

# WCS PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

## DURING COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Revised 10/12/2020

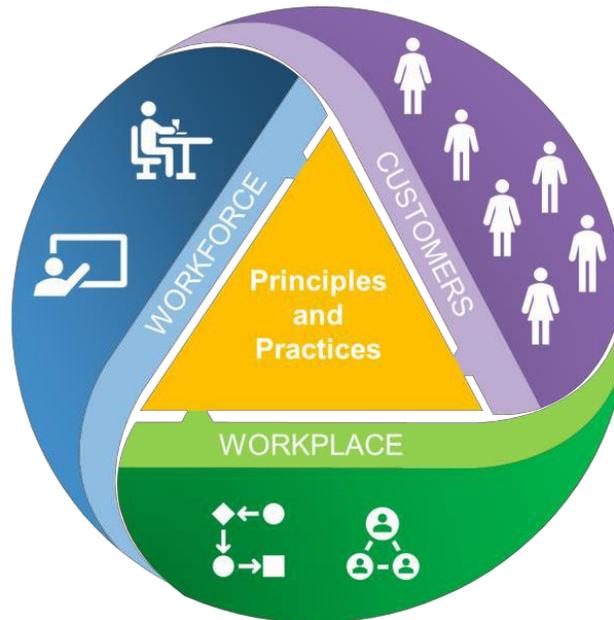
*The COVID-19 pandemic in the United States and southeast Wisconsin is a rapidly evolving situation. Wisconsin Community Services (WCS) is following health guidelines, primarily utilizing information from the state of Wisconsin Department of Health Services, local Public Health Officials, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to help navigate through the pandemic and protect the health and well-being of employees and those we serve.*

***The following PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES were developed in accordance with these health authorities and will be updated based on current and evolving 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

# WORKFORCE

## Protective Practices

### In-Office Work-Related Rules

WCS has adopted in-office work-related rules that are specific to the COVID-19 outbreak.

#### 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)*
- ⇒ **Limit non-essential meetings and gatherings**
- ⇒ **Avoid common area dining**
- ⇒ **Wear face coverings (see box below)**

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

- ⇒ **Issue face coverings/masks** for employees and visitors  
*(Some staff will also receive gowns, goggles, or face shields depending on the type of work they are engaged in.)*
- ⇒ **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

### **Face Covering Requirements**

As part of its COVID-19 Principles and Practices WCS mandated that Face Coverings/Masks be worn in buildings by participants, visitors and employees in all common areas, restrooms, and stairwells in facilities that are under the control of the organization through lease or ownership. Subsequent to the initial issuance of the WCS COVID-19 Principles and Practices, a number of municipalities and the state of Wisconsin have issued Ordinances and Orders requiring that ***individuals wear a face covering if they are indoors or in an enclosed space, other than a private residence; and another person or persons who are not members of the individual's household or living unit are present in the same room or enclosed space.***

To fully comply with state and local requirements for face coverings WCS strongly encourages staff working in cubicles or modular office space to wear a face covering/mask. Moreover, the agency is also asking that staff working in a shared office space with no barriers between staff, wear a face covering when others are present. This practice is in addition to previous requirements that staff wear face coverings/masks in common areas, restrooms, and stairwells. Adherence to this practice will help to slow and stop the spread of COVID-19.

## **Dining and Lunchrooms**

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 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 team meetings will occur in an office setting in conference rooms that can accommodate social distancing and will include no more than ten people. Employees will be required to wear masks during meetings.

## **Supervision**

WCS will continue to provide supervision for all staff either remotely or in-person. In-person supervision will occur in spaces that are large enough for social distancing. We understand that there will be questions about the evolving and rapidly changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and agency response. WCS will always provide consistent and ongoing supervision for all employees. 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 during the active stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Personal Travel:** For personal travel outside the state of Wisconsin, WCS is following the CDC guidelines. The guidelines were updated at the end of August, removing a recommendation that individuals returning from all international travel, and after domestic travel to states seeing a high rate of coronavirus cases, self-quarantine for 14 days. Updated travel guidelines from the CDC are based on risk of exposure during travel, asking travelers to think about what they did, where they were, and who they came into contact with to evaluate their risk of exposure to COVID-19. The updated CDC guidelines also suggest that all returning travelers should social distance, wear a cloth face covering, wash their hands frequently and watch for symptoms. Overall, CDC guidelines define those who should isolate for two weeks as people who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19-excluding people who have had COVID-19 within the past three months.

## **Screening**

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### **Employee Health Checks**

WCS has identified employee health as one of its top priorities. Each day before coming into any WCS worksite, employees are required 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. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring this practice occurs daily. 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 Confirmed Cases in WCS Workforce**

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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 respond immediately to support the infected employee and co-workers, and remove the employee from the workplace until they are cleared to return.

**Essential Workers Who Have Been Exposed to COVID-19** (*Updated by CDC on 9/11/2020*): 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**

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### **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 outbreak. 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 while navigating through the COVID-19 outbreak.

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**

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

## **Education and Cultural Practices**

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### **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 for staff on the following topics:**

- Universal hygiene methods aimed at preventing infection and stopping the spread
- Face covering and physical distancing expectations of them while at work
- Job- or task-specific education, such as additional cleaning and disinfecting protocols, appropriate PPE usage, effectively communicating and enforcing physical distancing guidelines to service users
- How employees can ask questions or have concerns addressed

### **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.

# CONSUMERS / PARTICIPANTS AND VISITORS

## *Risk Awareness*

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### **Health Screenings/Checks**

WCS 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, and wear a mask/face covering. The checklist has recently been revised in accordance with updated symptoms from the CDC.

### **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, program participants, 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 participants will be provided with PPE such as masks, gloves, and sanitizers. Any transported individual will be required to sit at least six feet away from the driver to maintain proper social distance. WCS will provide these staff members with hand sanitizer as well as disinfectant spray and wipes to disinfect seats, door handles, and surfaces after each transport.

## *Education and Communication*

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### **Sharing Guidelines**

WCS will educate program participants about the importance of universal hygiene methods, face coverings, and physical distancing. This may be communicated in-person, over the phone, through emails, or through signage around the building.

### **Identifying Participant Needs**

WCS recognizes that during this COVID-19 outbreak, certain basic need items may be in higher demand than usual and in short supply. Items such as food, toilet paper, and other basic need items may become difficult to obtain by the individuals that we serve. 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

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### Daily Disinfecting

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, WCS has implemented measures to ensure that daily cleaning and disinfecting is happening at all of our program sites, especially on hard surfaces that are frequently touched such as doorknobs, handles, light switches, elevators, counter and tabletops, etc. WCS will continue to follow CDC and EPA 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 participants.

*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

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### Entrance Points

WCS has established the following procedures for the entrance point of each building/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.
- Masks will be distributed to individuals/visitors who do not have one and they will be 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 should not share desks, or offices. In those program areas where this is not possible, extra care should be taken to wash hands, disinfect, sanitize, and wear masks. Employees should not share writing utensils, whiteboard markers, or other work tools and equipment.
- Where possible, office phones and cell phones should NOT be shared. In those program areas where this is not possible, extra care should be taken to wash hands, disinfect, sanitize, and wear masks. 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**

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### **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**

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### **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**

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### **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 and all riders must use masks.
- 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, and masks should always be worn. 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, program participant or visitor sees any violation of these Principles and Practices, they should report the violation to a supervisor, program director or building security.

