

# COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for HealthPartners

HealthPartners is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our employees, patients and visitors. To ensure we have a safe and healthy workplace, our organization has developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders and all employees are responsible for implementing the following plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our workplaces and communities, and that requires full cooperation among our employees, patients and visitors. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of all persons in our workplaces. This plan is not intended to replace any terms or conditions of an applicable collective bargaining agreement (CBA). To the extent that there is any inconsistency between this plan and any CBA, the terms of the CBA will apply.

The COVID-19 Preparedness Plan is administered by the Interim Chief Human Resources Officer, Casey Nolan, who maintains the overall authority and responsibility for the plan. However, leaders and employees are equally responsible for supporting, implementing, complying with, and providing recommendations to further improve all aspects of the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan.

As a health care organization, we value the safety and health of our employees. Employee communication and engagement are essential to developing and implementing a successful COVID-19 Preparedness Plan and we have engaged our employees in several different ways. For example, we created a dedicated COVID-19 employee health task force, with representation from numerous disciplines and locations across the organization. An Employee Health COVID-19 Resource Center was also set up to address any questions, feedback and concerns related to COVID-19 from both employees and leaders. Additionally, a central command center and command centers at each care site have been established to bring resources together, address concerns and provide guidance related to COVID-19. The leader of the COVID-19 employee health task force also has a direct line to the command centers to ensure they stay connected.

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan follows the industry guidance developed by the State of Minnesota, which is based upon Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines for COVID-19, Minnesota's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Minnesota OSHA) statutes, rules, and standards, and Minnesota's relevant and current executive orders, and addresses:

- Ensuring sick employees stay home and prompt identification and isolation of sick persons;
- Physical distancing – employees must be at least six-feet apart;
- Employee hygiene and source controls;
- Workplace building and ventilation protocol;
- Workplace cleaning and disinfection protocol;
- Visitor and vendor practices and protocol; and
- Communications and training practices and protocol.

We have reviewed and incorporated the industry guidance applicable to our business provided by the State of Minnesota for the development of this plan, including the following industry guidance for health care. Other conditions and circumstances included in the industry guidance and addressed in the plan that are specific to our business include:

- additional protections and protocols for patients and guests;
- additional protections and protocols for personal protective equipment (PPE);
- additional protections and protocol for access and assignment;
- additional protections and protocol for sanitation and hygiene;
- additional protections and protocol for distancing and barriers;

## **Ensuring sick employees stay home and prompt identification and isolation of sick persons**

Employees continue to be informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The following policies and procedures have been implemented to assess employees' health status prior to entering the workplace and for employees to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms.

- We are screening all employees and clinicians across our organization prior to entering the workplace.
- An Employee Health COVID-19 Resource Center has been established, which is available 7 days a week to field all questions, concerns and feedback from employees and leaders related to COVID-19. The resource center is staffed with RNs and receives additional clinical support from clinicians and RNs who specialize in infection prevention and occupational medicine.
- Leave and pay policies have been developed to promote employees staying at home when they are sick, when household members are sick, or when required by a health care provider to isolate or quarantine themselves or a member of their household.
- Tools have been developed for leaders to use when assessing employee health and/or potential risk including work modification tools.
- Policies and procedures for investigating potential COVID-19 exposures, including definitions, reporting a potential exposure, what to do if an exposure happens at work/outside of work, exposure investigations, communication and quarantine requirements are available to all employees. Additionally, an employee health and safety privacy policy has been implemented to protect the privacy of employees' health status and health information.
- Several return to work procedures have also been developed for employees who are returning to work after an illness, quarantine, potential exposure, volunteering/working in a COVID-19 hot spot, furlough or travel.

## **Physical Distancing**

Physical distancing of at least six feet is being implemented across the organization. General information about physical distancing, as well as specific information about physical distancing guidelines in the workplace is available on the company intranet. Physical distancing is being reinforced through senior leader messaging, direct leader communication and signage. Additionally, employees who have the necessary set-up and capability to carry out their job responsibilities at home are encouraged to do so.

## **Employee hygiene and source controls**

Basic infection prevention measures continue to be practiced at our workplaces at all times.

Information about reporting to work, including preventing the spread of the virus and addressing concerns about working with patients/employees with expected exposure is available on the company intranet.

The organization has also adopted risk-based strategies for personal protective equipment (PPE) and universal masking policies, with a focus on safety as our guiding principle.

Specific information on PPE and masking requirements during COVID-19, including donning and doffing, universal eye protection and PPE reuse, extended use and universal masking, is available on the company intranet.

In order to reinforce safety practices and guidelines for employees, patients and visitors, signage and posters are available on the company intranet. Leaders and employees have been asked and reminded to post this information in relevant locations.

## **Workplace building and ventilation protocol**

Operation of all buildings in which a workplace is located, include the necessary sanitation, assessment and maintenance of building systems including water, plumbing, electrical and HVAC systems. The organization ensures that all buildings follow the regulations for ventilation and air circulation as required by various accreditation agencies including agencies such as The Joint Commission for hospitals and various healthcare associations for non-medical facilities. These requirements/standards are monitored, documented and audited on an ongoing basis to ensure compliance.

## **Workplace cleaning and disinfection protocol**

Regular practices of cleaning and disinfecting continue to be followed, including a schedule for routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment, tools and machinery, vehicles, and areas in the work environment including, but not limited to, restrooms, break rooms, lunch rooms, meeting rooms, checkout stations, fitting rooms, and drop-off and pick-up locations. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting is being conducted of high-touch areas including, but not limited to, phones, keyboards, touch screens, controls, door handles, elevator panels, railings, copy machines, credit card readers, delivery equipment, etc.

Workplace cleaning and disinfection continues to be administered by either external vendors, Marsden and Harvard or by our employees across the organization. Each of these vendors and our employee groups ensure compliance with regulatory recommendations and requirements for cleaning and disinfection, including using EPA-registered disinfectants. They continue to monitor and implement changes as they are received from both the CDC and the MDH.

## **Visitor and vendor practices and protocol**

To help reduce the spread of COVID-19 to our employees, patients and visitors we have created more vigorous screening of other professionals entering our buildings. A system-wide screening policy has been implemented, in addition to updated hospital and clinic visitor guidelines.

## Communications and training practices and protocol

The information in this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan has been communicated to all employees in an organization wide email on Thursday, June 25, 2020, and necessary training was provided. Additional communication and training will be ongoing by through senior leader communication, direct leader messaging, huddles and email communication. Information will be provided to all employees prior to initial assignment or reassignment and will be available at any time on the company intranet.

Instructions have been communicated to all employees, temporary employees, independent contractors, subcontractors, vendors, patients and visitors on protections and protocols, including but not limited to: 1) Physical distancing protocols and practices; 2) Visitor and vendor practices and protocol; 3) Practices for hygiene and respiratory etiquette; 4) Recommendations or requirements regarding the use of masks, face-coverings, and/or face-shields by employees, patients and visitors. All employees, patients and visitors will also be advised not to enter the workplace if they are experiencing symptoms or have contracted COVID-19. This will be reinforced through signage, and communication to employees and leaders.

Leaders and employees are expected to monitor how effective the plan has been implemented. The command centers and the Employee Health COVID-19 Resource Center will also continue to collect feedback and monitor the effectiveness of the plan, including identifying successes, challenges and deficiencies. All leaders and employees are 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 certified by HealthPartners, posted on the company intranet and made readily available to employees on June 25, 2020. It will be updated as necessary by Casey Nolan, Interim Chief Human Resources Officer.

Certified by:

Casey Nolan  
September 2, 2020

Chief Human Resources Officer