

INTERNATIONAL FALLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Safe Learning Plan



December 19, 2023

Introduction

The following plan is the guide for operating our educational settings through this Covid -19 situation. It is a fluid plan that could be modified as we find areas of success and weaknesses. Please keep in mind that no plan can include every detail, but it is the roadmap for many of the key pieces that come together to make our system function. I thank the team for the number of hours put into the development and the people that have given input to make this plan come to fruition.

The 2023 – 2024 school year is starting up with the Covid – 19 pandemic in the rearview mirror and the plan being updated as a requirement to continue to get Essar funding. The state is encouraging vaccinations for all school students. The goal is to take precautions and layer safety approaches with the intent of allowing more of the normal educational opportunities as we are in a management stage at this point. There is guidance from the Center of Disease Control (CDC), Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL), and other organizations that are being taken into consideration, but the school board will have the decision making power on which protocol the district will follow at this time. Our commitment is to follow their guidance and will continually look at where we can improve our practices and when we can change our requirements.

In planning for the coming school year distance learning is not an option provided by the legislature. Zooming for classes is not an option unless worked out for individual situations that may arise when a student is out ill for an extended period of time.

The Learning Plan is based on the MDH *Best Practices for Covid-19 Prevention in Schools* and current public health recommendations at the time this document was developed, which include:

- Promoting Vaccination
- Consistent and correct mask use
- Physical distancing and cohorts
- Screening and testing
- Ventilation
- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
- Staying home when sick and getting tested
- Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine
- Plan for short-term school closures, should there be a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case

Five goals that International Falls Public Schools is dedicated to continuing for the 2021 -22 school year based on experiences from last school year are:

- 1. Prioritize the safety of students and staff
- 2. Prioritize in-person learning, especially for younger learners
- 3. Consider infectiousness and transmission risk among different ages
- 4. Support planning, while permitting flexibility for the district
- 5. Take into account disease prevalence at a local level

Throughout the Safe Learning Plan, you will be able to observe how International Falls Public Schools plans to take into account CDC guidelines, MDH guidelines, and MDE requirements, while providing staff and students with a safe place to learn and educate.

Our Safe Learning Model

At approximately the midpoint of the 2023-2024 school year, International Falls Public Schools will transition to requiring all students, staff, and visitors to be fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication to return to school from being ill. ISD 361 encourages staying home if ill and make decisions based on Covid as you feel appropriate such as masking and when to test. Staff and students may work with the school nurse and administration when they have Covid like symptoms.

At the current time, the District will be starting the year with Prek -through grade 12 in person every day of the week.

Contingency Planning

When viral activity increases, International Falls Public Schools will analyze the district level, county-level and state level data to determine if another learning model should be selected.

If viral activity decreases, the District may dial back to a less restrictive model than what is currently in place. If doing so, it may consult with local public health officials, MDH, and MDE through the Regional Support Teams.

Parents, guardians, staff and students will be notified of scheduling changes through Skyward, the District's Facebook Page and District email accounts. Kevin Grover, Superintendent is responsible for all communications with regards to learning model changes.

Communication

Taskforce

International Falls Public Schools has paused our taskforce to lend input to the learning model and layered approaches needed for the upcoming school year. The taskforce is open to representation from principals, maintenance, transportation, nurse, athletic director, community education, food service, union representatives, and superintendent. The group will meet as needed to consider recommendations.

Kevin Grover, Superintendent serves as the point of contact for all COVID-19 related matters in the district.

Leah Bacon, District Nurse is responsible for coordinating with local health authorities regarding positive COVID-19 cases and communicating with MDH/MDE. All school staff and families will be provided with this person's contact information.

A COVID-19 Program Coordinator is identified below for each building as well. This person will 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. Their contact information will be included on all communication.

Building	COVID-19 Program Coordinator	Title
Falls Elementary	Melissa Tate	Principal
Falls High School	Tim Everson	Principal

Communication Methods

The District will release communication updates in the following ways:

- Newsletters will be sent home to Elementary families monthly
- Daily announcements at FHS

During the school year, KGHS/KSDM radio will broadcast District announcements every other Tuesday

The District will continue to utilize the school website and Facebook page for updating staff, students, parents, and the public. Written documentation will be available at the District Office for parents who do not have internet access.

The District will post the learning plan on the District website and notify families, students and staff of the availability through Skyward.

Skylert will be utilized to provide parents and staff with immediate updates when necessary.

Posters may be present within the facility, including some of the following locations:

- At handwashing sinks to remind building occupants of good handwashing practices
- On entry doors to remind people who have symptoms not to enter

Mental Health & Wellness

The COVID-19 pandemic caused stress, fear, and anxiety for many people. The District will provide staff, families, and students (age-appropriate) with information on how to access resources for mental health and wellness.

International Falls Public Schools has the following mental health professionals available:

- Jordan Bright, Elementary Social Worker
- Thane Grewatz, School Counselor
- Laurie Youso, High School Social Worker
- Don Rolando, Dean of Students

The District will provide the following mental health services:

- Group lessons will occur with Elementary classes
- Staff members hours outlining their availability will be physically posted and also available on the District website, with how to reach individuals
- The District will provide training on the signs and symptoms of students in need to staff members and outline the process to be followed when this may occur
- The District utilizes BARK to supervise students correspondence on District devices

Reporting Methods

International Falls Public Schools requests parents, guardians and staff to self-report if they or their student have COVID-19 symptoms or have a positive test.

To report, parents and guardians will report their students absent to the attendance secretaries who will then complete a Google form provided by Leah Bacon, District Nurse to gather reporting data the District may need.

Staff members will also report the cases listed above to the attendance secretary to ensure the form is completed.

Screenings

International Falls Public Schools will not initially complete screenings of students, visitors, and staff entering the buildings. It is highly encouraged for parents to screen their child for symptoms prior to sending them to school. The district will follow the MDH Recommended Covid-19 decision tree.

Community Expectations

Hand Washing

Proper hand washing practices are very important to reduce the spread of any viruses. Posters will be placed at sinks to remind everyone of good hand washing practices.

Handwashing areas are present in most Elementary classrooms. Hand washing is more effective than hand sanitizer in reducing germs. However, in instances where handwashing is not readily available, hand sanitizer can be used. Visibly dirty or greasy hands should still be washed as soon as feasible. Custodial staff will check mounted hand sanitizer and handwashing supplies during each daily cleaning of the area.

Teaching staff are expected to encourage proper hand washing with all students.

Face Coverings

Per the school board face coverings are not required at this time for students/staff returning from being positive with Covid-19, but does acknowledge that MDH encourages mask use for days 6-10 unless you have 2 negative tests.

It is not recommended that masks be worn by anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. They are also not recommended for children who cannot manage them on their own and are not to be used on children under the age of two years old.

MDH face-covering guidelines should be followed when wearing coverings. This includes washing hands before applying, washing hands after taking off, not touching the covering repeatedly, and keeping it clean

Face coverings are considered to be a paper or disposable mask, cloth face mask, scarf, bandanna or religious face covering. They are required to cover the nose and mouth completely. A face covering is not a substitute for social distancing. Face coverings may be temporarily removed in the following situations:

- To eat or drink
- During active participation of extracurricular activities and physical education
- When asked to remove it for identification purposes
- When working alone in an office, classroom or vehicle where a person has no person-to-person interaction
- When working in communal spaces that have barriers that are above face level
- When communicating with someone who is deaf, hard of hearing or has a disability or medical condition which
 makes communicating with a face covering difficult.

Face shields must extend below the chin, to the ears and with no gap between the forehead and shields headpiece. Face shields are allowed in the following situations:

- Among students in preschool through grade 8 when wearing a face covering is problematic
- By teachers when wearing a face covering is impeding the educational process
- When staff, students or visitors cannot tolerate a face covering due to a developmental, medical or behavioral health condition
- When staff are providing direct student support services if the face covering impedes the service being provided
- Face shields are not allowed to replace a mask and allow a person to return early to school from having Covid-19.

School will supply face mask to students/staff that need or desire a mask.

Protecting Those at Higher Risk

International Falls Public Schools will accommodate the needs of students and staff who are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19. Discuss privately your needs with an administrator to figure out what modifications are possible

Facilities

Physical Barriers

International Falls Public Schools has barriers available for staff that desire something installed in their location.

Gatherings and Visitors

Visitors will be permitted as long as they comply with district requirements

Water and Ventilation Systems

Ventilation systems will be assessed to determine they are operating properly. Dampers are opened to bring in adequate outdoor air. Precautions must be taken to limit the air from blowing from one person directly to another to reduce the potential spread or any airborne or aerosolized viruses.

Space Considerations

Playgrounds

Playgrounds will remain open. Students will be directed to wash hands before and after playground use.

Computer Lab

Workstations will be cleaned on a normal basis with no extra accommodations in place at this time.

Library

Library books are available to be checked out through the Arrowhead Library System.

Technology

Each student will have their own Chromebook at the high school (9-12) and is responsible for keeping it charged and bringing it to class similar to bringing other needed materials. Jr. High and Elementary staff will clean devices on a regular basis.

Gymnasium

Physical education classes will be done outside when weather permits. When equipment is used, it will be cleaned on a regular basis.

Sporting Events/Locker Rooms/Fitness Centers/Pools

The District will take under consideration recommendations from MSHSL for activities and are following these safety protocols:

- Games (indoors and outdoors) can have the total number of players, coaches, referees, umpires, etc. as needed
 to hold the game and starting out spectators are allowed to attend as long as they follow district requirements.
 Social distancing is encouraged at all venues.
- Family and friends are not permitted to attend practices
- Coaches will remind participants to stay home if they have symptoms.
- Participants are not to share towels, water bottles, or snacks at this time.
- Coaches are supervising the cleaning of equipment in the weight room and within sports after each use

Any athlete that tests positive needs to report their results to school nurse.

Classrooms

Teachers are encouraged to limit the materials in classrooms to essential teaching tools. Limiting the number of personal items in the classroom will lighten the cleaning load of the custodial staff. Classrooms will have desks spread out as space allows and will allow for more space between students to avoid crowding

Drinking Fountains

Drinking fountains are allowed and cleaned on a regular basis. Bottle fillers will remain in use and are encouraged.

Cafeteria

Meals are free this year and we encourage families to fill the Free/Reduced application forms out as they can result in free or reduced activity fees along with helping district receive funding in other areas based on our rates.

Nurse's Room/Isolation Areas

Should a student or staff member need to be isolated until they can leave the building as they are showing symptoms of COVID-19, each building has selected an isolation room.

Falls Elementary will utilize the health office and Falls High School will utilize the Nurse's office.

The District Nurse will be providing teachers with education on when students should and should not be sent to the office to reduce congestion.

Scheduling

In person classes will take place with all students present 5 days a week under the current plan. After shared supplies are used at the High School level, they will be cleaned by students.

Community Education

Community Education will be conducting activities throughout the year.

All District policies listed in the learning plan will be followed.

Special Education

Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) will be reviewed in the first part of the school year and plans for each scenario will be tailored to each student.

Arrival and Dismissal

Staff will monitor the arrival and dismissal times to curtail congregating. Elementary will be allowed to access the playground before school. High school students will use their lockers and be asked to space accordingly as they wait for class to start or go to their assigned class.

Transportation

• Buses will be cleaned by the drivers regularly. Windows will be left open for ventilation as weather allows.

Facility Cleaning Methods and Considerations

Cleaning Considerations

International Falls Public Schools has prepared in-depth cleaning practices to prevent the exposure of COVID-19. Key elements include:

- Staff will utilize Oxiever, which is an approved disinfectant on the EPA approved chemicals list.
- The dwell time of product is one minute.
- The SDS is available to staff in each buildings custodial room.
- The containers are pre-labeled with GHS compliant labels.
- Staff have received training on good cleaning practices and Employee Right-to-Know. Records are located in the High school office.

When technology items are needing to be cleaned, alcohol wipes will be utilized to prevent damage to the equipment.

Routine Cleaning

MDH and CDC recommend routine cleaning and disinfection occur to assist in prevention of the virus spread. International Falls Public Schools accomplishes this through routine cleaning of high touch points as listed below, per CDC guidelines.

Internal custodial staff who complete routine cleaning follow these recommendations:

- 1. If the surface is visibly dirty, clean using soap & water
- 2. Disinfect surfaces using disinfectant provided and paper towels and or disposable scrub pads. The product needs to remain wet on the surface for the designated amount of time.
- 3. Use a garbage bag for your waste. When full, place garbage in dumpster.
- 4. Remove gloves, then wash hands thoroughly with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds.

Special Cleaning Considerations

Toys

Toys will be cleaned with water and detergent, rinsed, sanitized with an EPA-registered disinfectant, rinsed again, and air-dried.

Porous Surfaces

If porous surfaces do need to be cleaned, the following steps will be followed:

- Handle laundry wearing gloves
- Transport laundry in disposable garbage bags when possible OR clean and disinfect the method of transportation
- Do not shake laundry out
- Wash on hottest water setting with regular detergent
- Dry thoroughly

Transportation

Vehicles and busses used to transport staff and students need to be cleaned regularly. The district's cleaning method will be used. Bus drivers will receive training on proper cleaning practices and will be provided with cleaning supplies and PPE.

Handling Suspected or Confirmed Cases

International Falls Public Schools will proceed as follows with suspected or confirmed cases:

- The person will be separated and held in the designated isolation area until they are able to be picked up by a parent or guardian
- While waiting they will be under visual supervision of a staff member
- The staff member and person waiting will be requested to wear face masks, unless either person is unconscious, has trouble breathing or is incapacitated
- MDH will be notified of confirmed COVID-19 cases of students or staff based on current reporting guidelines.

The district will contact parents or guardians of the student to transport an ill student home. If medical care is needed, 911 will be called. If it is determined that the person is in need of transportation home and a parent/guardian cannot provide, International Falls Public Schools will use district transportation methods to bring the person home.

Anticipated Situations

While in in-person learning for all students, it is assumed that minimal to moderate community spread is occurring, but the impact on the school community in terms of confirmed cases among students and staff is relatively small. Single, standalone confirmed cases that occur while in this model will <u>not</u> result in notification to families. Parents are asked to watch for symptoms in their child if they were possibly exposed to a positive case. Formal notification of families will occur when nurse/administration feel appropriate due to rising numbers in a class or school.

While in person learning, case rates in the state, county, and school district will be watched. If local positivity rates and transmission get to a point where the district feels it is unsafe to continue in-person learning, we would switch to full distance learning for a period of time.

Quarantine

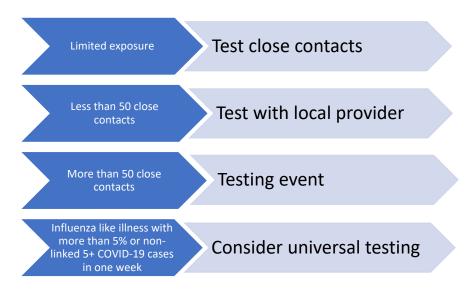
Students/staff who test positive for Covid - 19 must stay home at least until they are fever free without the use of medication for a minimum of 24 hours. Encouraged to make sure they are not ill and encouraged to follow MDH mask guidance.

Testing

Testing may be necessary depending on situations that may arise. MDH is providing guidance and making available multiple testing options.

The district would not test your child unless permission was given, but it likely will be an option to help combat the Covid-19 virus.

The following table has been provided to assist with determining the testing type.



Students that are out on quarantine will be supported by the district via an online platform to transmit work along with video communication of lessons as described below. Additional help is available from teachers during their preparation time as requested from the student and family. Teachers not using one of the platforms will work out ways to get materials to students that need to quarantine.

Online Platforms: Google Classroom (3rd-12th) and Seesaw (PK-2, Special Education). These online platforms will have assignments and activities and be the primary means of communicating assigned work with students/families.

Stop the Spread of Germs

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.







your nose and mouth.



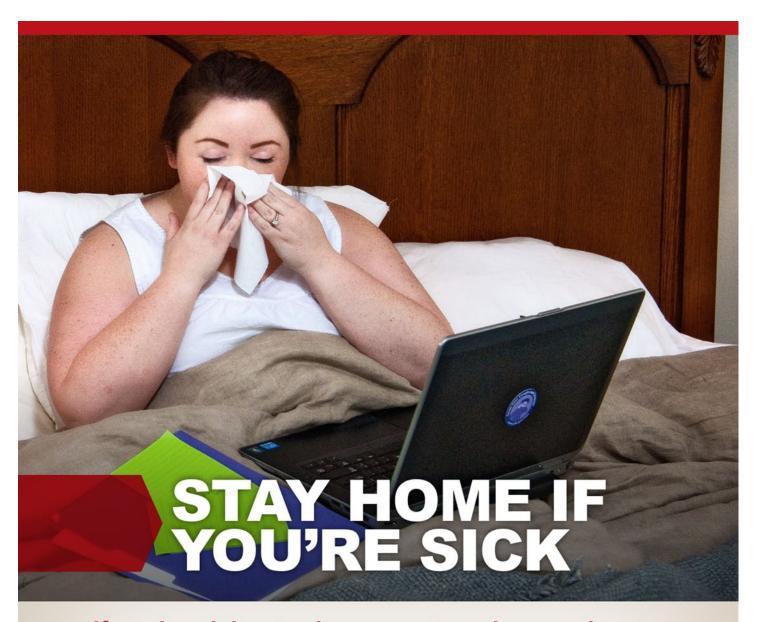












If you're sick, stay home, rest, and remember to:



Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.



Wash your hands often with soap and water.



Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects (for example, TV remotes and computers).

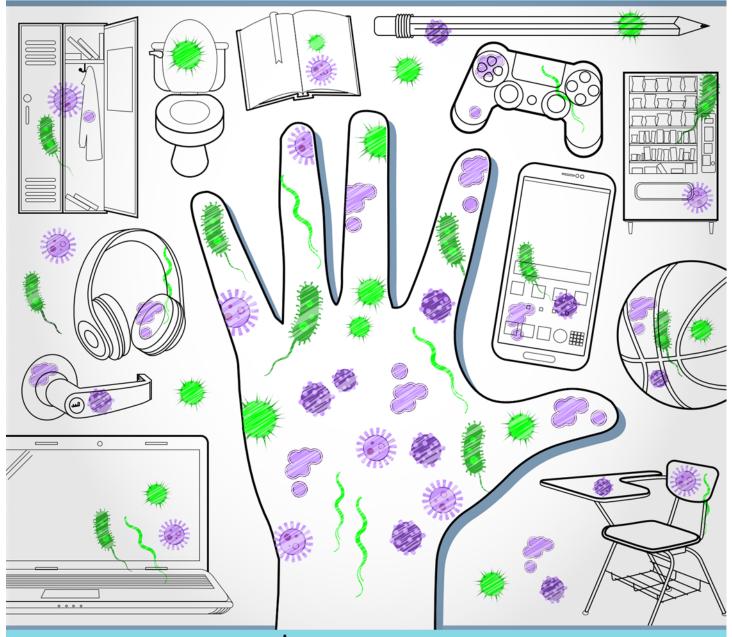




KEP CALM AND WASH YOUR HANDS



GERMS are all around you.



Stay healthy. Wash your hands.

www.cdc.gov/handwashing



Students: Let's work together to stop the spread of COVID-19

DID YOU WASH YOUR HANDS?

stop



think



wash hands



ASK YOURSELF:

Did I just go to the bathroom?

Am I about to eat?

Did I just eat?

Did I cough or sneeze?

Did I touch supplies or objects that other people have touched?

Did I touch garbage?

Did I touch my cloth face cover?

If you can't wash your hands, ask your teacher or another adult for hand sanitizer.



cdc.gov/coronavirus

DON'T FEEL WELL? STAY HOME WHEN YOU ARE SICK

Tell your mom, dad, or caregiver before you come to school. Tell your teacher or an adult if you become sick at school



cough



Shortness of breath or problem breathing



chills



sore throat



loss of taste or smell



muscle pain

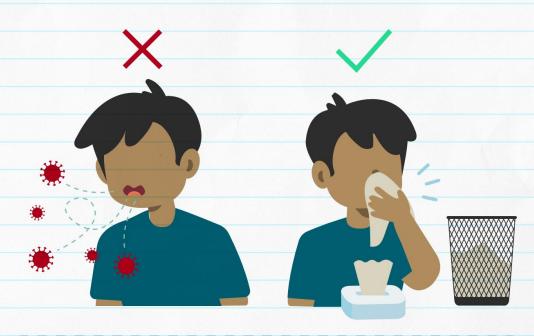
OTHER SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:

fever, runny nose, diarrhea, feeling nauseous or vomiting, feeling tired, headache, and poor appetite



cdc.gov/coronavirus

DON'T LET YOUR GERMS GO FOR A RIDE



COVER YOUR COUGHS AND SNEEZES

with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow. If you use a tissue, throw it in the trash, and wash your hands right away.

If you can't wash your hands, ask your teacher or another adult for hand sanitizer



cdc.gov/coronavirus

STAY SAFE

Prevent the Spread of COVID-19













WATCH FOR SYMPTOMS



Fever



Cough



Shortness of breath



Chill



Headache



Muscle pain



Sore throat



Loss of taste

For more information, visit health.mn.gov HOTLINE: 651-297-1304 or 1-800-657-3504



 $\label{eq:minnesota} Minnesota\ Department\ of\ Health} Contact\ health.communications (a) state.mn.us\ to\ request\ an\ alternate\ format.} \\ 06/10/2020$

In times of pain and grief, we want to come together. COVID-19 makes this difficult.

Help slow the spread



Wear a mask



Wash or sanitize your hands often



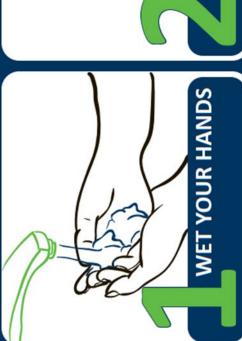
Stay 6 feet from others

mn.gov/covid19



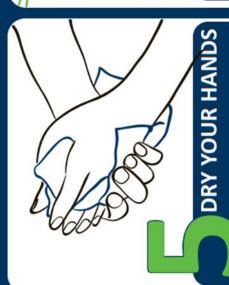


TO WASH JON'T FORGE













RINSE WELL

Don't forget to scrub between your fingers, under your nails, and the top of your hands.

How to Safely Wear and Take Off a Cloth Face Covering

Accessible: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html

WEAR YOUR FACE COVERING CORRECTLY

- Wash your hands before putting on your face covering
- · Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- · Make sure you can breathe easily
- Do not place a mask on a child younger than 2







USE THE FACE COVERING TO HELP PROTECT OTHERS

- Wear a face covering to help protect others in case you're infected but don't have symptoms
- · Keep the covering on your face the entire time you're in public
- · Don't put the covering around your neck or up on your forehead
- · Don't touch the face covering, and, if you do, clean your hands

FOLLOW EVERYDAY HEALTH HABITS

- · Stay at least 6 feet away from others
- · Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Wash your hands often, with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds each time
- · Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available





TAKE OFF YOUR CLOTH FACE COVERING CAREFULLY, WHEN YOU'RE HOME

- Until the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops
- Handle only by the ear loops or ties
- · Fold outside corners together
- · Place covering in the washing machine
- · Wash your hands with soap and water



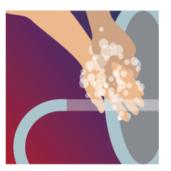
Cloth face coverings are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators, both of which should be saved for health care workers and other medical first responders.

For instructions on making a cloth face covering, see:

cdc.gov/coronavirus

CS 316488A 06/10/2020

How to Safely Wear Your Mask



Step 1: Wash or sanitize your hands.



your nose and the bottom top of the mask is over Step 2: Make sure the is under your chin.



mouth before you use the ear straps or tie it behind Step 3: Place the mask over your nose and your head.



around so it covers nose, Step 4: Move the mask mouth, and chin completely.



masks can bend. Press your **Step 5:** The tops of some fingers on the top of the mask to make them fit tight around your nose.



straps or ties if you need the mask while wearing Step 6: Do not touch it. Use the mask ear to make it fit better.



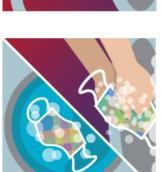
ear straps or ties to take it off. Do not touch the Step 7: Use the mask



Step 8: Throw away if mask is disposable.



Step 9: Wash your mask by machine or by hand before you use it again.



sanitize your hands Step 10: Wash or



STAY SAFEMIN

STAY SAFE MN

Is it COVID-19?

COVID-19 symptoms can include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. This may be similar to other illnesses, like the flu and common cold. Many people with COVID-19 have mild or few symptoms, and some may have no symptoms at all.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you should get tested. Talk to your health care provider or visit mn.gov/covid19. For medical emergencies, such as difficulty breathing, call 911.

	SYMPTOMS	COVID-19 FLU		COLD	ALLERGIES
	Cough	Often	Often	Sometimes	Sometimes
	Fever Body aches	Often	Often	Rarely	Never
		Sometimes	Often	Rarely	Never
	Shortness of breath	Sometimes	Sometimes	Rarely	Rarely
Headache	Headache	Sometimes	Often	Sometimes	Sometimes
	Fatigue Sore throat	Sometimes	Often	Sometimes	Sometimes
		Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
3	Loss of taste or smell	Sometimes	Rarely	Rarely	Rarely
•	Diarrhea	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Never
	Chest pain or pressure	Rarely	Rarely	Never	Never
2	Runny nose	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Often
	Sneezing	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Often
₽	Watery eyes	Never	Never	Never	Often

This list is not all-inclusive.



Minnesota Department of Health | health.mn.gov | 651-201-3920 Contact <u>health.communications@state.mn.us</u> to request an alternate format.

VISITOR AND EMPLOYEE HEALTH SCREENING CHECKLIST



CONDUCT HEALTH SCREENING EACH TIME EMPLOYEES OR VISITORS ENTER THE FACILITY.

You may also opt to conduct temperature screening if it can be done with proper social distancing, protection, and hygiene protocols. However, temperature screening is not required.

If a worker or visitor answers "Yes" to any of the screening questions, they should be advised to go home, stay away from other people, and contact their health care provider.

Have you had any of the following symptoms since your last day at work or the last time you were here that you cannot attribute to another health condition?

Please answer "Yes" or "No" to each	question. Do	you have:
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Fever or feeling feverish?
Chills?
A new cough?
Shortness of breath?
A new sore throat?
New muscle aches?
New headache?
New loss of smell or taste?



