



COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for the Workplace

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Introduction

Owatonna Public Schools (OPS) is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all of our students, employees, and the public we serve. The following Preparedness Plan, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, was developed to provide guidance to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our workplaces and communities. We require full cooperation among our administration, employees, students and families, and members of the public. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of our students, employees, and public we serve. Please review this video for more employee information: [Employee Preparedness Plan Video](#).

Employee involvement is essential for implementing a successful COVID-19 Preparedness Plan and administration and employees are responsible for complying with all aspects of this Plan. OPS administration and employees have our full support in enforcing the provisions of this policy.

This plan is continuously updated, as needed, and follows the state's [Guidance on Safely Reopening Minnesota Businesses](#), all applicable executive orders, and current guidance and standards from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and addresses:

- hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- engineering and administrative controls for social distancing
- cleaning, disinfecting, and decontamination
- prompt identification and isolation of sick employees

If you have questions about the plan, contact your supervisor.

Health and Safety Guidance

Gloves and Handwashing

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that gloves need only be worn when cleaning, disinfecting, caring for sick persons, or providing first aid or other emergency treatment. Certain employee groups (i.e. School Nutrition Employees, Maintenance Employees, etc.) may have regulations for glove usage beyond COVID-19 pandemic reasons; protocols for those employees should continue to be followed. Wearing gloves for reasons beyond those listed above does not necessarily protect you from getting COVID-19 and may still lead to the spread of germs. The best way to protect yourself from germs is to regularly wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented at our workplaces at all times. Employees are instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, but especially at the beginning and end of their shift, anytime they leave and return to the building, prior to any mealtimes, and after using the restroom. Friendly reminders have been placed in restrooms and near sinks to encourage this practice. Hand-sanitizer dispensers (that use sanitizers of

greater than 60% alcohol) have been placed in various locations throughout the workplace for use when soap and water are not readily available. Employees should avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands. [Watch this MDH video on how to properly wash your hands.](#)

Dispensers, both sanitizer and soap, will be checked daily to ensure an adequate supply is available. In the event of a sanitizer shortage, handwashing will be used in place of the use of hand sanitizer.

We will be limiting visitor access when possible, however, visitors who must come into our buildings will be asked to utilize available hand sanitizer upon entry into the building. Visitors will also be required to follow other health and safety guidelines as applicable or leave the premises.

Masks and Respiratory Etiquette

Per Governor's [Executive Order 20-81](#), face coverings are generally required for all students, staff and other persons present in any school building or district office or riding on school transportation vehicles. Additionally, all students, staff and other persons should wear a face covering outdoors on school district property if you cannot maintain a 6-foot distance. To provide a consistent, safe environment for students and staff, these requirements apply equally to kindergarteners, even those aged 5 and under.

The use of face coverings, when utilized properly, can help to prevent your germs from infecting others. This is especially important because the virus can spread from person to person even when an infected person is not showing symptoms. Please note that wearing a face covering may not necessarily protect you from others who may spread the virus. It is important to wash your hands often, cover your cough, and stay at least 6 feet away from others.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. These masks are considered critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance. The cloth face coverings should completely cover the nose and mouth, should not be overly tight or restrictive, and should feel comfortable to wear. In addition to cloth face coverings, it is strongly recommended that staff wear a face shield (a clear plastic barrier that covers the face) along with a mask when working in the vicinity of staff and/or students at all times.

Face coverings should not be placed on anyone under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance, or anyone who cannot tolerate a face covering due to a developmental, medical, or behavioral health condition.

Owatonna Public Schools will provide face coverings and/or face shields to employees and students. Employees and students may choose to wear their own face covering and face shield as long as it meets the minimum requirement of covering the nose and mouth and are of good taste and not have any derogatory or inappropriate designs or language. All mask options are reusable, depending on the

circumstances of their use, surroundings, duration, etc. Cloth masks should be laundered on a regular basis. Blue 'surgical' type masks, although typically intended to be disposable, can be reused when worn intermittently or in short duration situations. Goggles are not an approved face shield. Face shields should be cleaned daily with soap and water.

Despite the mandatory use of face coverings, employees and visitors are being instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and to avoid touching their face, in particular their mouth, nose, and eyes, with their hands. They should dispose of tissues in provided trash receptacles and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward. Respiratory etiquette will be demonstrated on posters and supported by making tissues and trash receptacles available to all employees and visitors.

Information on how to properly wear and disinfect face covering is listed below:

- [See MDH guidance on the use of face coverings](#)

A face shield allows visibility of facial expressions and lip movements for speech perception and may be used very limitedly without use of a face covering in the following situations:

- Among students in Kindergarten through grade 8, when wearing a face covering is problematic.
- For staff, students, or visitors who cannot tolerate a face covering due to a developmental, medical, or behavioral health condition.
- For staff providing direct support student services, when a face covering impedes the service being provided.

Staff, students, and other people present in the school building or in district offices may temporarily remove their face covering or face shield in the following situations:

- Pre-kindergarten students age 5 years and younger participating in programming in a school building or district office. Pre-kindergarten programs are subject to the Executive Order requirements and related guidance applicable in child care settings; see Masking Requirements for Child Care (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/masks.html). Pre-kindergarten children who are at least 2 years old may wear face coverings if they can do so in compliance with CDC guidance.
- Face coverings may be temporarily removed to eat or drink, but care should be taken to maintain as much space as possible between people, recognizing it is not always feasible to maintain 6 feet of distance from others.
- During indoor practices or performances involving singing, acting, public speaking, or playing musical instruments where a face covering cannot be used while playing the instrument. Performers should maintain 6 feet or greater of physical distance from others while participating in the activity to the extent possible, and should replace their face covering as soon as the activity is completed.

- People who are entering the school building during the day may be required by school staff to briefly remove their face covering for the purposes of checking identification.
- Staff working alone in their offices, classrooms, vehicles, or other job locations who do not have any person-to-person interaction.
- Staff working in communal spaces (e.g., at desks or in cubicles) that have barriers such as plexiglass or cubicle walls between employees that are above face level.
- When communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing or has a disability, medical condition, or mental health condition that makes communication with a face covering difficult, provided that social distancing is maintained to the extent possible.

Social Distancing

All employees must maintain six feet of social distancing with any person at all times. Social distancing will be implemented in the workplace through the following engineering and administrative controls. The options listed below may be available for some employee groups and positions, however, they may not be available for others. Positions whose job necessitates that the work be completed in a district building, may be required to work on-site.

- Remote Work Availability
- Virtual Meeting Rooms
- Flexible, Split, and Staggered Shifts
- Modified Work Spaces
- Restructuring of Classrooms Spaces

Social distancing signage will be posted for employees and visitors to ensure social distancing is easy and visible. Temporary barriers may be placed in certain areas, as applicable, to direct traffic flow or reduce congestion.

Markings at building entrances and service counters indicate directional flow and spacing for social distancing.

Do not exceed group size limits established by the Minnesota Department of Health for in-person meetings and gatherings. Use virtual meetings, whenever possible.

Owatonna Public Schools will be limiting all non-essential visitors. Student pick-up and drop-off should occur outside the building. Employees should avoid traveling in district or personally owned vehicles together unless they are living in the same household.

If there is an interaction or process where it is difficult to maintain social distancing consider the following:

- Is this an essential activity/interaction?

- Is there another way to complete the process that honors social distancing?
- Are there physical barriers that could be used to reduce risk of disease transmission?

If unable to determine and approach with social distancing or protective barriers, the activity/interaction should not be held. Consult with a supervisor for further consideration.

Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfection

It is important to note the difference between the terms cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. *Cleaning* removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection. *Sanitizing* lowers the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a safe level, as judged by public health standards or requirements. Generally speaking, sanitizing uses agents that destroy 99.999% of bacteria in 30 seconds. *Disinfecting* kills germs on surfaces or objects. Disinfecting works by using chemicals to kill and/or destroy germs on surfaces or objects, rather than simply reduce them. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection. Generally speaking, disinfecting is 99.9999% effective (100,000 times more effective) against bacteria and viruses than sanitizing.

Regular housekeeping practices are currently being conducted by our maintenance department including routine cleaning and disinfecting of general areas in the work environment including restrooms, break rooms, lunch rooms, meeting rooms, countertops, light switches, handles on equipment, door handles, elevator panels, railings, etc. Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfectant supplies have been purchased and are available for use in accordance with product labels, safety data sheets and manufacturer specifications, and are being used with required personal protective equipment for the product.

All employees are expected to help clean and disinfect their personal work space, as well as shared surfaces and objects on a daily basis. Employees should clean and disinfect high-touch areas, such as phones, keyboards, touch screens, etc., and where appropriate equipment, tools, and machinery should also be disinfected. Employees should avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible, and if necessary, clean and disinfect them before and after use. Cleaning and disinfecting supplies are provided for employees to use in accordance with product labels, manufacturer specifications and any required personal protective equipment.

Employees using district vehicles and equipment are expected to wipe/disinfect door handles (inside/outside, steering wheel, seat, gear shift, radio/climate control/other knobs, glove box entry, etc.).

In the event of a positive COVID-19 exposure while in the workplace, an assessment will be conducted to determine the additional cleaning and sanitizing procedures needed to properly

disinfect the potentially contaminated areas. Potentially contaminated areas will be restricted while awaiting disinfection.

Building systems were assessed and sanitized prior to reopening, and are regularly evaluated to ensure proper ventilation and healthy indoor air quality that exceeds OSHA standards.

Deliveries, Exchanges and Handling Materials

All deliveries, including in-district delivers, should be received in a contact-free way that provides for social distancing. Procedures should be clearly communicated to visitors. Employees should wear a face covering if unable to maintain at least 6 feet of spacing while receiving a delivery.

Limit personal exchanges of materials to essential items, and wash your hands before and after each delivery or exchange of materials.

Daily Screening Procedures for Employees

Employees have been informed of and expected to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 using MDH/CDC symptom list. Employees should stay home or go home if exhibiting new onset cough or shortness of breath by themselves OR at least 2 of the following symptoms with no other diagnosis to explain it:

- Fever of 100.4°F or greater
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Muscle pain or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

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

1. Assess Health Status Prior to Reporting to Work: Employees should use the Health Self Screening Checklist **EACH DAY** to assess their health status prior to reporting to work. This checklist should be completed prior to taking any fever reducing drug.

- a.** Employees exhibiting any of the symptoms of COVID-19 are to stay home from work. The employee will log their absence in Absence Management (Aesop) and then will contact Human Resources (507.444-8611) for further follow-up. Employees are encouraged to contact their medical provider to determine the need for testing.

2. **Leave Work Immediately if Symptoms Appear Throughout the Work Day:** Employees who have the onset of COVID-19 related symptoms throughout the work day should immediately notify their supervisor and Human Resources and leave the premises immediately. If the employee is not able to leave immediately, they should self-isolate in an unoccupied area of the building until they are able to do so. Employees are encouraged to contact their medical provider to determine the need for testing.

Guidelines for Employees Exhibiting Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19

The following guidelines may be implemented **when an employee becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms**. Depending on the exact circumstances of an employee's illness, modifications may be implemented on a case by case basis.

1. If the employee **has not been tested** for COVID-19, they may be asked to stay home from work for 10 days from the onset of symptoms and may return to work once they are fever-free (without the use of fever reducing drugs) and symptom-free for 24 hours. Employees are encouraged to contact their medical provider to determine the need for testing.
2. If the employee **tests negative** for COVID-19, they may be asked to stay home from work until they are fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing drugs) for 24 hours and any other symptoms improve significantly.
3. If the employee **tests positive** for COVID-19, they will be asked to notify their supervisor and HR Department and to stay home from work and self-isolate under the guidance of the Minnesota Department of Health for at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms. The employee may return to work if it has been 10 days from the onset of symptoms, if their symptoms have subsided, and they have been fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing drugs) for 24 hours.

Guidelines for Employees Who Have Potentially Been Exposed to COVID-19 - Standard Quarantine Option

The following guidelines may be implemented **when an employee has potentially come into contact with someone who has or could have COVID-19**. Depending on the employee's circumstance, modifications may be implemented on a case by case basis. For the purposes of this section, the Minnesota Department of Health defines "close contact" as being less than 6 feet from someone for 15 minutes or more, typically sharing living arrangements with and/or having a close relationship with.

1. If an employee has **had "close contact" with a known positive COVID-19 case** and/or has been notified by the Minnesota Department of Health to quarantine, the employee will be asked to stay home from work for at least 14 days from the last contact with the positive case. If the employee exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 within that 14 day period, the employee should continue to stay home from work and follow the guidelines listed above.
2. If the employee has **had "close contact" with a suspected positive COVID-19 case awaiting test results**, the employee may be asked to stay home from work and monitor their own health status until the results return. If the results of the "close contact" return a positive result, the

employee will be asked to continue to stay home from work and follow the above guidelines. If the results of the “close contact” return a negative result and the employee is feeling well, the employee may return to work.

3. If the employee has ***had “close contact” with a suspected positive COVID-19 case who is not being tested***, the employee may be asked to stay home from work and monitor their own health status for 14 days from the last contact with the suspected positive case.
4. ***If the employee has had contact or “close contact” with someone who has had contact or “close contact” with a known or suspected positive COVID-19 case***, the employee may continue to report to work but the employee must practice social distancing, good hygiene, and continue to monitor their health status often.
5. If the employee has ***had contact (but not “close contact”) with a known or suspected positive COVID-19 case***, the employee may continue to report to work but the employee must practice social distancing, good hygiene, and continue to monitor their health status often.

Guidelines for Employees Who Have Potentially Been Exposed to COVID-19 - Shortened Quarantine Option

Owatonna Public Schools is implementing the shortened quarantine option for all staff. Per the [new MDH close contact guidelines](#), staff who have one close contact experience may be considered for an earlier return to work date if they meet certain criteria. For ALL early returns, you must have no symptoms and have had only one close contact exposure. If you would like to request the 10 or 7 day shortened quarantine period, please email the HR department and we will send you a link to the request form and will make sure that all conditions have been met.

1. 10 Day Quarantine Request (return after finishing 10 full days of quarantine)

The following conditions must be met:

- You have no symptoms
- You have NOT tested positive for COVID
- No one in my household has tested positive for COVID
- After the 10-day quarantine, you agree to monitor myself for symptoms through day 14 and stay home if any symptoms appear.

2. 7 Day Quarantine Request (return after finishing 7 full days of quarantine)

The following conditions must be met:

- I have been tested for COVID-19 **at least five full days after** my close contact exposure, and the test is negative. To qualify, **test must be a PCR test** - please check with your doctor. Negative results with appropriate date (5+ days after exposure) must be provided to the HR Department. *Please note, day one starts the day after exposure. Ex: close contact occurred on Friday at 3pm , earliest date of test could be Wednesday at 3 pm (Sat. = day 1, Sun = day 2, Mon = day 3, Tue = day 4, Wednesday = day 5)

- I have no symptoms
- I have NOT tested positive for COVID
- No one in my household has tested positive for COVID
- After the 7-day quarantine, I agree to monitor myself for symptoms through day 14 and stay home if any symptoms appear.

Notification Procedures for Potential Exposure

The following policies and procedures are being implemented for informing workers if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 at their workplace.

1. Following the notification of a positive COVID-19 case within the district, the Human Resources department will collect information regarding the circumstances of the positive case including but not limited to: proximity and duration of contact with others, physical space and social distancing considerations, and any hygiene related concerns.
2. Depending on the level of exposure, employees will be contacted in the following ways:
 - a. If a true “close contact” exposure is suspected, employees will be notified by phone of the exposure and will be asked to stay home from work using the guidance from the MDH decision tree for a close contact exposure. The employee will also likely be contacted by the Minnesota Department of Health for further follow up.
 - b. If no “close contact” is suspected, employees will receive a notification by email notifying the employee of the positive test result along with the steps that have and will be taken by the district to mitigate the risk of transmission as well as steps employees can take to safeguard their own health. This notification may be district-wide, specific to a building, or specific to individuals who may have potentially been in contact or close proximity to the positive case.

If an employee has traveled, they should follow the [guidelines by the Center for Disease Control](#) and/or local government.

Policies and Procedures for Employee Leave Reasons Related to COVID-19

Owatonna Public Schools has several policies in place that promote workers staying at home when they or a member of their family are sick. Some of these policies are regular and outlined in master agreements and personnel policies, and some are temporary federal and state regulations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please note: Employees may be required to provide medical documentation for use of paid or unpaid leave. Medical documentation requested may need to outline specific accommodations as it relates to the leave reason and restrictions of the employee.

Reason (as listed above)	Options
Ill or Showing Symptoms of COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request the use of medical leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request the use of leave under Emergency Paid Sick Leave (through 4/1/21). • Request the use of personal leave/vacation leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. • Request the use of FMLA. • Request accommodations to report to work virtually, if possible.
Close contact with individuals who have been diagnosed or are awaiting diagnosis of COVID-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request the use of medical leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. • Request the use of leave under Emergency Paid Sick Leave (through 4/1/21). • Request the use of personal leave/vacation leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. • Request the use of unpaid FMLA. • Request accommodations to report to work virtually, if possible.
Living with family members who are ill or showing symptoms of COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request the use of family medical leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. • Request the use of leave under Emergency Paid Sick Leave (through 4/1/21). • Request the use of personal leave/vacation leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. • Request the use of unpaid FMLA. • Request accommodations to report to work virtually, if possible.
High-Risk (Immuno-compromised or in a MDH designated high-risk category)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to work, maintain social distancing and proper hygiene and use PPE if appropriate. • Request the use of medical leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. • Request the use of leave under Emergency Paid Sick Leave. • Request the use of personal leave/vacation leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. • Request the use of unpaid FMLA. • Request accommodations if applicable.
Living with High-Risk Family Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to work, maintain social distancing and proper hygiene and use PPE if appropriate. • Request the use of medical leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Request accommodations to report to work virtually, if possible.
Other Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Report to work, maintain social distancing and proper hygiene and use PPE if appropriate. ● Request the use of personal leave/vacation leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy.

Data Privacy and the Prohibition of Sharing Private Data

Owatonna Public Schools is subject to and complies with the laws and regulations associated with the privacy of medical information. To ensure compliance with these laws and regulations, administrators, supervisors, and other employees are prohibited from revealing the name or any other private information about the individual who has reported COVID-19 symptoms or who has been tested for COVID-19, regardless of the result, with anyone besides those who absolutely need to know (i.e. Human Resources). Only the individual may share information about themselves, if they so choose. Administrators, supervisors, and other employees are prohibited from sharing any private information, under any circumstance, regardless of whether the information is widely known.

Communications and Training

This Preparedness Plan will be communicated via email to all employees, provided to employees and other individuals who do not have access to email, posted on the staff portal, and a physical copy of the plan is available at every building in the front office for reference. Additional communication related to any changes in the plan will be provided via email and posted on the staff portal and updated copies sent to all building front offices.

Regular communication will be provided to parents/guardians and other known visitors regarding our health and safety protocols. Information posters and guidance will be placed conspicuously in buildings for reference and to serve as a reminder for all individuals on-site. Employees, students, and other visitors to the building will also be advised not to enter the workplace if they are experiencing symptoms or have contracted COVID-19.

The District Leadership Team will continually monitor the effectiveness of the Preparedness Plan by soliciting feedback and concerns directly from individuals or in survey format as well as by personal observation. Modifications to the plan will be made as necessary and communicated using the above protocols.

The Director of Human Resources serves as the point of contact for all COVID-19 related matters in the district. The Health Services Supervisor is responsible for coordinating with local health authorities regarding positive COVID-19 cases. Each building will also have a COVID-19 Building Program Coordinator (school nurse) to communicate concerns, challenges, and lessons learned related to COVID-19 preventive activities as needed with staff, students and their families, school and district leadership, and local health officials. District administrators or the Health Services Supervisor will provide training at the beginning of back to school workshop week.

While these are guidelines in place for employees while at work, it is also important that employees continue to follow recommended guidelines and continued enhanced sanitary practices while away from work as well, for the safety of themselves and their co-workers.

More Information

If you have questions about anything in this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for the Workplace, talk with your supervisor first. If you have further questions, contact a member of the Pandemic Preparedness Plan Team:

Name	Title/Building
Jeff Elstad	Superintendent
Michelle Krell	Director of Teaching & Learning
Chris Picha	Director of Human Resources
Bob Olson	Director of Facilities, Security and Infrastructure
Amy Jo Havelka	Health Services Coordinator & COVID Coordinator



Employee Health Screening Tool for COVID Symptoms

Click on the link below to answer these screening questions each time you are going to work at Owatonna Public Schools.

[MDH Home Screening tool](#)