Resources will notify other employees if they have had possible exposure to a person with COVID-19 and requirements to quarantine. Human Resources and Supervisors must protect the privacy of employees’ health status and health information.

c. Human Resources will notify the Response Team (MPCA Facilities Manager, Safety Director, Emergency Management Unit Supervisor, and Regional Manager) of the illness and office locations in need of immediate cleanup. The Facilities Manager, in collaboration with the Response Team, will put up appropriate signage and notify all staff in the office location (including guard in St. Paul) when implementing enhanced
Office safety guidelines

All employees should continue to telework if job responsibilities can be performed through telework. Leave is available to employees who must be absent from work for reasons related to COVID-19.

1) All MPCA offices remain closed to the public until further notice. Decisions to open the doors to the public will be made by the Commissioner in consideration of requirements of MMB and recommendations of the ICS Team.

2) Employees who can continue to telework, must continue to telework unless specifically allowed to enter or required to work from the MPCA offices.

3) Employees instructed to return to the workplace must return to the workplace. Leave is available to employees who must be absent from work for reasons related to COVID-19 which does not include the fear of contracting COVID-19 or fear of passing it on to another individual. Human Resources determines an employee’s eligibility for COVID-19 leave, not an employee’s ability to telework. Supervisors may consult directly with Human Resources or the agency’s assigned consultant at MMB’s Organizational Health Unit for advice on how to have conversations with employees fearful of or refuse to return to work.

4) Employees returning to the workplace (including MNIT and BWSR) are instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or use hand sanitizer routinely throughout the day, especially at the beginning and end of their shift, after using community areas (e.g., conference rooms, mail rooms, copy facilities, etc.) and/or appliances (e.g., copiers, shared keyboards and equipment, elevators and elevator buttons), prior to any mealtimes, and after using the toilet. Face masks will be provided to staff with frequent contact with others (e.g., reception or field work).

5) All visitors to the facility will be instructed via signage to wash or sanitize their hands prior to or immediately upon entering the facility.

6) Employees 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, in particular their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. They should dispose of tissues in the trash 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 employees and visitors.

7) Employees and visitors are prohibited from gathering in groups and in confined areas where social distancing requirements can’t be met, including elevators, and from using other employees’ personal protective equipment, phones, computer equipment, desks, cubicles, workstations, offices or other personal work tools and equipment unless specifically allowed (front desk, Service Center, Service Center office, and FOC office). Employees must limit in-person interactions as much as possible. Where necessary, all in-person interactions will accommodate appropriate social distancing.
a. In common use copy and multi-function device rooms, mail rooms, and supply rooms employees must wait until the room is empty before entering and must wipe any touched surfaces with disinfectant prior to leaving the room. Employees should submit a request to the COVID-19 email if additional disinfectant is needed in a given area.

8) MPCA employees assigned to work in the offices will be assigned workstations, including offices, which will accommodate appropriate social distancing as evaluated by the MPCA Space Planner. MNIT will submit a plan for MNIT employees for review by ICS Team that follows this document and maintains proper social distancing.
   a. Employees should talk to their Supervisor if they are uncomfortable with the social distancing or other requirements in their workstation location. Supervisors may make adjustments to work schedules or submit a request to the COVID-19 email box about additional measures that may be needed (e.g., taping distance on the floor, additional barriers, relocation to a temporary workspace) to address the issue.
   b. Social distancing may vary by offices to account for the different office layouts. This will be evaluated by the MPCA Space Planner in conjunction with Regional Managers.
   c. Standing desk (e.g., Varidesk or other standing modifications) use is limited to workspaces where walls are a minimum of 72 inches.
   d. Employees with specialized equipment, such as extra computers and monitors for modeling activity, will be prioritized to remain in those locations.
   e. Sharing of equipment and workspaces should be limited. Employees should use wipes or paper towel and disinfectant spray to wipe down all hard surfaces touched in a work area (e.g., chair arms, mouse, keyboard, desk surface, drawers, handles, etc.) at the end of each day.

9) All work cafes and break rooms are closed for gatherings and meetings until further notice. Employees (including MNIT and BWSR) should comply with posted occupancy signs.
   a. Sinks remain available for the purposes of hand washing.
   b. Staff are asked to limit use of office microwaves and refrigerators and disinfect appliances and counters after each use. It is recommended employees bring beverages in thermoses, food in appropriate coolers for refrigeration, and not bring food that needs to be heated. Employees should plan on eating at their assigned work station or go outside if the weather is appropriate.
   c. On-site potlucks and any other food sharing activities are strictly prohibited until further notice.

10) Meetings must be held virtually to the greatest extent possible. If conference room use is necessary, limit people in the conference room to essential personnel only, and appropriate social distancing must be maintained.
    a. Revised room capacity information will be posted on all conference rooms to allow for social distancing.
    b. The host of the meeting is responsible for ensuring all used surfaces (arms on chairs, keyboard, mouse, touch screen, table and counter tops) are wiped down after the meeting and to notify the COVID-19 email if disinfecting materials are used up.

11) Enhanced cleaning procedures will continue. These procedures include the following provisions:
   a. In St Paul, a daytime designated cleaning staff conducts enhanced cleaning measures to include all high touch point areas such as door handles, elevator buttons, common area
tables and conference rooms, conference room chair arms, stairwell railings, faucet handles, and the like up to four hours per day. In Regional Offices, the enhanced cleaning should follow similar protocol by staff designated by the Regional Manager. Staff are responsible for cleaning commonly used areas as it’s difficult to employ designated cleaning staff during business hours.

b. Routine cleaning and disinfection of all areas, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment (e.g., multifunction copiers), machinery, tools, controls, etc.

c. Daily cleaning of all high touch items like door knobs, handles, light switches, surfaces, etc.

d. Decontamination (deep cleaning and surface sanitizing) will occur if someone in the building become ill with COVID-19.

e. Proper disposal of all cleaning and/or contaminated items in the nearest trash receptacle or by authorized contractor.

f. See also field work safety guidelines below.

**Fleet management**

Existing administrative guidance regarding fleet management and vehicle use remains in place. Program vehicles may be temporarily assigned to specific staff to managing social distancing and will be returned to the overall program pool as staff travel needs increase and social distancing is relaxed.

**Process for requesting and picking up vehicles**

1) Use the existing vehicle reservation processes for requesting pool vehicles and supervisor’s instructions for use of assigned vehicles.

2) Portfolios will be placed in a centrally located place for pick up and drop off at all sites.

3) Disinfectant and wipes will be available to wipe portfolios before and after pick up.

4) Follow social distancing procedures when picking up and dropping off portfolios.

**Vehicle Cleaning**

This procedure needs to be put into action between vehicle operators or at the end of the week, whichever comes first.

1) Remove all your personal gear and store in designated areas. Try to minimize touching any high touch areas as you do so.

2) Wash your hands with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

3) Make sure to wipe down the follow areas of the vehicle with disinfectant solution:

   a) Steering wheel;
   b) Shifters;
   c) Armrests and headrests;
   d) Seats;
   e) Dash;
   f) Center console;
g) Door and door handle;
h) Seatbelt, buckle, and seatbelt fastener;
i) Windows.
4) Wipe down keys. Be sure to wipe down credit card inside key chain if used.
5) Close front doors and wipe down the exterior handle.
6) Wipe down rear door handle interior and rear doors.
7) Close doors and wipe down door handles and gas cap/ gas cover.
8) Wipe down black portfolio designated with each vehicle (field and pool).
9) Wash your hands with soap and water again, or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

**Entering an office due to retirement or separation**

Employees who are separating from the MPCA will need to work with their Supervisor to schedule a time enter the building so that predictability of exposure to other people is trackable and to manage interactions with others entering the building. The Supervisor will follow the normal process of completing the HR PTR forms and the Staffing Change Notification Input Form (SCNIF). The PTR initiates an exit checklist being sent to the supervisor. The SCNIF notifies MNIT, facilities, and other necessary staff of the employee's departure. Employees separating from MNIT or BWSR will follow their agency’s protocols for separation, and the supervisor and employee will follow steps below for building access.

1) Supervisor, including MNIT and BWSR, submits a building entry request to the COVID-19 email box (covid19.pca@state.mn.us) or Regional Manager/Regional Manager designee and notifies the separating employee of the scheduled time to enter the office.
2) Employee lets the health screening and front desk staff know approximately how many times they may be entering and exiting the building to carry materials in and out of the building (e.g., return state equipment and remove personal items).
3) Unless otherwise specifically directed, employee leaves computer, monitors, desk phones and any other state equipment at their work station/office. The employee should review the Equipment Checklist completed when COVID-19 teleworking started to ensure all equipment is accounted for and appropriate asset numbers are identified.
4) Employee use wipes or paper towel and disinfectant spray to wipe down all hard surfaces that you have touched in your work area (e.g., chair arms, mouse, keyboard, desk surface, drawers, handles, etc.), badges, keys, and equipment before leaving the office for the final time.
5) Employee places their badge, any state-issued keys, and cell phone into an interoffice envelope and leaves it with their supervisor, or designated leader in the office if the supervisor is not in, when leaving the office for the last time.
6) In person recognition events in the offices are prohibited at this time.

**Performance**

MPCA is a data-driven agency and much of our work is measured by efficiency and effectiveness metrics, and is required by law or delegation agreements and associated funding. We will continue to monitor our short-term, strategic goals, as well as our long-term, environmental outcome goals, according to our
established strategic calendar. In addition, we have many metrics we must meet such as legislative timeliness goals and those contained in our Environmental Performance Partnership Agreement with EPA. If any of the measures are not meeting minimum expectations, we will reevaluate our resources and operations and adjust accordingly.

**Communications and training**

This Preparedness Plan will be posted to the MPCA’s intranet, the Lorax, and communicated to all staff via email after certification. Additional communication and training will be ongoing. Managers and supervisors will monitor how effective the Plan has been implemented and adopted through frequent check-ins with their staff. Conflicts with implementation of this Plan will be communicated to ICT through the COVID-19 email inbox, which will continue to be monitored daily. This plan is part of the agency’s Continuity of Operations Plan and will be updated as necessary.

Additional communication and training will be provided by:

- Posters and signage at elevators, conference rooms, and throughout the building
- Posting of this Plan and Frequently Asked Questions to the Lorax (internal website)
- Training for employees on office and field safety guidelines and other aspects of this plan as necessary will be provided and documented via Enterprise Learning Management (ELM) for each employee.
- Frequent COVID-19 emails and announcements to all staff (frequency and content determined by ICT)
- Deployment of MMB-provided templates for consistent reinforcement of key messages
- Other communication and training as identified

Compliance with this Plan upon return to office or field work is critical to the effectiveness and success of this program. As such, all MPCA employees will be required to formally sign a document indicating they have read, understand, and will follow the guidelines prior to accessing buildings.
Appendix A: Field Work Safety Guidelines

Staff are not allowed to conduct field work (field monitoring, onsite visits, onsite inspections) unless they have received instructions to do so from their supervisor. Staff are expected to fulfill their normal fieldwork assignments. Cloth masks will be provided by the agency. Supervisors can consider and approve employee requests to continue to telework when not in the field. Human Resources determines eligibility for COVID leave. Staff should not report to work in the field or office when feeling ill.

Listed below are guidelines that staff must follow while conducting field work with social distancing and the use of cloth facial masks, including when stopping at the office, storage, FOC, etc. for picking up supplies at the beginning or end of the day. Individual locations may have additional guidelines unique to the location (e.g., procedures for loading/unloading equipment into designated locations to minimize contact) that must be followed.

1) Wash your hands with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are unavailable
2) Vehicles (handles, doors, steering wheel, dash etc.) should be wiped down with disinfectant spray at the beginning and end of each day. Wipe down car keys and any commonly touched surfaces.
3) Wipe down equipment (clipboard, phone, GPS, computer etc.) and any surfaces touched while loading or unloading equipment.
4) If traveling in teams, staff must always travel in separate vehicles.
5) While working together, staff must maintain a minimum of 6 ft. distance between each other.
6) As per CDC guidelines, staff should wear cloth face masks in situations where they will be working in proximity to other people or may encounter members of the public. The mask does not substitute for social distancing.
7) Hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes, and disposable gloves will be supplied in each field vehicle (additional supplies can be found by vehicle keys; check with Facilities staff or vehicle coordinator for additional materials).
8) Gloves should be worn when pumping fuel and disposed of before re-entering the vehicle.
9) It is recommended that staff “pay at the pump” to avoid going inside gas stations.
10) After leaving the vehicle for gas, food, field work etc., staff should use hand sanitizer and wipe down door handles and steering wheel with disinfectant spray, as needed.
11) It is recommended (but not required) that staff bring their own lunch and water to prevent making unnecessary stops at local businesses.
12) If possible, each field staff person should have a dedicated vehicle for field work in order to minimize the risk of exposure.
13) Talk to your Supervisor regarding if the trip distance is appropriate to complete (costs of travel, increased time at the wheel with two drivers going separately). Overnight travel may be delayed until later when the viability of overnight hotel stays will be reevaluated.
14) Schedule/stagger the time you will be in the warehouse with other staff; if two staff are traveling to the same sampling location, they should load their vehicles at separate times to maintain proper distancing.
15) Call hotels as applicable on availability and willingness to accept out-of-town guests.
16) Boats do not allow for sufficient social distancing; no field work requiring boat use can be completed until social distancing is lifted.
17) Kayaks, if they can be loaded safely by a single person, are the only watercraft allowable at this time for field work.

**Disinfecting Equipment**

Disinfect equipment between operators or at the end of the week, whichever comes first.

1) Start unloading field gear, wiping down hard surfaces as items are removed and before they are returned to their storage places. Leave equipment out to air dry overnight or over the weekend.
   a) Open any equipment cases and wipe down with disinfectant solution (if equipment won’t be damaged by solution – may need to check user manuals). Close the case and wipe down the exterior, paying special attention to the handles of the case.
   b) Remove flow trackers and wipe down following the same procedure.
   c) Follow a similar procedure with any other gear removed from the vehicle.
   d) Set aside all field gear you will need for data entry in a clean area in the warehouse, cleaning as you do so. Remember to wipe down the laptop!

2) Begin wiping down the equipment handled by staff that stays in the vehicle.
   a) Remove all the gear you used during the trip and disinfect as you go.
   b) Once everything that has been used is outside the vehicle, do a quick wipe down of the surfaces inside the truck you may have touched (drawer handle, tape down handles, lubricant bottle, etc.)
   c) Return the equipment to the vehicle.

**Working with the Public - Inspections**

1) Call the facility before travel to inquire if the facility has a protocol for visitors and if it is feasible to conduct an inspection and maintain social distancing (If they know ahead of time because of the nature or layout of the facility social distancing cannot be maintained, consult your supervisor on the need for inspection during this time.

2) Follow whichever safety protocol (these guidelines or the facility protocol) is the most restrictive.

3) Wash your hands with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are unavailable prior to and after inspection.

4) Do not conduct the inspection if you are ill or if the facility’s representation is visibility ill.

5) Limit the number of people involved in the inspection. Preferably only one other person.

6) As per CDC and PCA guidelines, staff should wear cloth face masks in situations where they will be working in proximity to other people, which includes performing inspections. The mask does not substitute for social distancing.

7) Do not greet with a hand shake.

8) Maintain social distance of 6 feet or more during inspection.

9) Take extra photographs to capture information that can be evaluated at an off-site location.

10) If other parts of the inspection (records review) can be performed off-site complete those inspection elsewhere.
Appendix B: Example Health Screening Form

(Screening administrator will fill out the information on the form, rather than the individuals being screened.)

Name of Screener: _______________________________________________

Date: ____________________________

Name of screened individual: _____________________________

Employee, contractor, or visitor? _____________________________________

1. Have you been in close and prolonged physical contact (within less than 6 feet for at least 10 minutes) with an individual who has tested positive for or been diagnosed with COVID-19, or exposed to their cough or sneeze, within the last 14 calendar days; or have you tested positive for or been diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 14 calendar days?
   
   Yes ____________  No______________

2. Have you had a fever or felt feverish in the past 72 hours?
   
   Yes ____________  No______________

3. Have you taken any fever-reducing medication to reduce a fever in the past 72 hours?
   
   Yes ____________  No______________

4. Have you had cough, shortness of breath, or any other symptoms of COVID-19 (muscle aches, headache, sore throat, diarrhea, vomiting, or new loss of taste or smell) within the last 72 hours?
   
   Yes ____________  No______________

Any “YES” answers= Inform individual they may not enter and must leave the facility

All “No” answers= Take temperature

Temperature:_________________________________

- If temperature 100.4 F or greater, inform individual they may not enter and must leave the facility
- If temperature under 100.4 F, individual may enter the facility
Appendix C: Example checklist upon return to the workplace

Supervisors should have each employee complete the following form on the employees’ first day back in the workplace.

Welcome back! We are glad to be working on getting our team back together and we are glad you’re here!

State Property. Please confirm which of the following state-owned equipment you are returning to the office (alternate option is to attach form for removal of equipment from office and indicate each piece that has been returned).

☐ Mobile device (e.g., cellphone, hotspot) asset # _________________
☐ Laptop/desktop – asset # _______________
☐ Computer Monitor(s)
☐ VPN token
☐ Office Chair
☐ Other (please specify) ___________________________________________

Did you clean and sanitize all equipment according to guidelines?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Communications

☐ Remove any modified service message on your voicemail and record a new personal greeting.
☐ Remove any modified services delivery message on your internal and external email.

Employee Signature __________________________________________ DATE ____________
Supervisor Signature _________________________________________ DATE ____________
## Appendix D: Risk assessment for COVID-19 pandemic emergency (MN Dept. of Administration)

### Risk assessment for COVID-19 pandemic emergency

1. **Select employee work environment**
   - Healthcare environment
   - Non-healthcare environment

2. **Select contact criteria for job duties**
   - Healthcare environment
   - Non-healthcare environment

3. **Level of risk* and recommended respiratory infection control**
   - Very high
   - High
   - Medium
   - Low risk (caution)

   *Risk status can potentially change with an employee’s tasks or duties

   **Respiratory Infection Control Recommendations**
   - **Very high**: N95 respirator
   - **High**: N95 respirator or surgical mask
   - **Medium**: Cloth face covering
   - **Low risk (caution)**: None, please practice personal hygiene and social distancing

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Appendix E: Phased Return to the Office

Using the priorities outlined in the MPCA COVID-19 Preparedness Plan, a staff survey completed by leadership in May 2020, social distancing requirements, and other data, the ICS Team identifies the phased return described below. In addition to the priorities noted, consideration was given to: ability to telework, having the right technology/equipment to move between office and home, having backups for the work, ratio between telework days and office days to meet program needs, and the particular work and those who do it. Employees in any wave may be reassigned to essential office duties as needed.

Stay at Home

• **Wave 0**: Skeleton crew who remained in the building and any staff who received a specific/individual exemption to the Stay-at-Home order in April 2020. This is <5% of overall staff with focus on keeping essential services running.

Stay at Home to Safer at Home transition

• **Wave 1**: Field staff and limited office staff specifically allowed to return through MMB exemptions in May and June 2020. Note: staff in this wave are expected to telework when not in the field; training and supervisor approval required to start field work.

• **Wave 2**: Includes employees whose work is not conducive to ongoing telework, who will support the field staff in Wave 1 or who will relieve staff in Wave 0. Staff will need to have sufficient computer equipment to move back and forth between office and home.

• **Wave 3**: Any additional staff needed to support waves 0, 1, or 2 (not yet identified) or potentially support limited by appointment in-person activities such as file review while still retaining maximum social distancing and following Safer at Home requirements. Note: staff in this wave not yet identified. This is <15% of overall staff in offices 1-5 days per week; includes staff who need to be in the field or office to accomplish their work; maintains a single Leader of the Day per office approach.

Safer at Home to Governor’s Next Announced Phase

Timeframe for bringing additional staff into the office is dependent on future directives from MMB or the Governor, progression of the virus (e.g. testing capabilities, are there illnesses among staff; when was the last illness, etc.), and/or virus mitigation (e.g. is there a vaccine).

• **Wave 4**: This wave could be divided into multiple groups and may include: staff needed (e.g. reception) to potential move from limited, appointment-based access in Wave 3 to doors open; staff needed to manage increased shipping, receiving with increased office presence; staff meeting with stakeholders on an ad hoc basis (assumes in-person meetings acceptable); additional records management and document services, data practices, file review staff on a regular basis; staff needed to hold in-person exams (can be appointment-based/not continual; can be off-site if needed; 100s of certified individuals that will need certification exams in next six months).

Additional consideration could include opening offices to the public under reduced hours (e.g. MWF or daily 8-12).
This wave may not go beyond maximum social distancing capacity of the offices and may need additional Leader of the Day in St. Paul.

End of pandemic/full recovery

- **Wave Z**: Reconstitution. All pandemic social distancing requirements removed. No health screening or limitations for staff entering offices. A portion of staff will continue to telework permanently, or semi-permanently (based on May 2020 survey, 66% of staff were interested in continuing to telework).
Appendix F: MPCA Certification of Readiness to Return Employees to the Workplace

- The MPCA has identified priority services operations (prioritized, operational requirements enumerated, cost and revenue considered). This includes identifying the percentage or number of employees:
  - Required to work on premises
  - Who will remain remote on a short term, medium term, and long-term basis
- The MPCA has identified performance metrics associated with each operation in the new normal and can collect/monitor data.
- The MPCA has a process to identify any slip in performance, workforce absenteeism, and operational impacts via the weekly agency impact survey submitted to MMB.
- The MPCA has developed a scalability rating (can they operate with 20%, 30%, 50%, etc.) and the impacts to cost/revenue/deliverability to customers.
- The MPCA has social distancing plans in place for work areas, elevators, meeting rooms, and common spaces. Any changes to layout of work areas or additional barrier construction has been approved by the Department of Administration.
- The MPCA has a plan to conduct health screenings, which may include temperature screening, and will do so for all employees, vendors, and visitors entering the facility.
- The MPCA has communicated infection control protocols including handwashing, health screening, temperature taking, face covering wearing, and respiratory etiquette to anyone who is in the workplace.
- The MPCA has plans in place for telework, flextime, and staggered schedules in areas where social distancing is not possible.
- The MPCA has communicated travel restrictions and policies for remote meetings.
- The MPCA has consulted with the Department of Administration or the landlords to ensure extra cleaning and sanitizing schedules, needed layout changes, etc.
- The MPCA has appropriate and sufficient signage posted denoting social distancing requirements, hygiene reminders, restrictions on public access, required conference room seating, maximum number of people allowed in each space, what to do if employees become ill, etc.
- The MPCA has made cleaning and disinfecting supplies available for employees to maintain their workspaces and equipment, along with adequate hygienic products such as soap, towels, and tissues.
- The MPCA has a process for employees and supervisors to report, inventory, and sanitize all state-owned equipment and office furniture removed from the agency and subsequently returned.
- The MPCA has employee communication plans that include notifying employees of information needed BEFORE they return to the site.
- The MPCA has notified all employees how to contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) if necessary.
• The MPCA has mechanisms in place to report and resolve compliance issues with safety protocols. These mechanisms are widely known to employees, either through signage or frequent verbal or written communication.
• The MPCA has protocols in place and an appropriate space set aside to isolate anyone who becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms while working.
• If applicable, the MPCA has the necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) on hand to distribute to employees working in high risk conditions.

I certify the MPCA has protocols in place to comply with executive orders allowing the safe return of employees to the workplace. By signing this certification, I attest the MPCA has followed all applicable guidance in this document, and has communicated or will communicate all relevant standards and policies to employees before they return or immediately as they return to the workplace.

MPCA Commissioner:

Date: June 12, 2020
Appendix G: MNIT Certification

As a partner and sub-tenant of the MPCA St. Paul office, I certify MNIT has protocols in place to comply with executive orders allowing the safe return of employees to the workplace. By signing this certification, I attest MNIT will follow all applicable guidance in this document, and has communicated or will communicate all relevant standards and policies to employees before they return or immediately as they return to the workplace.

MNIT:

[Signature]

6/15/2020

Date: ________________________________
Appendix H: BWSR Certification

As a sub-tenant of the MPCA St. Paul office, I certify BWSR has protocols in place to comply with executive orders allowing the safe return of employees to the workplace. By signing this certification, I attest BWSR will follow all applicable guidance in this document, and has communicated or will communicate all relevant standards and policies to employees before they return or immediately as they return to the workplace.