

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by the Coronavirus. Symptoms of the disease include fever, dry cough, and shortness of breath. Severe cases can result in hospitalization and death. Minnesota has numerous confirmed cases of COVID-19. All Minnesotans are advised to take a few simple precautions to help reduce their risk of exposure.



HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF & OTHERS

Avoiding crowds and other people's personal space helps to curb the spread of the virus. Keeping at least six feet away from other people will also reduce your chances of catching COVID-19:

- Avoid handshaking, hugging and other intimate types of greetings
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid non-essential travel
- Avoid groups larger than 10 people, especially in poorly ventilated spaces
- Stay at home as much as possible
- Avoid unnecessary errands – consider ways to have essential items brought to you



SELF-QUARANTINE

People who have been exposed to the new coronavirus and who are at risk for coming down with COVID-19 should **self-quarantine**. Health experts recommend that self-quarantine lasts 14 days. Two weeks provides enough time for people to know whether or not they will become ill and be contagious to other people. Self-quarantine involves:

- Staying at home
- Not having visitors
- Practicing social distancing with other people in your household
- Standard hygiene practice and frequent hand washing
- Not sharing things like towels and dining ware



RESOURCES AND LINKS

Below are COVID 19 web links and hotline numbers for more information:

- **Minnesota Department of Health –**
 - Health Questions - 651-201-3920 or 1-800-657-3903
 - Schools & Childcare Questions - 651-297-1304 or 1-800-657-3504
<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html>
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention –**
 - 1-800-232-4636 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

COVID-19 Expanded Work Release Program (C19EWRP)

Effective April 14, the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) will temporarily expand its work release program under Minn. Stat. §§ 241.26 and 244.065. The expanded work release program will help increase social distancing practices and create additional capacity to use quarantine and containment strategies in correctional facilities due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Under the expanded work release program, low- or medium-risk incarcerated adults, who have served at least half of their terms of imprisonment, may reside in approved programs/residences in the community up to three months before their scheduled supervised release date. Approved adults must work at paid employment, seek employment, or be involved in vocational or educational programs, and be under the supervision of the work release unit, while continuing to serve the remainder of their terms of imprisonment.

This temporary policy is in effect until 12/31/2020 or until otherwise amended.

Program participants will be supervised by DOC Work Release Unit staff and will participate in at least twice-weekly virtual visits with their assigned supervisor. The program also aims to provide additional assistance and accountability by helping participants identify accessible, pro-social supports during their release. Only incarcerated men and women who have an agent-approved residence will be eligible for this program at this time.

C19EWRP Release Criteria

To be eligible to apply, applicants must:

- have served at least one half of their terms of imprisonment;
- have no more than 3 months remaining to release;
- have an assessment score using the Minnesota Screening Tool Assessing Recidivism Risk (MNSTARR) of medium or low risk;
- have an approved program/residence; and,
- have access to a landline or internet access with a camera-capable device at the release address.

COVID-19 Releases to the Community

In regards to the release of incarcerated men, women and juveniles who:

- Are confirmed positive for COVID-19;
- Have COVID like symptoms and are presumed COVID-19 positive, or;
- Are subject to medical isolation or quarantine status because of close contact with known or presumed COVID positive inmate or staff member.

After discussion with various COVID-related public policy groups at the state enterprise level, please find the protocol below.

- If being placed in the work release program to a residential or jail facility, the inmate must remain incarcerated until fever free for 3 days without medication or 7 days with no progressive respiratory illness, whichever is longer, or has completed the duration of the 14-day isolation or quarantine period.
- For any type of release, if the inmate is releasing to a private residence and is able to quarantine for 14-days or for the remaining duration of their quarantine or isolation period, the inmate can release with the added temporary release condition requiring compliance with the quarantine term.
- If the inmate is releasing on intensive supervised or supervised release or conditional medical release and does not have a private residence in which to reside, the inmate may be placed in a state approved facility serving unsheltered COVID-19 vulnerable populations; or the inmate may voluntarily remain in a DOC facility until fever free for 3 days without medication or 7 days with no progressive respiratory illness, whichever is longer, or has completed the duration of the isolation or quarantine period.
- If the inmate is releasing on termination of sentence and does not have a private residence in which to reside or refuses to comply with established conditions detailed above, please contact Dr. Amsterdam at 651-361-7233 or Nanette Larson at 651-361-7280, and the Hearings and Release Unit with the name, OID, county of release and release date no less than one week prior to release.

Minnesota Correctional Facility case managers closely coordinate with nursing and release planning staff to ensure that these guidelines are followed explicitly.