

# COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Healthwise Behavioral Health and Wellness

**Healthwise Behavioral Health and Wellness** is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our workers and clients. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Managers and workers are all 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 workers, management, and clients. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of our workplaces.

Management and workers are responsible for implementing and complying with all aspects of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. **Healthwise Behavioral Health and Wellness** owner and managers have our full support in enforcing the provisions of these procedures.

Our workers are our most important assets. We are serious about safety and health and keeping our contract employees and staff working at **Healthwise Behavioral Health and Wellness**. Worker involvement is essential in developing and implementing a successful COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. We have involved our employees in this process by inviting staff and contracted workers to staff meetings, developing a COVID-19 task force, polling of staff and contracted workers regarding concerns and health safety policies, email updates on task force progress, and ongoing requests for staff and contracted worker feedback. Our COVID-19 task force will continue to meet regularly to assess necessity and effectiveness of safety procedures if COVID-19 is a health safety concern. 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 Order 20-48, and addresses:

- hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- engineering and administrative controls for social distancing.
- customer controls and protections for drop-off, pick-up and delivery.
- housekeeping, including cleaning, disinfecting and decontamination.
- prompt identification and isolation of sick persons.
- communications and training that will be provided to managers and employees; and
- management and supervision necessary to ensure effective implementation of the plan.

## Screening and policies for employees exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19

Employees have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The following policies and procedures are being implemented to assess workers' health status prior to entering the workplace and for employees to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms. Our staff and contracted workers will assess their own potential COVID-19 symptoms, and by taking their temperature upon arrival at the workplace and logging their temperature on a log sheet behind the front desk. Staff and contracted workers must be fully aware of COVID-19 symptoms such as fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, chills, new cough, new sore throat, shortness of breath, muscle aches, headache, or loss of taste or smell. If any COVID-19 symptoms are present, the staff person or contracted employee shall not enter the workplace and will immediately contact owner, Kristin Dahl, PsyD, LP and return home. If a staff person or contracted worker displays any of the above symptoms while at work, they shall contact Dr. Dahl immediately, leave the building, and cancel all clients for the day. Once home, the staff person or contracted worker will inform all remaining clients for the following 14 days that they will be working from home utilizing telehealth if symptoms do not hinder work performance. A negative COVID-19 test is required to return to in-office work sooner than 14 days. If the test is positive, the staff person or contracted worker will also contact every person they have had contact with 3 days prior to symptom development to inform of possible exposure. If these people include clients, the clients will need to participate in telehealth only for the following two weeks. If the staff person or contracted employee is too ill to make all the required contacts, they shall inform Dr. Dahl to assign assistance in making these calls.

**Healthwise Behavioral Health and Wellness** has no leave policies in place for any of their contracted workers as benefits are not a part of their contract. Leave is understood to be taken without pay, or provider may engage clients utilizing telehealth from home if they are well enough to provide quality therapy services. For all other staff, employment leave will be given with full pay. All staff and contracted workers are required to stay 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. Employees with underlying medical conditions or who have household members with underlying health conditions will have the option of working from home.

**Healthwise Behavioral Health and Wellness** has also implemented a procedure for informing workers if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 at their workplace and requiring them to quarantine for two weeks. Dr. Kristin Dahl or an agent representing the owner will work with the staff person or contracted worker to assign who will make calls to inform people of possible direct exposure.

In addition, a policy has been implemented to protect the privacy of workers' health status and health information. Health information of clients will be strictly protected. Names of clients shall not be shared with anyone other than those involved in making calls informing clients of possible direct exposure, or schedule changes due to possible direct exposure. If a staff person or contracted worker is sick or has been directly exposed, only that staff person or contracted worker can grant permission to share this personal health information with Healthwise staff and contracted workers within the company only. This permission will be given directly to Dr. Dahl who will notify the workers whether the provider name will be released to the company or not. If released, this information is required to stay within the company.

## Handwashing

Upon entering the building, all employees at Healthwise Behavioral Health and Wellness will be required to 1). wash their hands *or* 2). use hand sanitizer. There are multiple sinks in each of our buildings that can/will be used by our employees. Soap dispensers and paper towels will be provided and monitored daily to ensure they are fully stocked. Hand sanitizer (with greater than 60 % alcohol concentration) will be located at the front desk, as well as in each of the provider's offices. These will be monitored and replenished as needed.

All visitors/clients who enter our building will be told of this necessary precaution (by their individual provider) and will be expected to do the same. Additionally, posters with the proper hand washing/ hand sanitation steps will be on display in our building.

Additionally, all employees will be encouraged to wash/sanitize their hands frequently throughout the day, including but not limited to after using the restroom, before and after meals, in between client sessions, etc.

## Respiratory Etiquette: Cover your Cough or Sneeze

All employees at Healthwise Behavioral Health and Wellness will be informed of the appropriate respiratory etiquette needed to mitigate the potential spread of COVID-19, as recommended by the CDC and the MN department of Health. The appropriate respiratory etiquette includes the following:

1. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue (or a mask). Throw the tissue away in the trash can and wash/ sanitize your hands immediately.
2. If you are unable to cough or sneeze into a tissue (or a mask), please ensure that you cough or sneeze into your arm/elbow. Wash/sanitize your hands immediately after.

All visitors/clients who enter our building will be informed of this pertinent information as well, by their individual provider. Boxes of tissues (along with trash cans) will be kept at the front desk and in each of the providers offices. Tissues will be monitored and restocked as

needed. Trash cans will be emptied daily. Additionally, posters will be on display to further remind individuals of the need to cover their cough/sneeze.

## Social distancing

Social distancing refers to the practice of keeping space (6 feet or more) between yourself and others to reduce the chance of contact with those who knowingly or unknowingly carry an illness. It is being implemented in the workplace through the following engineering and administrative controls:

- Option for use of telehealth; flexible work hours for providers; staggered office use when possible to reduce the number of people in common areas and option to use back door entrances,
- Providers, clients and other staff maintain six feet of distance when possible,
- Administrative staff are available by phone or email from 8:00am to 6:00pm daily to address concerns and support clients (in-office support staff will resume in July/August 2020); Clinical Director, Dr. Dahl is available by phone, email or by appointment,
- Signage posted in offices,
- Adequate time maintained between in-person client appointments to clean and disinfect surfaces and allow air to settle; hand sanitizer will be provided to the client upon entering the building; masks and gloves are available upon request (the use of a face covering is recommended if social distancing cannot be maintained and their use will be determined by the client/therapist/staff on an individual basis),
- Clients wait in cars/outside and will be notified when they may enter the building. They will be asked health screening questions prior to being escorted into the building. They will go directly to the providers office. They will be escorted out of the building at the end of their session,
- Additional seating may be added to rooms for easier cleaning; when the lobby is in use, clients will sit at least six feet away from one another; plastic barriers will be placed on administrative desks.
- Payments will be processed online to reduce physical contact; a credit card can be kept on file,
- Use of a break room will be limited to one person at a time, and
- Desks, phones, computers, chairs, tables will be wiped down between use.

## Housekeeping

Regular housekeeping practices are being implemented, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces and areas in the work environment, including restrooms and break rooms. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted in high-touch areas, such as phones, keyboards, touch screens, desks, chairs, door handles, alarm system panels, light switches, railings, copy machines, filing cabinets, microwave doors and credit card readers.

Professional cleaning services will be utilized to complete office cleaning procedures two to three days a week.

If office staff or a provider shows symptoms of, had direct contact with someone diagnosed with or is diagnosed with COVID-19 themselves, they will:

- Inform Clinical Director, Dr. Dahl, as soon as possible by phone or email,
- Remain out of the office for 14 days, and
- Have the option to continue client care via Telehealth.

If a client shows symptoms of, had direct contact with someone diagnosed with or is diagnosed with COVID-19 themselves, they will:

- Contact their provider and inform them as soon as possible, and
- Have the option to continue client care via Telehealth for 14 days.

If client, provider or office staff member is tested and receives a negative test result, they may return to in-person visits (following the most up-to-date guidelines recommended by the CDC).

Ultimately, should an exposure occur, the current recommendations given by the CDC will be referred to and followed.

## Communications and training

This Preparedness Plan was communicated via email to all workers 06/02/2020 and necessary training was provided. Additional communication and training will be ongoing by posting up to date procedures in common areas and provided to all workers who did not receive the initial training. Instructions will be communicated to clients about how and when to enter the clinic for appointments as well as drop-off and pick-up of clients who are minors.

These procedures are being conducted to ensure social distancing between the client, the employee, and other clients, and about the recommendation that clients use face masks when dropping off, picking up or entering the clinic. Managers and supervisors are to monitor how effective the program has been implemented by following up with any comments/concerns people may have. Management and employees are to work through this new program together and update the training, as necessary. This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan has been certified by Healthwise Psychology, PA management and was posted throughout the workplace June 2020. It will be updated, as necessary.