



Northeast Nebraska Public Health Department

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RE: Updated COVID-19 Guidance for Businesses

Our health department continues to encourage businesses to operate in a manner that protects their employees and community members. We hope that the following best practices will be helpful to you as you work to protect your employees and customers.

1. **Instruct employees** to stay home when sick.
2. Establish a system to **monitor employees for illness at work**. Before or upon arrival to work, again half-way through their shift and then again before leaving work. Symptoms to monitor for include: Fever (measured or “feeling feverish”), Chills, Cough, Shortness of Breath, Difficulty Breathing, Sore Throat, Muscle Aches, Headache, Sudden loss of taste or smell, Extreme Fatigue, Diarrhea, or other symptoms of illness. Develop a system to record this employee information. If an employee would have any of these symptoms, they should immediately return home, stay away from others, and contact their health care provider or public health for further direction.
3. **Post a sign on the door** that guides individuals with any symptoms of illness to not enter, go home and call their medical provider or public health department.
4. **Practice strict social distancing** (6 feet or more) between individuals. Post signs instructing customers to maintain a minimum of 6 feet between themselves and others. Limit any unnecessary gathering of customers in checkout lines by providing marked spaces at least 6 ft apart between customers.
5. Have all employees wear **cloth face masks** while at work. Please visit the Resources - COVID-19 Resources page on our webpage at www.nnphd.org for documents and a video to help train employees on the proper use and care of cloth face masks. The exact web address for those resources is <https://nnphd.org/resources/communication-resources.html>
6. **Plexiglass shields** are highly recommended to be installed at cash registers to provide a protective barrier between employees and customers to decrease the risk of virus transmission. A small opening at the bottom of the shield should be provided for pass through items (cash, etc).
7. **Provide guidance to customers** to shop with the fewest number of household members possible; one member per family is recommended. Avoid using reusable shopping bags at this time.
8. Have a strict **handwashing policy** for all workers, which requires frequent washing of hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. When handwashing opportunities are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.

9. **Clean and disinfect frequently** touched surfaces many times throughout the day such as workstations, cash registers, payment terminals, door handles, tables, and countertops on a routine basis. Follow the directions on the cleaning product's label and clean hands afterwards. This should occur multiple times daily. A mixture of bleach and water is also effective to use for regular cleaning of common touch surfaces. The mixture must be made fresh daily and can be mixed as follows:
 - a. 4 teaspoons Bleach to 1 quart of water, or
 - b. 5 Tablespoons Bleach (1/3 cup) to 1 gallon of water.
10. **Encourage use of touchless payment options**, when available. Minimize handling of cash and credit cards whenever possible.
11. When exchanging **paper and coin money**:
 - Do not touch your face afterward
 - Ask customers to place cash on the counter rather than directly in your hand
 - Place money directly on the counter when providing change back to customers.
 - Sanitize hands (or gloves) between each customer interaction.
12. **Do not confuse gloved hands for clean hands.** Gloves are not a substitute for frequent hand washing and hand sanitizing. Change gloves between customers. Ensure your hands are thoroughly cleaned after glove removal. Consider using gloves when handling money and credit/debit cards. As always, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
13. Small places of business should **limit customers** to no more than 10 at a time. Remember to abide by the 6 ft social distancing rule. If you don't have the space to allow people to be 6 feet away from others, please limit the number of customers at any one time to ensure everyone has at least 6 feet of personal space.
14. **Employees who may be at high risk for severe disease**, due to age and underlying medical conditions, are encouraged to seek direction from their healthcare provider to determine their level of risk regarding continuing to work during this pandemic.
15. **Use teleworking technologies** to the greatest extent possible, establish work-at-home opportunities whenever possible.
16. **Stagger work schedules** as able to limit the number employees in the facility at any one time.
17. **Reevaluate sick leave policies** to ensure people are not encouraged to come to work sick. Remove incentives for perfect attendance.
18. Ensure workstations are at least **6 feet apart**.

We all have a personal responsibility and civic duty to help keep our community safe. Thank you for your cooperation and support!

Should you have any questions, please visit our website www.nnphd.org or call our office at 402-375-2200. We also encourage you to visit www.cdc.gov or call the DHHS COVID-19 call-in line at 402-552-6645, 8 am – 8 pm, seven days per week for more information.

Sincerely,
Julie Rother, BSN, RN, CPH
Health Director