

WCS PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Revised 3/2/2022

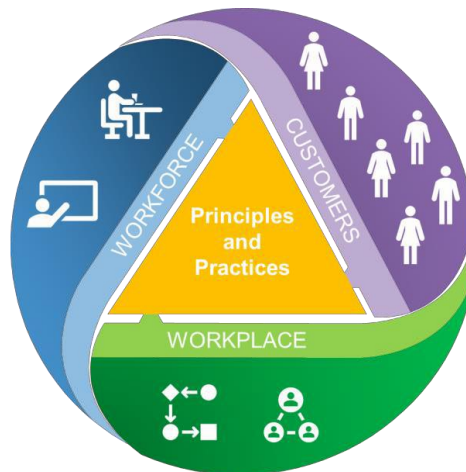
Wisconsin Community Services (WCS) has established health guidelines, primarily utilizing information from the state of [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#), [local public health officials](#), the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), and the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\)](#).

The following **PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES** were developed in accordance with these health authorities. WCS continues to monitor COVID-19 developments and changes related to mitigation, new variants, and levels of spread. We will continue to update our policies and practices based on new information.

Prepare and Protect WORKFORCE

- ✓ Protective Practices
- ✓ Screening
- ✓ Rapid Response to Cases
- ✓ Flexible Work Options
- ✓ Risk Mitigation
- ✓ Education and Cultural Practices

Sources:
Medical College of Wisconsin,
CDC, WHO, OSHA



Prepare and Protect CUSTOMERS

- ✓ Risk Awareness
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Communication

Prepare and Protect WORKPLACE

- ✓ Disinfecting Practices
- ✓ Environmental Controls
- ✓ Workspace Design
- ✓ Workflow Design
- ✓ Controlled Access

NEW: Face Covering Requirements

Effective, 3/2/22

The [CDC](#) issued new guidelines for wearing masks indoors. The new guidelines recommend the following:

- *Americans living in areas that "low" levels of the disease no longer need to wear masks indoors.*
- *Residents of counties at "medium" risk should wear masks if they are at heightened risk of severe disease, such as those who have compromised immune systems.*
- *People in counties at a "high" level should still wear a mask indoors.*

Following these guidelines, **WCS will no longer require that staff, participants, or visitors wear a mask inside of WCS leased and owned properties, with the following exceptions:**

- *Staff, participants, and visitors at program locations where the funding source requires face coverings, must continue to follow this requirement.*
- *For those working in a county that has a high community level of COVID-19, or there is a local mask-wearing ordinance, we request that individuals follow the CDC guidelines and/or local ordinance.*

NOTE: *Lifting the WCS requirement for wearing a mask, does not preclude anyone from exercising their personal preference to continue wearing a mask, or asking others to do so when meeting in their personal workspace.*

Protective Practices

IN-OFFICE WORK-RELATED RULES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Employees are expected to:

- ⇒ **Practice social distancing**
(at least six feet between individuals)
- ⇒ **Practice CDC recommended hygiene**
(Wash hands with soap & water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer containing at least 70% alcohol; avoid touching of face; avoid shaking hands; sneeze or cough into a tissue or the inside of elbow)
- ⇒ **Avoid non-essential meetings and gatherings**
- ⇒ **Avoid common area dining**

To support in-office/building/work area work-related rules, WCS supervisors will:

- ⇒ **Enforce the practice of social distancing at all times**, including hallways and common areas
- ⇒ **Provide hand sanitizer, disinfectant spray, and wipes** for disinfecting and cleaning

Dining and Lunchrooms

Community dining and sharing of snacks, food, and beverages is prohibited for the time being. Employee breakrooms will not be used for dining or eating. These spaces will only be used for warming meals and beverages. There should be no food left on tables and counters for sharing in employee breakrooms or offices and private workspaces.

Team Meetings

WCS will continue to conduct Team Meetings using platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams. When appropriate, in-person meetings will occur in an office setting in conference rooms that can accommodate social distancing and will include no more than ten people. Mask wearing is now optional.

Supervision

WCS will always provide consistent and ongoing supervision for all employees. WCS will provide supervision for all staff either remotely or in-person. In-person supervision will occur in spaces that are large enough for social distancing. There are clearly established lines of authority across the organization to manage the daily operations of programs and to provide updated information.

Travel

WCS has adopted in-office travel guidelines that are specific to the COVID-19 outbreak.

- **Work Travel:** WCS is limiting employees to local travel that is essential to provide services, and to other required and essential meetings. Non-local (in-state) travel to meetings, conferences, and other gatherings will not be allowed unless it relates directly to an essential part of our business. Out-of-state work-related travel will not be allowed.
- **Personal Travel:** For personal travel outside the state of Wisconsin, WCS asks employees to follow the [CDC guidelines](#).

NEW FROM CDC (12/27/21)

CDC GUIDELINES FOR ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE RELATED TO COVID-19

If you TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19, you should:

- Isolate for 5 days.
- If asymptomatic or your symptoms are resolving (without fever for 24 hours), then follow isolation with 5 days of wearing a mask when around others.

If you ARE EXPOSED TO COVID-19, AND you are unvaccinated or more than 6 months out from your second mRNA dose (or more than 2 months after the J&J vaccine) and not yet boosted, you should:

- Quarantine for 5 days followed by strict mask use for an additional 5 days. Alternatively, if a 5-day quarantine is not feasible, it is imperative that an exposed person wear a well-fitting mask at all times when around others for 10 days after exposure. See page 4 for guidance related to “critical workers.”

If you ARE EXPOSED TO COVID-19, AND you have received your booster shot, you:

- Do not need to quarantine following an exposure but should wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure. See page 4 for guidance related to “critical workers.”

Screening

Employee Health Checks

WCS has identified employee health as one of its top priorities. Each day before coming into any WCS worksite, employees are (encouraged) to conduct self-health checks (using the WCS health screening checklist) for the presence of a fever and other COVID-19 symptoms by you or a member of your household.

If an employee experiences COVID-19 symptoms prior to reporting into work, they should call the supervisor for guidance. For employees working in WCS youth and adult residential programs, a COVID-19 health screening (including temperature check) will be done on-site by, or in the presence of, a supervisor.

Rapid Response to Symptoms and Exposure to COVID-19

Employees Who Exhibit COVID-19 Symptoms

Employees who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms will be sent home immediately or asked to remain home until symptoms have cleared. In situations where an employee reports a positive COVID-19 test, WCS will support the employee and co-workers and remove the employee from the workplace until they are cleared to return.

CDC Guidance for Critical Workers Who Have Been Exposed to COVID-19

To ensure continuity of operations of essential functions, the CDC has advised that critical and essential workers **may continue to work** following potential exposure to COVID-19.

The CDC advises that critical workers may be permitted to continue work following potential to COVID-19 provided they remain asymptomatic and additional precautions are implemented to protect them and the community. A potential exposure means that you are a household contact of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID19, or you have had close contact (within six feet) of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID19. The timeframe for having contact with an individual includes the period of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic.

WCS employees/critical workers who have had an exposure but remain asymptomatic should adhere to the following practices prior to and during their shift:

1. **Pre-Screen:** Temperature check and assess symptoms before an employee begins their shift
2. **Regular Monitoring:** As long as the employee does not have symptoms they should continue to monitor under the supervision of manager or supervisor.
3. **Wear a Mask:** The employee should always wear a mask in the workplace for 14 days after the last exposure.
4. **Social Distance:** The employees should always maintain at least six feet and practice social distancing.
5. **Disinfect and Clean Workspace:** Clean and disinfect all areas of such as offices, bathrooms, common areas and shared electronic equipment routinely.

Flexible Work Options

Working Remotely

WCS will continue to allow staff to work remotely as needed and appropriate to maintain a safe work environment while navigating through the COVID-19 pandemic. Such determinations are made on a case-by-case basis involving the employee's supervisor, program director or administrator, and where appropriate in consultation with Human Resources.

Modified Work Schedules

WCS will consider modifying employee work schedules based on individual circumstances and needs as appropriate and to maintain health and well-being. Such determinations are made on a case-by-case basis involving the employee's supervisor, program director or administrator, and where appropriate in consultation with Human Resources.

Staff Who are Over Age 60 or Have Underlying Health Conditions

WCS will make every effort to accommodate individuals over the age of 60 and those with underlying health conditions, which may include but not be limited to extended time for working remotely, modifications of work schedules, and granting additional time off and leave from work.

Risk Mitigation

WCS will always maintain an adequate supply of PPE, paper goods, soap, and hand sanitizer to promote hygiene among employees.

Education and Cultural Practices

Staff Communication

WCS will regularly communicate the new *Principles and Practices* (e.g., face coverings, physical distancing, hygiene) that are expected in the workplace. This will include communication through email, internal intranet, and signs throughout the facilities.

Education and Training

WCS will provide online or other socially distanced education about job-specific topics such as cleaning and disinfecting protocols, appropriate PPE usage, effectively communicating and enforcing physical distancing guidelines to service users.

Self-Care During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic can feel overwhelming due to new information, long work hours, and caring for yourself and your family. It is normal to feel stressed during this uncertain time. Emotions in response to uncertainty may include anxiety, fear, anger, and sadness. It is important to pause for a moment and collect yourself, and to reach a place of calmness.

There are several websites that can provide information on self-care. The WCS Community Building Milwaukee project offers [Virtual Circles of Support](#) to help manage the stress of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Employees are also encouraged to reach out to the [WCS Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) at 1-800-236-3231.

Cultural Practices

WCS understands that these new strict *Principles and Practices* may conflict with some staff cultural practices. With this in mind, WCS leadership will make every effort to listen to all staff concerns about these practices, while maintaining an organizational emphasis on the collective interest of our staff and the individuals we serve.

INDIVIDUALS WE SERVE AND VISITORS

Risk Awareness

Health Screenings/Checks

At WCS youth and adult residential or congregate care facilities, we will conduct health screenings/checks on those we serve and visitors to our various locations to detect the presence of COVID-19 symptoms. Most essential services require some level of face-to-face or in-person contact. When conducting face-to-face contacts, staff will utilize a symptom checklist (Public Health Questionnaire) to ensure that consumers do not have COVID-19 symptoms, practice social distancing.

Securing Signatures

WCS will utilize appropriate alternate methods to obtain signatures from individuals who participate in programming. This includes electronic signatures, paper signatures, and entering notes in individual records if acceptable.

Social Distancing

WCS requires that all staff, individuals we serve, and visitors practice and are mindful of social distancing behavior and guidelines issued by the CDC to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Minimal guidelines include maintaining a distance of at least six feet from the closest person.

Transportation

There are times when a WCS employee is required to transport an individual in their personal vehicle. When this is required, employees and individuals we serve will be provided with protective items such as masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer. Any transported individual will be required to sit at least six feet away from the driver to maintain proper social distance. WCS will also provide these staff members with sanitizing spray and wipes to disinfect seats, door handles, and surfaces after each transport.

Education and Communication

Sharing Guidelines

WCS will talk with individuals we serve about the importance of universal hygiene methods, face coverings as needed, and physical distancing. This may be communicated in-person, over the phone, through emails, or through signage around the building.

Identifying the Needs of the Individuals We Serve

WCS recognizes that during the COVID-19 pandemic, certain basic need items may be in higher demand than usual and in short supply. We are cognizant of the lack of basic need items and are committed to helping individuals find ways to meet such needs. We will work closely with each person around resource management and utilizing public resources when appropriate.

WORKPLACE

Disinfecting Practices

Daily Disinfecting

WCS has implemented measures to ensure that daily cleaning and disinfecting occurs at all of our program sites, especially on hard surfaces that are frequently touched such as doorknobs, handles, light switches, elevators, countertops, and tabletops, etc. WCS will continue to follow [CDC guidelines](#) for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces. Employees will be given the supplies needed to disinfect computer equipment and electronic devices, phones, desks and surfaces, light switches and handles, key cards and keys, and personal vehicles when used to transport individuals we serve. *Please note in worksites that are not under the control of WCS, we will work with the responsible authority to ensure this is being addressed.*

Environmental Controls

Entrance Points

WCS has established the following procedures for the entrance point buildings/office spaces that we control:

- WCS will screen all visitors for COVID-19 by using a Symptom Checklist/Public Health Questionnaire, which includes a temperature check.
- As needed, masks will be distributed to individuals/visitors who do not have one if they are required to wear masks while in a WCS controlled building.
- Hand sanitizer will be available, and individuals/visitors are required to use it before proceeding into the building.
- Ventilation will be increased. Unless doing so is a violation of code, a threat to safety, or poses a similar type of problem, WCS will:
 - increase the amount of outdoor air that circulates into the building/room
 - run HVAC fans continuously where possible

Communal Touchpoints

WCS has established the following procedures for communal touchpoints:

- All trash and recycling bins will not require a person to touch the container in order to dispose of something.
- Where possible, employees will not share desks, or offices. In those program areas where this is not possible, extra care should be taken to wash hands, disinfect, sanitize. Employees should not share writing utensils, whiteboard markers, or other work tools and equipment.
- Where possible, office phones and cell phones will NOT be shared. In those program areas where this is not possible, extra care should be taken to wash hands, disinfect, sanitize. Office phones should be wiped down at least daily with disinfecting wipes, paying particular attention to the receiver and cradle. Cell phones should be wiped down at least daily with disinfecting wipes or a mixture of 70% isopropyl alcohol/30% water a soft lint-free cloth. No liquids should be directly sprayed on the device.
- Users will be required to clean and disinfect communally used equipment (e.g., printers, desktop computers) before and after use and make sanitizers available in the area. *Signs will be posted as reminders*. This includes the following procedures for communal office equipment, such as printers and fax machines:

Displays/control panels/buttons will be wiped down after each use using a microfiber cloth with a mixture of 70% isopropyl alcohol/30% water. Cloth and cleaning mixture are provided near every shared device. No liquids should be sprayed directly on the device.

Equipment will be fully wiped down using a microfiber cloth with a mixture of 70% isopropyl alcohol/30% water at the end of each day.

- Where possible, WCS will install controls at transaction points that work to minimize touchpoints and areas of close contact.

Workspace Design

Workstations

- Workstations will be set up with at least six feet of distance between people. If physical distancing between workstations is not possible, barriers or partitions may be installed.
- Where possible, staff will have a designated workstation to minimize the number of people sharing space.

Workflow Design

Flow of Individuals Between and Within Offices

WCS will continuously evaluate and adjust the flow and presence of individuals in office and program areas to ensure there is appropriate social distancing space between individuals and that all individuals can avoid contact with each other (i.e., entryways, stairwells, aisles, necessary waiting areas). We will modify work areas as needed to improve the safety and well-being of staff and to make them feel as comfortable as possible. Furniture and seating in waiting areas will be arranged to accommodate social distancing and to discourage unnecessary waiting and loitering.

Controlled Access

Access to WCS Buildings

WCS is controlling access to our facilities in the following ways:

- Occupancy: WCS will limit the number of individuals allowed in each facility at any given time.
- Packages: All packages must be delivered at the main entrance of WCS-controlled buildings and will be distributed by WCS staff and security.
- Security Protocols: WCS will continue to have Security at the main location on 37th Street and will visit other locations as needed to ensure that buildings are secure and that non-essential visits are not taking place.
- Loading Docks/Service Elevator: WCS will continue to utilize a large freight elevator at the 37th Street building as needed and limit the level of accessibility by vendor and others.

Access Within WCS Buildings

WCS is controlling access within our facilities in the following ways:

- Elevator Use: WCS will limit the number of individuals on elevators to three at a time.

- Stairwell Use: WCS encourages staff to utilize stairwells versus elevators, and practice social distancing at all times. The 37th Street location will have multiple stairwells open to accommodate staff egress from the building and to limit the use of elevators.
- Bathrooms: All WCS restrooms will be limited to one person at a time. Thorough handwashing of at least 20 seconds will be required after each use.
- Kitchen and Break Rooms: Community dining and sharing of snacks, food, and beverages will be prohibited for the time being. Employee breakrooms will not be used for dining or eating. These spaces will only be used for warming meals, and beverages. There should be no food left on tables and counters for sharing in employee breakrooms, offices, or private workspaces.

Please note that for buildings and worksites not under the control of WCS, we will work with the responsible entity to ensure that the above is addressed to a level that maintains a safe work environment.

VIOLATIONS OF PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

If a WCS employee, individual we serve, or visitor sees any violation of these *Principles and Practices*, they should report the violation to a supervisor, program director or building security.

