



Northeast Residence

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Northeast Residence, Inc.

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Introduction

Northeast Residence Inc. (NER) is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our employees and people we support. To ensure everyone's safety and health, we have developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. All NER employees are responsible for implementing this 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, management and people we support. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of our employees, people we support, and our workplaces.

Our employees are our heroes. We simply can't provide support for the people living in our homes without healthy employees. NER takes the safety and health of our employees seriously. Our COVID-19 Preparedness Plan follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines, federal OSHA standards related to COVID-19, and Executive Orders issued by Governor Walz (<https://mn.gov/governor/news/executiveorders.jsp>).

Screening Visitors, Direct Care Staff and Administrative Staff for COVID-19 Symptoms

All visitors to NER and NER employees will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms prior to entering NER facilities and interacting with NER employees and the people we support.

Screening Visitors

Visitors (i.e., anyone who is not an NER staff member) to any NER facility will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms. Upon entering the NER facility:

1. An NER staff member will take the temperature of the visitor using a contactless thermometer provided by NER. If the visitor's temperature exceeds 100.4, they will be asked to leave the facility immediately.
2. The visitor must complete the NER Visitor COVID-19 Health Screening Checklist (available at <https://www.nerinc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NER-Visitor-Screening-Checklist.pdf>). If the visitor answered "Yes" to any of the items on the form (indicating they have at least one of the symptoms), they will be asked to leave the facility immediately.

Screening Direct Care Staff

NER direct care staff (i.e., Supervisors, Program Coordinators and Direct Support Professionals) who come in regular contact with people we support will be screened at the beginning of each shift. Direct care staff working a split shift (i.e., 2 or more different time blocks in a single day) must complete a new checklist at the beginning of each shift and send it to their supervisors. Staff who routinely visit multiple NER sites during a shift are not required to complete a Health Screening Checklist for each site they visit. They should only complete a checklist at the beginning of their shift.

At the beginning of each shift:

1. The NER staff member will be expected to take their own temperature at the beginning of their shift using a contactless thermometer provided by NER. If their temperature exceeds 100.4, they should notify their supervisor, leave the facility immediately, keep socially distanced from others, and consult their healthcare provider.
2. The NER staff member will complete the NER Visitor and Employee Health Screening Checklist (available at <https://www.nerinc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NER-Direct-Care-Staff-Screening-Checklist.pdf>) and email a picture of the completed checklist to their supervisor. If the staff member does not have access to a smart phone, they should call their supervisor and tell them how many of the boxes they checked “Yes”. If any boxes are checked “Yes”, the employee will be told to leave the NER facility, stay away from others, and consult their healthcare provider.

The supervisor of an employee who has any of the symptoms on the checklist will report this information to Human Resources.

Screening NER Administrative Staff

NER administrative staff (i.e., Program Managers, anyone else with office space in the corporate office) will be screened at the beginning of every shift. At the beginning of each shift:

1. The NER administrative staff member will be expected to take their own temperature using a contactless thermometer provided by NER. If their temperature exceeds 100.4, they should notify their supervisor, leave the facility immediately, keep socially distanced from others, and consult their healthcare provider.
2. The NER staff member will complete the NER Administrative Staff Member Health Screening Checklist (available at <https://www.nerinc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NER-Administrative-Staff-Screening-Checklist.pdf>). If any boxes are checked “Yes”, they should send this form to their supervisor immediately, go home, stay away from other people, and contact their healthcare provider. If the staff member answered “No” to all symptoms (indicating they have none of the symptoms), they do not need to send this form to their supervisor each day. Instead, the staff member should send the form to their supervisor at the end of their work week.

Contacting Your Supervisor with Screening Results

It is important that supervisors are not unnecessarily disturbed during non-work hours. For staff who begin shifts before 8am or after 5pm and have completed a checklist, please use the following procedure:

1. If you have checked “Yes” in any of the boxes (indicating you have at least one symptom), please take a picture of your completed checklist, text that document to your supervisor and then call them. You will not be permitted to work your shift, and they will need to find a replacement. Human Resources will be notified by the immediate supervisor.
2. If you have not checked “Yes” in any of the boxes, please email the checklist to your supervisor. Please do not text the checklist to your supervisor.

Safely Storing Completed Health Screening Checklists

All completed NER Visitor and Employee Health Screening Checklists are considered protected health information by NER. As such, every completed checklist must be stored in a secure (locked) location at the site where it was submitted, or on a secure electronic device.

NER will follow all state and federal laws and or regulations regarding HIPAA, ADA and personnel privacy.

Prompt Identification and Isolation of Sick Persons at Work

If a staff member is feeling sick or otherwise experiencing symptoms listed on the checklist while they are at work, they are to do the following in order:

1. The symptomatic employee should wear a mask at all times and maintain a minimum of 6' social distance whenever possible.
2. The symptomatic employee should notify their supervisor immediately. If the supervisor isn't available, the employee should contact the back-up supervisor or the supervisor's supervisor. The supervisor will then notify Human Resources of the employee's illness and identify the person to replace the symptomatic employee. If the symptomatic employee is working at an NER home, the site Supervisor/Program Coordinator may be needed to fill-in for the symptomatic employee. If the site Supervisor/Program Coordinator isn't available, the Program Manager will need to fill-in themselves or find someone else to fill in. If a replacement employee is required immediately to ensure the ongoing safety of people we support, the symptomatic employee should isolate themselves from others as much as possible until replacement staff arrives.
3. The symptomatic employee should go home and seek appropriate medical care.

NER has implemented leave policies that 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. Accommodations for employees with underlying medical conditions or who have household members with underlying health conditions have been implemented. Please refer to the "Time Off/Leaves of Absence" section of the 2020 Northeast Residence, Inc. Employee Handbook for details.

If Human Resources learns an NER employee has tested positive for COVID-19, Human Resources will notify employees who have been in contact with the infected employee to tell them about their exposure and conduct an interview to assess the risk associated with the exposure (see Interview Guide: <http://www.nerinc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NER-Risk-Assessment-for-Potentially-Exposed-HCWs.pdf>). All employees who had prolonged close contact (less than 6 feet apart for more than 15 min per day) with a person who tested positive within 48 hours from when the symptoms of the infected staff member first appeared will be asked to leave the site as well and will only be permitted to return to work after they have self-monitored for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days and are symptom free. The site Supervisor/Program Coordinator or Program Manager (whoever is available) will contact the Infectious Disease Epidemiology, Prevention and Control (IDEPC) Division of the Minnesota Department of Health at 651-201-5414 (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/about/org/idepc/contact.html>) and follow their recommendations.

Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

Handwashing

Basic infection prevention measures are always being implemented at our workplaces. 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, prior to any mealtimes and after using the toilet.

All people we support and visitors to NER facilities will be required to wash or sanitize their hands prior to or immediately upon entering the facility. Hand-sanitizer dispensers (that use sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol) are located at NER facilities in entrances and frequently used spaces so they can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water, if hands are not visibly soiled.

Staff at each NER home is responsible for ensuring that the home has an adequate supply of hand sanitizer. Staff at the Corporate Office is responsible for monitoring supplies. If Supervisors/Program Coordinators are unable to acquire hand sanitizer, please notify Maintenance. The Office Coordinator working at NER's front desk in the corporate office will check sanitizer supply levels in the welcome area and conference room, and ensure the dispensers are full and will order additional sanitizer as needed.

Respiratory etiquette: Masks, and covering your cough or sneeze

Pursuant to Governor Walz's Executive Order 20-81 (https://mn.gov/governor/assets/EO%2020-81%20Final%20Filed_tcm1055-441323.pdf), NER employees are expected to wear face masks at all times, unless they have "a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that makes it unreasonable for the individual to maintain a face covering.", in which case they are encouraged to use alternative face protection such as face shields. NER will provide masks to any NER employee or visitor who doesn't have one so they can interact safely at work. A box of masks is always available at the front reception desk in the corporate office.

Employees, visitors and people supported are 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 workers, customers and visitors.

Encouraging Good Hygiene for People We Support

NER employees will encourage and remind all people supported to wear a face mask, follow social distancing and sanitize/wash hands often when out in the community including going to day programs/work. We recognize many people supported will not be able to follow the standard guidelines such as wearing a face mask or social distancing due to their disability.

Upon returning to their home, employees will encourage each person supported to shower/bathe, put on clean clothing and launder clothes and cloth face mask worn that day.

Twice daily people supported will have their temperature taken and recorded. Employees will monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 or other illness and notify the site Supervisor/Program Coordinator and Registered Nurse, as needed. All information will be documented by employees.

Social distancing

Social distancing of six feet or more will be implemented and maintained between employees and visitors in the workplace.

Working Remotely When Possible

Every employee must work remotely whenever it is possible to fulfill work responsibilities without physically being at the workplace. Employees are encouraged to use electronic means for communicating with NER colleagues, and whenever possible processing documents electronically in order to prevent trips to the office.

When an employee's work requires them to be physically present at an NER facility, social distancing guidelines should be followed. Employees are encouraged to stagger breaks to prevent kitchen areas from becoming too crowded.

Meetings and Trainings

Whenever possible, NER-related meetings involving staff and/or person's supported will be curtailed as much as possible.

- Management meetings are canceled until further notice.
- Staff meetings are canceled until further notice however written information will be provided along with monthly training forms (pre-typed) for staff to review information. Supervisors/Program Coordinators will be expected to make sure all staff review the written material and submit a Monthly Training Record (MTR).
- Community meetings can be held outside provided that social distancing is maintained. Virtual community meetings are encouraged.
- Orientation and other NER-related classes will continue face to face and will be held in the NER conference room which will be sanitized by the training hosts before and after each use. Social distancing will be maintained in the training sessions, masks will be worn by all participants, and COVID-19 room capacity restrictions will be observed.

Corporate Office Capacity Limits

Meeting room capacity will be limited to the number of people who can be in a room at the same time, while still being able maintain 6' of social distance between each other. During the COVID-19 pandemic and until further notice, the following maximum capacity limits should be observed for each of the following rooms:

Room Name	Max Capacity with 6' Social Distancing
248 Vadnais Heights Room (training)	30
248A Vadnais Heights Room (training) (½ Room)	15
248B Vadnais Heights Room (training) (½ Room)	15
203 White Bear Lake Room (board)	6
204 Little Canada Room	4
205 Roseville Room	4
206 Maplewood Room	6
228 Shoreview Room	2
237 Oakdale Room	2

The corporate office elevator may not be used by more than 1 person at a time, unless 2 are required in order to attend to a person supported.

The corporate office will remain closed to unannounced visitors and locked until further notice.

Work-Related Transportation

At no point should employees ride in vehicles with other employees as part of performing work responsibilities, except when required to transport people we support.

Cleaning, Disinfecting and Ventilation

Regular housekeeping practices are being implemented, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment, areas in the work environment, including restrooms, break rooms, lunchrooms, and meeting rooms. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted in high-touch areas, such as phones, keyboards, touch screens, controls, door handles, elevator panels, railings, copy machines, credit card readers, delivery equipment, etc.

Common Areas at NER Corporate Office

The reception area at NER's corporate office has been outfitted with a plexiglass shield to prevent contamination. Hand sanitizers and disinfecting wipes are available in lobby area, conference room and mail room. Magazines, candy dishes and shared pens have all been removed from common areas. When a pen is required, a sanitized pen will be issued.

Corporate restrooms, training areas and meeting rooms are cleaned every week by a professional cleaning service.

The maintenance team will remove garbage from the area in back of the corporate lobby and take it to the dumpster. HR/Finance staff will disinfect areas in the lobby including shared equipment and door handles at the end of each day. Program staff will disinfect the area where cubicles are located at the end of each workday. Human Resources and Finance will disinfect the back area of the corporate office building at the end of each workday. Staff will use disinfectant wipes and sprays.

Shared office supplies such as copiers, staplers, copier keypads will be cleaned and disinfected after each use by the person who used the equipment.

Employee Workspaces

Each employee will be responsible for cleaning their own workspaces. Sanitizing wipes and other cleaning supplies are available at all NER facilities. If you are unsure of the location of supplies at your workplace, ask your supervisor.

Cleaning Supplies

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.

Ventilation

The corporate office has five mechanical rooms all of which have fresh air supplies of outside air. Twelve air conditioners provide dehumidification for the corporate office along with eight stand-alone dehumidifiers that are

emptied up to twice daily. This generally maintains a healthy indoor relative humidity of less than 70%. The HVAC units are running 24/7. Ten of the units have the thicker pleated filters. All homes have a supply of outside air for their mechanical rooms. All homes have a central air conditioning system that provides dehumidification. Some homes have additional dehumidifiers. The homes furnaces have the thicker pleated filters where possible.

Staff Communications

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan was distributed via email to all NER employees and posted in communication logs as well as posted in a prominent area at NER homes and programs. Legal Representative/Families and Case Managers have been informed of the preparedness plan and directed to view it at the NER website. Additional communication will be provided on an ongoing basis to all employees via email and/or communication book, and via biweekly Program Manager COVID meetings.

New employees will be provided with the Preparedness Plan during their orientation. Instructions will be communicated to visitors about required hygiene practices at the front door of NER's corporate office and via NER's Web site.

At least one poster demonstrating respiratory etiquette and instructions for social distancing will be displayed in each NER home, and in frequently used corporate office spaces. Poster can be downloaded here (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>) and printed.

All staff are encouraged to offer suggestions for improvements to the plan or submit questions and concerns about the plan by communicating them to Interim Executive Director Eric Schnell (eschnell@nerinc.org).

Management and Supervision Necessary to Ensure Effective Implementation of the Plan

Managers and supervisors monitor Plan effectiveness by regularly monitoring their supervisees' compliance with this Preparedness Plan.

The Interim Director of Human Resources, Director of Operations and Interim Executive Director meet weekly as a COVID Response Team to review health status of organization and effectiveness of prevention and risk mitigation strategies. This team also creates and executes a communication plan to ensure staff are updated on the latest COVID-19 prevention and response strategies implemented at NER.

This updated COVID-19 Preparedness Plan has been certified by Northeast Residence Inc. management and was posted throughout the workplace on 11/1/2020. It will continue to be updated as necessary.

Certified by:



Eric Schnell

Interim Executive Director