



Serving crime victims in Lincoln, Lyon, Murray,
and Redwood Counties of
Southwest Minnesota since 1981.

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Prevention & Professional Education • General Crime
Parenting Time • Sexual Assault

COVID-19 Pandemic Response Protocol

Purpose: To protect the health and well-being of and reduce the transmission of illness among NHCC employees, clients, volunteers, and community members; to maintain essential business operations and minimize effects on community partners; to prepare for increased staff absence.

Essential Services:

Crime Victim Services have been deemed an essential service and must continue to be offered.

Advocacy and Parenting Time Center staff continuing to provide services in physical locations should ask clients if they have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, influenza, or colds. Symptoms may include: fever, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, headache, aches and pains.

Should any of the NHCC physical locations not be open due to COVID-19 closure recommendations:

1. Crime Victim Advocacy services will be provided through electronic means.
2. Parenting Time supervised visits and exchanges will be cancelled.
3. Leadership may work remotely. Vital personnel will be required to be onsite at least weekly to complete essential agency functions.
4. Special events for March and April 2020 will be cancelled or postponed.

Readiness and Preparation:

1. NHCC's leadership team will decide when the office will be closed and/or move to remote work/services. This decision may be based on Board guidance and recommendations from the CDC, MDH, local emergency management, and/or local relevant services providers. The agency will be giving staff the flexibility to continue to work, including from home, as their position allows due to school closures. Due to the size of the organization some locations may remain open while others are closed.
2. Internal NHCC communications related to COVID-19 will be done through the agency email. This will include updates to possible location closures and services being offered through remote work/services.
3. External NHCC communications related to COVID-19 will be done through agency social media and local media (radio & newspaper). Staff will be asked to post announcements on social media as well as forward external emails regarding closures/service provisions to local media and email lists.
4. Supervisors and/or the Executive Director will meet with staff to ensure they are equipped for successful remote work.

Finance and Operations Functions:

1. Staff should: 1) Submit timesheets/payroll forms to their supervisor by email. 2) Submit Reimbursement Forms to their direct supervisor by email.
2. Payroll will be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director and processed electronically by the Fiscal Manager.
3. Mail will be checked, as directed.
4. The Executive Director and Fiscal Manager will assess the need to pay specific bills as they arrive. Those that can wait will be held. Others will be paid electronically, if possible (by credit card or electronic transfer) or by check.

Continuity of Operations:

1. All staff working remotely must use agency owned cell phones and laptops.
2. CVS office number will be routed to CVS Staff's cell phones or crisis phones.
5. NHCC will continue necessary meetings through virtual methods. Virtual meetings will take place through Zoom or conference call.
6. Staff are responsible for rescheduling meetings or notifying clients or community partners from their individual contacts.

Review and Revision:

This Protocol is a working document. The leadership team will review and revise the Protocol to implement changes with the circumstances as necessary.

The following procedures will be observed to help prevent workplace exposures to acute respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19:

1. Staff who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are recommended to stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever (100.4 degree F or greater using an oral thermometer), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Staff should notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick.
2. Staff who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work or become sick during the day will be separated from other staff and sent home. Staff should cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or an elbow or shoulder if no tissue is available).
3. Staff who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and refer to CDC guidance for [how to conduct a risk assessment](#) of their potential exposure.
4. Staff who are well and need to work remote to take care of family members due to varying circumstances should notify their supervisor to create a plan.
5. If a staff is confirmed to have COVID-19, leadership staff should inform fellow staff of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Employees exposed to a co-worker with confirmed COVID-19 should refer to CDC guidance for [how to conduct a risk assessment](#) of their potential exposure.
6. Staff can elect to work from home (if they are able and willing) or use sick leave during their time out of the office (self-quarantine, sick, care for family).
7. Those unable to work or who have hours cut should apply for unemployment as early as possible. (See page 3.)
8. Staff who become infected with the COVID-19 virus or suspect they are infected will be required to follow guidelines recommended by CDC, [what to do if you are sick](#).
9. NHCC will provide tissues, hand sanitizer, and hand wash for use by staff.
10. NHCC will provide disposable disinfectant wipes for all staff to routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in their spaces (workstations, keyboards, desks, doorknobs).

Travel Policy:

1. NHCC will refer to [Center for Disease Control's travel recommendations](#) and use their discretion regarding travel for NHCC business.
2. Travel bookings and reservations should include travel insurance.

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and Unemployment Benefits <https://www.uimn.org/applicants/needtoknow/news-updates/covid-19.jsp>

The Unemployment Insurance program is ready to assist workers who can't work, workers who have had their hours reduced, and workers who have lost their jobs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

If your employment has been affected by COVID-19, you can apply for unemployment benefits. After you apply, we will let you know if you are eligible.

Apply for unemployment benefits as soon as you can; waiting may result in you losing some benefits.

You can apply online, Monday-Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., or with our [automated phone](#).

If you have questions, call one of our [Customer Service representatives](#). We can assist you in Spanish, Hmong, Somali, or any other language you prefer. Customer Service representatives are available Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- *Twin Cities area: 651-296-3644*
- *Greater Minnesota: 1-877-898-9090;*
- *TTY users: 1-866-814-1252*