COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Northwest Minnesota Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA)

We are committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our Employees. To ensure that, we have developed the following Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Managers and Employees are all responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our workplaces, and that requires full cooperation among Employees and management. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of our Employees and workplaces.

Management and Employees are responsible for implementing and complying with all aspects of this Preparedness Plan. HRA’S Employees have our full support in enforcing the provisions of this policy.

Our Employees are our most important assets. We are serious about safety and health and keeping our Employees working at the HRA. Employee involvement is essential in developing and implementing a successful COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. Preparedness Plan follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines and federal OSHA standards related to COVID-19 and addresses:

- hygiene and respiratory etiquette;
- engineering and administrative controls for social distancing;
- housekeeping – 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 Employees’ health status prior to entering the workplace and for Employees to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms. Any worker who is sick or experiencing symptoms while at home should communicate with their supervisor by phone by leaving a message on the voicemail for the office, if after hours, or by text. If you become sick while at work, we will facilitate sending you home as is practical.

HRA 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. We have vacation and sick leave policies that includes being absent from work due to illness.
**Handwashing**

Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented at our workplaces at all times. 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 work day, prior to any mealtimes and after using the toilet. All visitors to the facility will be required to disinfect their hands prior to or immediately upon entering the facility using the hand sanitizer installed at all entrances.

Hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes have been placed in areas of the office where people typically gather to use the equipment and/or supplies.

**Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze**

Employees and visitors are being 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 the trash and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward.

**Social distancing**

Social distancing is being implemented in the workplace through the following engineering and administrative controls: Employees and visitors are prohibited from gathering in groups and confined areas, and from using other Employees’ personal protective equipment, phones, computer equipment, desks, cubicles, workstations, offices or other personal work tools and equipment.

**Housekeeping**

Regular housekeeping practices are being implemented, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment, tools and machinery, and areas in the work environment, including restrooms, break rooms, lunch rooms and meeting rooms. Hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes are available throughout the office. Each worker is responsible for cleaning their work environment, phones frequent cleaning and disinfecting high-touch areas, such as phones, keyboards, door handles, copy machines, etc. as you use them.