



## Northeast Nebraska Public Health Department

215 N Pearl Street • Wayne, NE 68787 • (402) 375-2200

[www.nnphd.org](http://www.nnphd.org)

Fax (402) 375-2201

Toll Free (800) 375-2260

**March 31, 2020**

### **RE: COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR AREA BUSINESSES**

**In light of the expanding COVID-19 pandemic and our commitment to keep the public safe, we encourage businesses to review and adapt their work practices in order to provide the best safety measures possible for their workforce:**

1. Instruct employees to stay home when sick.
2. Encourage employees who come to work to self-monitor for fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat or other symptoms of illness before or upon arrival to work, half-way through their shift and then again before leaving work. Develop a system to record this employee information. If an employee would have any of these symptoms, they should immediately return home, stay away from others, and contact the health department for further direction.
3. Post a sign on the door that guides anyone with symptoms of illness, especially fever, cough, shortness of breath, and sore throat to not enter, go home and call their medical provider or public health department. For businesses that provide scheduled services (hair salons, massage therapists, etc.) consider contacting clients prior to their appointment time to share information regarding the need to cancel their appointment if symptoms are present.
4. Practice strict social distancing (6 feet or more) between individuals. If someone must enter another person's close (6 foot) space, keep that interaction to less than 10 minutes. The less time in close proximity, the better.
5. Have a strict handwashing policy for all workers, which requires washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
6. Small businesses should limit customers to no more than 10 at a time. Abide by 6 ft social distancing rule.
7. For larger businesses (grocery stores, etc.), encourage social distancing by limiting any unnecessary gathering of customers in checkout lines by providing marked spaces at least 6 ft apart between carts.
8. Frequently disinfect surfaces—including counter tops, pens, debit card machines, cash register buttons, door handles/knobs, etc. This should occur multiple times daily.
9. Encourage employees that may be at high risk due to age and underlying medical conditions to seek direction from their healthcare provider regarding continued employment.
10. Those handling money, insurance cards or payment cards, consider wearing gloves to protect from contaminated money, or strict use hand sanitizer between

- each transaction. Moving to checks or online pay is even better in that it limits
- a. the back and forth exchanges from cashier to customer. Debit/credit cards, cash, and coins and debit/credit card machines all spread germs.
11. Use teleworking technologies to the greatest extent possible, establish work-at-home opportunities whenever possible.
  12. Stagger work schedules as able.
  13. Increase distance of workspaces to be at least 6 feet or more as able.

Below are **additional measures for businesses:**

1. **Gas Stations-** Close the dining or seating areas within gas stations.
  - a. For food warmers (pizza, fried food, hot sandwiches, etc.) or food display cases (donuts, cookies, etc.) discontinue the use of those and have staff serve these foods to customers directly.
2. **Pharmacies-** Encourage drive-thru, curbside, or delivery. Encourage 90-day supplies, if allowed.
3. **Banks-** Encourage online banking to the highest extent possible and converting to drive-thru only and close lobbies. Tellers should wear gloves to protect themselves from contaminated money. Conduct other banking services by appointment only.
4. **Food-based businesses-** consider going to drive-thru, curbside pick-up, or delivery. Close the dining room. For delivery orders, the use of hand sanitizer before delivery and immediately following delivery is recommended to help prevent the spread of disease.
5. **Miscellaneous Businesses** – It is recommended that businesses that provide products /services that are not “truly essential” at this time consider closing temporarily, moving to online only interactions, if possible, and/or rescheduling appointments to comply with the social distancing to the **highest extent possible**.

We all have a personal responsibility and civic duty to help keep our community safe. Thank you for your cooperation and support!

Please note that when Directed Health Measures are implemented, this guidance will change, and only essential services will be operating. Directed Health Measures are implemented when there is a case of community transmission of COVID-19 identified in a health district.

Should you have any questions, please call our office at 402-375-2200. We also encourage you to visit [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov) or call the DHHS hotline at 402-552-6645 for more information.

Sincerely,

Julie Rother, BSN, RN, CPH  
Health Director