



## Lake Superior Zoo School Pandemic Preparedness Plan

All critical businesses, including licensed and certified child care services, in Minnesota are required to have a COVID-19 preparedness plan that protects staff, children, families and the community we serve. This document was created in accordance to Executive Order 20-48, and follows guidance from the [Minnesota Department of Health \(MDH\)](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The [CDC Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open](#) was also used in preparing this document. This document was last updated December 23, 2020.

### 1. Frequent Handwashing

Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty and if soap and water are not readily available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used.

#### Handwashing

A hand soap dispenser, disposable towel dispenser, and the procedures for handwashing will be posted at each handwashing sink throughout the center. Adults will aid children in proper hand washing (wash hands with soap and water and dry hands with disposable, single-use towels) and/or the proper application of hand sanitizer if necessary. These procedures will be followed at all hand washing times.

- Children and staff will wash their hands upon arrival to the preschool.
- Children and staff will wash their hands upon returning indoors after outdoor play.
- Children will wash their hands after each use of the toilet, including after an accident.
- Children will wash their hands before eating.
- Staff will wash their hands after helping a child use the toilet.
- Staff will wash their hands after each use of the toilet.
- Staff will wash their hands before serving or eating food.
- Children and staff will wash hands after handling or caring for animals

If food is consumed outdoors (away from handwashing sinks), all staff and children will wash hands indoors or properly apply hand sanitizer (approved by parents on enrollment forms) before eating.

Age-appropriate guidance on handwashing skills will be provided during the first week of school and will be reinforced throughout the school year.

## 2. Cleaning and disinfecting

Routine cleaning and disinfecting is key to maintaining a safe environment for children and staff. Refer to “Zoo School Cleaning and Disinfecting Schedule” document for specific cleaning and disinfecting schedule. Staff will be trained in cleaning and disinfecting protocols.

**Cleaning** removes dirt and most germs and is usually done with soap and water.

**Disinfecting** kills most germs, depending on the type of chemical, and only when the chemical product is used as directed on the label.

White Labeled Bottle: Food-safe Cleaner

Red Labeled Bottle: Food-safe Disinfectant

Yellow Labeled Bottle: Multi-Purpose Cleaner and Disinfectant

### General Cleaning Protocols

- Wear disposable gloves & protective eyewear to clean and disinfect.
- Wash hands often.
- Always read and follow the directions on the label to ensure safe and effective use.
- Cleaning products should not be used near children. Staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling toxic fumes.
- Always store cleaners, disinfectants, and sanitizers out of reach of children.

#### A. Cleaning and Disinfectant Procedures on Hard Surfaces

Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces. Ensure high-touch surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, sink handles, counters, tables and chairs, shared toys, program equipment, desk, phones, keyboards, cubbies, and other items are regularly cleaned and disinfected.

1. **Wear disposable gloves & protective eyewear** to clean and disinfect.
2. Examine area/item for any visible soiling (finger prints, dirt, oils, debris). Spray these areas with the yellow bottle and wipe with paper towel.
3. Spray disinfectant use disinfectant labeled “Multi-purpose disinfectant.” **Leave disinfectant visibly damp for 10 minutes.** After 10 full minutes of dwell time, dry any remaining wet areas with paper towel.

**Always read and follow the directions on the label** to ensure safe and effective use.

- Wear skin protection and consider eye protection for potential splash hazards
- Ensure adequate ventilation
- Use no more than the amount recommended on the label
- Use water at room temperature for dilution (unless stated otherwise on the label)
- Avoid mixing chemical products
- Label diluted cleaning solutions
- Store and use chemicals out of the reach of children and animals

You should never eat, drink, breathe or inject these products into your body or apply directly to your skin as they can cause serious harm.

#### B. Cleaning and Disinfecting Soft surfaces (carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes)

- Clean the surface using soap and water
- Launder items according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.

OR

- Use Multi-Purpose Disinfectant according to instructions on label and allow sufficient dry time.
- Vacuum as usual

### **C. Disinfecting electronics, such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and CD Players**

- Follow manufacturer's instruction for cleaning and disinfecting. If no guidance, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol. Dry surface thoroughly.

### **D. Cleaning clothing, towels, linens and other items**

- Launder items according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
- **Wear disposable gloves** when handling dirty laundry from a person who is sick.
- Dirty laundry from a person who is sick can be washed with other peoples' items.
- **Do not shake** dirty laundry.
- Clean and **disinfect clothes hampers** according to guidance above for surfaces.
- Remove gloves, and wash hands right away.

### **E. Cleaning and disinfecting your building or facility if someone is sick with COVID symptoms**

- Preschool building and grounds will be closed for cleaning and disinfecting.
- **Wait 24 hours** or for as long as feasibly possible before you clean or disinfect.
- Clean and disinfect **all areas used by the person who is sick**, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls.
- Vacuum the space if needed. Use a vacuum equipped with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, if available.
  - Do not vacuum a room or space that has people in it. Wait until the room or space is empty to vacuum, such as at night, for common spaces, or during the day for private rooms.
  - Wear disposable gloves to clean and disinfect. For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floors or rugs, clean the surface with detergents or cleaners appropriate for use on these surfaces, according to the textile's label. After cleaning, disinfect with the "Multi-purpose Disinfectant" according to instructions on label and allow for sufficient drying time.
- Once area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.
- If more than 7 days since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.
  - Continue routine cleaning and disinfection. This includes everyday practices that businesses and communities normally use to maintain a healthy environment.

## **F. Cleaning and disinfecting outdoor areas**

- Outdoor areas, like playgrounds in schools and parks generally require normal routine cleaning, but do not require disinfection.
  - Do not spray disinfectant on outdoor playgrounds- it is not an efficient use of supplies and is not proven to reduce risk of COVID-19 to the public.
  - High touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, such as grab bars and railings should be cleaned routinely.
  - Cleaning and disinfection of wooden surfaces (play structures, benches, tables) or groundcovers (mulch, sand) is not recommended.

## **G. Special Consideration for Toys**

- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions should be set aside and placed in the bucket labeled “soiled toys” until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, rinse again, and air-dry. Be mindful of items more likely to be placed in a child’s mouth, like play food, dishes, and utensils.
- Machine washable cloth toys should be used by one individual at a time or should not be used at all. These toys should be laundered before being used by another child.
- Children’s books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.

## **3. Arrival and Departure**

- Parents and siblings over 5 years are required to wear a face covering when dropping off and picking up their children.
- Pick-up and drop-off will be flexible and will be held outside as much as possible.
- Families will maintain a distance of 6 feet between families during drop-off and pick-up.
- Whenever possible, pick-up and drop-off should occur outside. If outside check-in is not possible, only two families are allowed to enter the building at a time and must go through screening procedures and wear a mask or face covering before entering.
- As much as possible, pick-ups and drop-offs will be staggered and direct contact between parents and staff will be limited.
- A hand sanitizer station will be located at the entrance of the facility so that children can clean their hands before entering. Staff will sign children in and out on the clipboard to reduce the need to pass the clipboard or share a pen.
- Ideally, the same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day. If possible, older people such as grandparents or those with serious underlying medical conditions should not pick up children, because they are more at risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

### **Screening Procedures**

Persons who have a fever of 100.4° (38.0°C) or above or other signs of illness will not be admitted to the facility. Parents will be expected to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick.

Before children enter the space, parents will screen children at home to ensure those with symptoms are not attending.

- Use the Home Screening Tool for COVID-19 Symptoms ([attached](#))

If parents are unable to screen their child(ren) at home, staff will screen them upon arrival at Zoo School.

- Upon arrival, staff will wash hands and put on a facemask, eye protection (goggles or disposable face shield that fully covers the front and sides of the face), and a single pair of disposable gloves.
- Staff will make a visual inspection of the child for signs of illness, which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness, and confirm that the child is not experiencing coughing or shortness of breath.
- Child's temperature will be taken by staff upon arrival using a non-contact (temporal) thermometer.
  - After using non-contact thermometers, clean them with an alcohol wipe (or isopropyl alcohol on a cotton swab) between each person. The same wipe can be reused as long as it remains wet.
  - If you did not have physical contact with an individual, you do not need to change gloves before the next check.
- If it is not possible to take temperature outside of facility, parents will be asked to take a temperature of their child before coming to facility.
- After screening, remove and discard PPE, and wash hands. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol or wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

#### 4. Plans for sick children, staff, and volunteers

- Daily health checks will be conducted. This includes screening for children, staff, and volunteers to ensure those who exhibit any symptoms of illness are not present.
  - Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and follow CDC recommended precautions.
- The exclusion guidance provided by the Minnesota Department of Health's Decision Tree will be followed to ensure that children, staff, and volunteers stay home when sick ([see attached](#)).
- Substitute teachers will be utilized in the case of a regular staff member having to stay home if they or their family members are sick.

#### **Sick children and staff are required to stay home.**

- Parents will be notified about the importance of keeping children home when they are sick.
- Sick staff members and children should not return to the facility until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation. The criteria can be found [here](#)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html> or see attached document “What to do if you are Sick.”

### **If someone becomes sick with COVID-like symptoms**

- If a child enters the school while sick or becomes sick while at school, the sick child will be placed in an isolated area until their parent/guardian picks them up.
  - Parent/Guardian will be notified via phone and asked to pick their child up as soon as possible.
- Employees that are exhibiting symptoms will notify their supervisor and stay home.
  - Sick employees will follow guidelines for staying home using Minnesota Department of Health Decision Tree. Employees should not return to work until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met, in consultation with healthcare providers.
- Building will then be disinfected based on CDC Guidelines
- If COVID is confirmed in a child or staff member
  - Building and nature playscape will be closed.
  - Wait 24 hours before cleaning or disinfecting to allow respiratory droplets to settle before cleaning and disinfecting.
  - Clean and disinfect all areas of the building, such as offices, bathrooms, kitchen, and common areas.
  - If more than 7 days have passed since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.
  - Continue routine cleaning and disinfection.

### **Communication Plan**

- Parents will be given “Parent’s Guide to Zoo School’s Pandemic Preparedness Plan” and will be given access to the full “Zoo School Pandemic Preparedness plan.”
- In the event that a child, staff member, or volunteer has tested positive, Lake Superior Zoo School will:
  - Notify St. Louis County Public Health worker Anna Clough, 218- 471-7362, [Clougha@stlouiscountymn.gov](mailto:Clougha@stlouiscountymn.gov), and follow her direction.
  - Notify MDH through the COVID-19 Information Submission Form for K-12 Schools, Childcare, or Youth Camps <https://redcap.health.state.mn.us/redcap/surveys/?s=79FPADEAMF> and follow their direction.
  - Notify parents, staff, and volunteers via email if after hours, or by phone if during operating hours.
  - Notify DHS Licensor Naoko Sands 651-431-4567, [naoko.sands@state.mn.us](mailto:naoko.sands@state.mn.us).
  - Communicate to families any necessary information as soon as possible to provide time to plan.
- If anyone in the child’s family tests positive for COVID-19, the parent/guardian must communicate immediately with Zoo School staff. Parents/Guardians will be asked to send a message via email. Confidentiality will be honored when communicating about a case or outbreak.

## 5. Social distancing throughout the day

- The school is reduced in class size with a maximum of 10 students, 3 staff members, and two AmeriCorps Members. Because of the small class size, the children will be in the same group each day.
- Events, festivities, special guests, and any community gatherings will not be held.
- During group time, children's spots will be spaced out to promote social distancing.
- At nap time, children's naptime cots will be spaced out as much as possible. Children will be placed head to toe in order to further reduce the potential for viral spread.
- Students will be outside for at least 5 hours a day whenever possible.
- Pick-up and drop-off will be flexible and will be held outside as much as possible.
- Families will practice social distancing during drop-off and pick-up.

## 6. Source control and cloth face coverings

- Staff members and volunteers are required to wear cloth face coverings during the work day when they are inside the building and are outside within 6 feet of students and other staff. Face shields may be used in place of cloth coverings when teaching requires consideration of the developmental needs of the children in their care.
  - Staff may remove masks when distanced from children outside and when eating or drinking.
- Children will not be required to wear face coverings due to their inability to reliably wear, remove, and handle the cloth face covering throughout the day.
- If parents or siblings 5 and over must enter the building, they are required to wear face coverings.
- Staff members and volunteers will be trained in the proper use and wear of face coverings in accordance with the CDC recommendations:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

## 7. Workplace ventilation

- Whenever possible, windows will be opened to maximize the amount of fresh air being brought in the building.
- If fans are used, steps will be taken to minimize air flow blowing across people.
- Students will spend as much time outdoors as possible.

## 8. Playground use

- Children will be in the same small group and will be the only group using the playscape.
- Children will be using the zoo playground only when the zoo is closed to the public.
- Children will always be required to wash hands when coming in from outside.

## 9. Meals and snacks

- Staff will ensure children wash hands prior to eating.

- Staff are required to wash their hands before preparing food and after helping children to eat.
- Children will be spaced apart as much as possible when seated at tables during meals and snacks.
- Children will receive water in individual water bottles, cleaned and sanitized daily.
- Tables will be cleaned and sanitized before and after mealtime use.

## 10. Field trips and events

- Daily walking field trips within zoo grounds will take place during hours the zoo is closed to the public.
- Field trips and family events will not take place in person.

## 11. Communications and training

- This plan will be available to the Commissioner and offered to families. Expectations for parents and children for implementing this plan will be clear and in plain language on a separate document titled “A Parent’s Guide to Lake Superior Zoo School Pandemic Preparedness Plan.”
- The plan will be posted in a prominent place inside our facility and available on our website, so that it is readily accessible. Training will be provided to ensure everyone is following the plan. Everyone (staff, parents, volunteers, and DHS) will be updated on any changes to the plan.
- Staff with concerns about their employer’s COVID-19 Preparedness Plan or questions about their rights should contact MNOSHA Compliance at [osha.compliance@state.mn.us](mailto:osha.compliance@state.mn.us), 651-284-5050 or 877-470-6742.

## 12. Additional Policies & Procedures

### Travel Restrictions

At this time, MDH is highly discouraging any unnecessary travel.

- People who visit Minnesota, and Minnesotans returning after traveling out of state, are asked to stay away from others (quarantine) for 14 days after they arrive in Minnesota. During those 14 days, it is important that you stay home and watch for symptoms. If you must go out, wear a mask, stay 6 feet from other people, and wash your hands often.
- Staying away from others for 14 days is safest. In some circumstances, a shortened quarantine period may be possible. For more information, see [Close Contacts and Tracing](#) and [Quarantine Guidance for COVID-19 \(PDF\)](#).
- If you are close to someone with COVID-19 during travel, follow guidelines for [how long to keep away from others \(quarantine\)](#).
- For information on testing, visit [Getting Tested for COVID-19](#).

Visit [CDC: Travel](#) for more information about traveling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Information about transmission rates state by state can be found here:

<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases>

### **Financial Policies Relating to COVID-19 Closures: School Year Session**

Because we want to be responsive to changing circumstances and the needs of families, ongoing safety considerations, and the need to maintain organizational flexibility, the following financial policies will be in effect from January-June, and then re-evaluated. In the event the Lake Superior Zoo School determines the need to close because of ill students or staff, official public health requirements, or for other pandemic-related reasons during the School Year Session:

- Lake Superior Zoo School will issue refunds for any COVID-19 related closures at the prorated amount of \$45/day (\$40.50/day for discounted tuition) for a maximum cumulative total of fifteen school days between January-June. No refunds will be issued for closures in excess of this amount during the period of January-June.
- For accounting purposes, full tuition amounts will continue to be due on the 1st day of every month and will be deducted from your bank account on file accordingly. Any refunds or credits will be issued upon the school's re-opening following a closure.
- If an individual child misses preschool for quarantine or illness, Lake Superior Zoo School will not issue refunds.
- The 2020-2021 School Year Session deposit will remain non-refundable.
- You may choose to keep your child home at any point and continue paying tuition to hold their spot. We will continue to require 30 days written notification of withdrawal.
- We understand that COVID-19 has negatively impacted many families' financial situations and we welcome individual families to reach out about financial policies at any time.