



PICS COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

At PICS it is our mission to protect staff, service recipients, and the community we serve to reduce the potential transmission of COVID-19. PICS is following guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the homes of the people we serve.

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan (“Plan”) is designed to assist you in meeting the unique needs of your staff and family during this peacetime emergency. If you or a participant ever feel unsafe, please contact PICS with your concerns.

PICS will evaluate, monitor, and update our Plan if necessary, on a regular basis. This Plan is posted and readily accessible on our [website](#) under the COVID-19 updates page. You will need to acknowledge you’ve received this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan and all that it addresses.

Our Plan describes how we will implement, at a minimum, the following components, in compliance with MDH and CDC guidelines. These are recommendations to use as you staff your own home environment:

1. hygiene and source control;
2. cleaning and disinfecting;
3. policies related to arrivals and departures;
4. screening and policies for workers and volunteers exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19;
5. screening and policies for service recipients exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19;
6. social distancing;
7. food preparation and meals;
8. ventilation;
9. communication and training about the Plan.

Notifying and working with MDH:

Notify PICS when there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in your home. PICS will notify MDH when a confirmed case of COVID-19 has been reported to the program. Contact information for MDH: 651-297-1304 or 1-800-657-3504 (Mon. – Fri., 8AM-5PM). PICS will work with MDH and comply with their directive when given.

Hygiene and source controls

- Reinforce handwashing routines, after having been in a public place, prior to and after eating, after using the toilet, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

- Service recipients, workers, volunteers and visitors should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Ensure handwashing facilities and/or hand-sanitizer are readily available and appropriately stocked.
- Provide paper towels and ensure a trash-receptacle is placed by the bathroom door so a paper towel can be readily disposed of when operating the door.
- Post handwashing and “cover your cough” signs.
- Plan for when and how facemasks will be used by service recipients, workers, volunteers and visitors.
- Provide workers and volunteers with recommended protective supplies, such as facemasks, gloves, disinfectant, eye protection, shields, etc.
- Provide tissues for proper cough/sneeze etiquette and no-touch disposal containers.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Community drinking stations and water-fountains should not be available/used. Touchless water-filling stations may still be provided.
- Prepare for potential symptomatic or COVID-19 positive service recipients by having appropriate supplies.

Cleaning and disinfecting

- Follow MDH and CDC guidance for frequent cleaning and disinfecting of your home space, especially shared spaces. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
- Establish a documented sanitation schedule and checklist, identifying surfaces/equipment to be sanitized, the agent to be used, and the frequency at which sanitation occurs.
- Ensure high-touch surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, stair rails, counters, tables and chairs, phones, keyboards, home equipment and other shared items are regularly cleaned and disinfected.
- Minimize the use of shared supplies (e.g. arts and crafts, office supplies) that cannot be sanitized and consider using designated bins for clean and used items.
- Use EPA-registered disinfectants recommended by the CDC: <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus>

Arrivals and departures

- Conduct health screenings of service recipients, workers, volunteers and visitors outside or near the entrance to the home using a health screening tool such as this: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf>
- Post instructions and considerations at entrances informing people entering your home:
 - Not to enter if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms;
 - To wash or sanitize their hands upon arrival;
 - Screening for COVID-19 symptoms by workers is required prior to or immediately upon entering the home
 - To wear face-coverings whenever possible; and
 - To adhere to hygiene and social distancing instructions, signage and markings.
- Stagger when people arrive and leave so that larger groups of people do not congregate during these times.

- Consider use of multiple entrances and exits when these can be used safely by the service recipient, workers, volunteers and visitors.
- Limit the number of persons accompanying the service recipient.

Screening and practices for Workers exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19

- Workers will self-assess possible symptoms before beginning each shift. Workers will not report to work, stay away from other people and contact their health care provider if they exhibit any symptoms of COVID-19, including: a fever, chills, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, headache, shortness of breath or loss of smell or taste.
- Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 can be found here: <https://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/if-sick/is-it-covid/index.jsp>
- If a Worker is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or has come into contact with someone who has tested positive, they are required to contact PICS at 651-967-6060 to report their possible exposure or test results. PICS, in partnership with LSS, has developed a response team that will monitor and follow all reports, including making any required reports to MDH.
- If a positive COVID-19 test results, PICS will contact the impacted party and conduct a risk assessment and report to LSS and MDH. PICS will continue to be in contact with the impacted person until they are able to return to work following MDH and CDC guidelines.
- Representatives are encouraged to review and update their back-up staffing plans in case a Worker becomes ill during their shift or is out unexpectedly due to COVID-19 reasons.

Screening and practices for Participants exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19

- Monitor Participants for signs of illness, including using a health screening tool such as: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf>.
- Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 can be found here: <https://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/if-sick/is-it-covid/index.jsp>
- If a Participant has or is suspected to have COVID-19 their Representative should notify their Service Coordinator or PICS at 651-967-5060. PICS will conduct a risk assessment in order to comply with MDH reporting requirements.
- Representatives should notify their Workers right away of the possible exposure and utilize their back-up staffing plans while they are at risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Social distancing throughout the day

- PICS always encourages practicing social or physical distancing by keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home. To practice social or physical distancing stay at least 6 feet from other people whenever possible.
- If not possible to maintain distance during the course of your work (such as during transportation or personal care situations) have a plan on how to mitigate the spread of the virus when in close quarters.
- Workers may wish to use disinfectant spray on seats, disinfectant wipes on dashboard, door handles and other interior places when close quarters cannot be avoided.

- For direct care services that require close contact, be sure to use masks and gloves, with handwashing or use of hand sanitizer before and after care.
- PICS staff are working from home and holding meetings remotely at this time, and using virtual formats for staff meetings, trainings or guest speaker.

Accessing the Community:

When assisting Participants in community or when providing transportation, PICS recommends the following precautions:

- Plan for the use of facemasks when accessing the community or providing transportation.
- Take precautions when using public transportation or taxis when accessing the community.
- Limit the number of people in the vehicle.
- Remind clients to wear a facemask, wash their hands, and follow social distancing guidelines while they are in the community.

Food preparation and meals

- Workers, when instructed by the Representative, should prepare meals for Participants using good hygiene practices and serve the Participant in the same manner.
- If possible, apply social distancing guidelines to reduce the number of people at the table when food is served, if anyone who may be visiting who is not a member of the existing household.
- Note that PICS does not provide group home services. All services are provided in the Participant's home setting.

Ventilation

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

Communications and training

This Preparedness Plan was provided via email to workers and is posted on the PICS COVID-19 webpage. Necessary training will be ongoing and will occur on an as needed basis. PICS provides updates to Workers, Participants and Representatives as new information about COVID-19 becomes available. Communication is sent via email and regular mail if requested.

- The most up-to-date copy of the PICS COVID-19 Preparedness Plan is available online at: <https://www.lssmn.org/pics/news/covid-19>.
- Revisions to this plan will be communicated via email following guidance obtained from DHS.
- PICS office staff will follow the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan communicated and distributed by LSS.

- As integration into various community settings and workplace occurs, PICS will work to best communicate changing expectations and conditions.
- PICS will provide a copy of this plan to Participants and, as appropriate, parents, guardians, legal representatives, case managers, and residential providers if requested, as well as the resources to follow the plan.
- Anyone with concerns about the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan or questions about their rights should contact MNOSHA Compliance at osha.compliance@state.mn.us, 651-284-5050 or 877-470-6742.

Everyone will be responsible to monitor effectiveness of implementation. The COVID-19 Preparedness Plan has been certified by PICS and is available on the COVID-19 webpage or by request. It will be updated as necessary and required.

Up-to-date guidance from MDH on recommended community mitigation strategies can be found here:

- MDH's COVID-19 Hotline: (651) 201-3920 or (877) 676-5414
<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html>
- CDC's General information about COVID-19: (800) 232-5414
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Submitted by

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