
Family Outreach, Inc.
COVID-19 Safety Precautions Effective August 26, 2021

Family Outreach, Inc. provides guidance to staff, families and the community regarding COVID-19 precautions for clients and staff. This memo replaces and supersedes the memos issued on September 18, November 5, and December 22, 2020 and the memos issued February 11, and June 8, 2021.

This June 8, 2021 memo includes the following updates:

- *Reinstatement of the face covering requirement in common areas or in areas where social distancing isn't feasible, subject to managerial discretion (pages 1 & 2).*
- *Authorizing Program Managers to implement more restrictive masking requirements or exceptions from masking requirements in cases where the mask interferes with the provision of services (page 1).*
- *Notification that Family Outreach, Inc. will continue to allow sick leave for COVID-19 related reasons even if the employee is not symptomatic, e.g., for quarantine or isolation (page 2).*
- *A reminder and requirement that staff must utilize appropriate protective and sanitizing supplies and protocols (page 2).*
- *Authorizing Program Managers to implement program or office-specific protocols to protect employee and client safety (page 3).*

Our personal responsibility is to protect those around us – particularly those whom we serve. This memo details our plan to protect the health and safety of our workforce and the individuals and families we serve and safety precautions addressing the Core Preparedness Responsibilities from the State of Montana Plan:

- Protect the health and safety of those living and working with vulnerable populations.
- Maintain protocols for social distancing and face-coverings (where appropriate).
- Monitor for Covid-19 symptoms.

Effective immediately and until further notice, the following safety precautions are in place.

Face Coverings:

Due to the resurgence of active cases and the rapid spread of the COVID-19 variant, Family Outreach is reinstating the requirement that all staff and visitors wear face coverings in common areas (hallways, meeting rooms, supply/equipment rooms, etc.) or in situations where social distancing isn't possible. This includes wearing face coverings in home settings where appropriate. Program Managers have the authority to institute more restrictive requirements in their offices or programs (e.g., masking always) and to implement exceptions to the masking requirement in cases where the mask will interfere with effective service provision.

Current CDC guidance regarding face coverings is attached to this memo.

Employees who do not comply with face covering requirements may be directed to leave the assignment, will be required to utilize personal leave during any absence, and may be subject to disciplinary action. Employees should report concerns or potential violations to their supervisor.

Sick Leave for COVID-19:

Until further notice, Family Outreach, Inc. is authorizing the use of sick leave for quarantine, isolation, or other management-approved COVID-19 related reasons, even if the employee is asymptomatic. The use of sick leave remains subject to all other policy provisions. Employees with questions or requests regarding sick leave should see their Program Manager.

Continue to practice good hygiene:

- Continue to sanitize all commonly touched surfaces frequently.
- Wash your hands frequently and especially after using the toilet, before eating, and if you cough/sneeze into your hands (follow the [20-second hand-washing rule](#)).
- Cough/sneeze into your sleeve, preferably into your elbow. If you use a tissue, discard it properly and clean/sanitize your hands immediately.
- Open the windows regularly to ensure open ventilation.
- Avoid touching your face, particularly eyes, nose, and mouth with your hands to prevent from getting infected.
- If you find yourself coughing/sneezing on a regular basis, avoid close physical contact with your coworkers and take proper measures (e.g., staying home or requesting to leave work if at work).
- Utilize masks, hand sanitizer, disinfectant spray, and other precautionary measures instituted and provided by Family Outreach, Inc.

Office and Meeting Guidelines:

In recognition of the fact that Family Outreach operates in different communities that may have different COVID-19 risks we are implementing a tier system for determining the appropriate office and meeting guidelines based on the number of active cases in each community. Family Outreach will regularly review case statistics and update guidelines if needed. If two offices exceed a threshold, the entire agency will move to the next tier.

Tier system and protocols

Family Outreach will observe precautions appropriate for the community based on the risk of exposure as determined by infection rates.

Tier 1: Enterprise-wide precautions

Employees must observe the following precautions in all offices regardless of community infection rate:

- Staff must wear masks in all common areas or in situations where social distancing isn't feasible.
- Staff may work in the office. A staff member with concerns about being at risk should immediately notify their supervisor.

- Offices are now open to the public.
- Employees who come to the office must maintain social distancing.
- When scheduling home visits and before going into client homes employees will inquire as to whether anyone in the household has been sick. Adult Services employees will take special precautions in this regard including monitoring their and client health and following program-specific guidelines and client/family preferences.

Definitions:

Program and office-specific measures	Measures specific to an office or program (e.g., children's, adult, autism insurance, and business programs). This includes guidance defined by the State (e.g., for children's services) and by the Program Manager. Measure may include closing offices, prohibiting in-person meetings of any kind or limiting meeting size, staggering work shifts, requiring work from home, workplace monitoring (e.g., temperature taking or testing), etc.
Social distancing	Means keeping a safe space between yourself and other people who are not from your household. To practice social or physical distancing , stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people who are not from your household.
Tier 1:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe all enterprise-wide precautions (defined above).
Tier 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe all enterprise-wide precautions (defined above) AND • No in-person gatherings greater than 3 people.
Tier 3:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe all precautions for Tiers 1 and 2 AND • Limit access to offices (i.e., if an individual has a compelling reason (i.e., essential services) to come in, they can with Program Manager approval. Approval will depend on office size and capacity; may close office to sanitize if someone in the workforce is affected). • Implement program and office-specific measures to protect employee and client health.

Active Cases and Restriction Levels:

Office (County)	County population (to nearest 500)	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Bozeman (Gallatin)	114500	Observe Tier 1 during Phase II (until we move to Phase III)	≥ 0.5% population active cases	≥ 0.6% population active cases
Butte (Butte Silver-Bow)	35000		572	687
Helena Offices (Lewis & Clark)	69500		175	210
			347	417

The tier system represents guidelines only. The Executive Director and Program Managers retain authority to determine the appropriate restrictions or measures necessary to protect employee and client health at their discretion.

Working from home

Upon authorization from the Executive Director and with appropriate technology, devices, and mandatory technology safeguards, employees may work from home. Employees working from home must comply with the Work at Home policy and may be required to sign a telecommuting agreement if required by the Executive Director.

Family Outreach, Inc. will not reimburse employees for the use of the remote office space including personal equipment and supplies. Certain equipment and supplies will be allowed to be temporarily utilized from Family Outreach facilities as determined by supervisors in consultation with the Business Office and information technology staff.

Program Managers (or their designee) will provide specific direction to employees regarding the ability to work from home, as well as specific direction on work hours and schedule for non-exempt employees. Family Outreach expects employees working from home to communicate frequently with their supervisor and coordinate interruptions in this work accordingly. Employees are expected to accurately report hours worked.

Employees who can work remotely and who are impacted by COVID-19 as described herein must communicate with their supervisor as to their individual capacity to continue to work remotely as their individual or household situations change. Employees shifting between working remotely and using leave must clearly delineate and report their time.

Health Screening. To protect the health and welfare of employees and the community and ensure employees are healthy and safe, all employees are required to complete a health self-screening assessment at the start of their work shift if they are working from their normal place of work (i.e., the screening is not required of employees while working from home). The intent of the health screening is to engage all employees in preventing the spread of the disease. To complete the health self-screening assessment, employees must ask themselves the following questions:

- Do I have a fever (temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or more using an oral thermometer)?
- Am I experiencing acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e., fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea¹) or symptoms of any other contagious illness (e.g., cold or flu)?

“No” Answer: If the employee answers “No” to all the questions on the self-screening assessment, the employee stays at work. If any answers to the self-screening assessment change while the employee is at work, the employee must immediately notify their immediate supervisor by phone, email, or personally, making sure they adhere to safe social distancing (6 feet away), leave the workplace, and seek assistance from their healthcare provider.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

If “Yes” Answer: If the employee answers “Yes” to any one (1) of the questions, the employee must leave immediately and notify their immediate supervisor or follow the normal call- in/out procedures for leaving or not reporting to work and seek assistance from a healthcare provider.

If an employee realizes prior to reporting to work they will answer “Yes” to any one (1) of the self-screening assessment questions, the employee should not report to work, follow the normal call-in/out procedures for not reporting to work, and seek assistance from a healthcare provider.

Symptomatic Employees. Employees who are sick **MUST STAY HOME** and are strongly encouraged to seek assistance from a healthcare provider or the Public Health Office. Employees who were ill must follow the CDC guidelines and be symptom free before returning to work and/or provide a release from a medical provider to return to work.

COVID-19 positive employees. Employees who test positive or are diagnosed with COVID-19 must stay out of the workplace and observe requirements from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and/or receive clearance from a medical provider to ensure they are not infectious before returning to work.

Employees Who Had Close Contact with Infected Persons: Employees who have had close contact with an infected person must follow all instructions from health officials including observing any quarantine or isolation orders. Employees should monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19, especially if they’ve been around someone who is sick. Employees with symptoms of COVID-19 must follow the protocols for **Symptomatic Employees**. Employees subject to a quarantine or isolation order must complete and/or be released from that order before returning to work.

Quarantine and Isolation Orders. Quarantine keeps someone who was in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 away from others. Isolation keeps someone who is sick or tested positive for COVID-19 without symptoms away from others, even in their own home. Employees subject to a quarantine or isolation order must provide a copy of the notice to Discontinue Home Isolation from Public Health or their medical provider and complete the requirements of the Quarantine Order before returning to work.

Actions to Take if a Sick Individual was in the Workplace (Clean and Disinfect)

- 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.
- If **less than 7 days** since the sick employee has been in the facility, **close off areas** used by the person who is sick.
- **Open outside doors and windows** to increase air circulation in the area.
- Wait 24 hours after the sick individual has been in the facility before cleaning or disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.

- 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, remote controls, etc.

Actions to Take if a Sick Individual was in the Workplace (Continued)

- Vacuum the space if needed. Use vacuums equipped with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, if available. Do not vacuum a room or space with 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.
- Consider temporarily turning off room fans and central HVAC system that services the room or space, so that particles that escape from vacuuming will not circulate throughout the facility.
- Once area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.
- Workers without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.

Additional guidance for employees:

- If you are feeling ill, but you are able to work, you must stay home and can request to work from home.
- If you're a parent and you have to stay at home with your children, you may work from home or request leave. Follow up with your supervisor to make arrangements and set expectations.
- If you need to provide care to an individual infected by COVID-19, you may work from home or request leave. You must meet the requirements for returning to work after close contact documented in this memo before returning to work. You are directed not to come into physical contact with any colleagues or clients prior to meeting these requirements.

We need to continue to exercise caution. Please take the time to care for yourself and support each other. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 443-3083. Watch the Family Outreach website and Facebook for updates.

Sincerely,

Jackie Mohler M.Ed., LBA
Executive Director

Your Guide to Masks

Updated Aug. 13, 2021

- If you are not fully vaccinated and aged 2 or older, you should wear a mask in indoor public places.
- In general, you do not need to wear a mask in outdoor settings.
 - In areas with [high numbers of COVID-19 cases](#), consider wearing a mask in crowded outdoor settings and for activities with [close contact](#) with others who are not fully vaccinated.
- People who have a condition or are taking medications that weaken their immune system may not be fully protected even if they are fully vaccinated. They should continue to take all [precautions recommended for unvaccinated people, including wearing a well-fitted mask](#), until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider.
- If you are fully vaccinated, to maximize protection from the Delta variant and prevent possibly spreading it to others, wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area [of substantial or high transmission](#).

[Wearing a mask over your nose and mouth is required](#) on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and while indoors at U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations. Travelers are not required to wear a mask in outdoor areas of a conveyance (like on open deck areas of a ferry or the uncovered top deck of a bus).

How to Select

When selecting a mask, there are many choices. Here are some do's and don'ts.

DO choose masks that



Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric



Completely cover your nose and mouth



Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps



Have a nose wire to prevent air from leaking out of the top of the mask

DO NOT choose masks that



Are made of fabric that makes it hard to breathe, for example, vinyl



Have exhalation valves or vents which allow virus particles to escape



Are prioritized for healthcare workers, including N95 respirators

Special Considerations

Gaiters & face shields



Wear a gaiter with two layers, or fold it to make two layers



Not recommended: Evaluation of face shields is ongoing, but effectiveness is unknown at this time.

Children



Find a mask that is made for children to help ensure proper fit



Check to be sure the mask fits snugly over the nose and mouth and under the chin and that there are no gaps around the sides



Do NOT put on children younger than 2 years old

People with beards

Certain types of facial hair, like beards, can make mask fitting difficult. Masks that fit well protect you better. To have a better fit, people with beards can shave their beards or trim their beards close to the face.

Other ways to improve fit



Use a mask fitter or brace.



Wear one disposable mask underneath a cloth mask that has multiple layers of fabric. The second mask should push the edges of the inner mask against the face and beard.

For people with beards that are not trimmed close to the face, masks may fit loosely around the beard. However, people with beards should still wear a mask. Masks designed for people with beards are being evaluated, and information will be provided when it becomes available.

Wearing a mask does not raise the carbon dioxide (CO₂) level in the air you breathe

Cloth masks and surgical masks do not provide an airtight fit across the face. The CO₂ escapes into the air through the mask when you breathe out or talk. CO₂ molecules are small enough to easily pass through mask material. In contrast, the respiratory droplets that carry the virus that causes COVID-19 are much larger than CO₂, so they cannot pass as easily through a properly designed and properly worn mask.

How to Wear

Wear a mask **correctly** and **consistently** for the best protection.

- Be sure to [wash your hands or use hand sanitizer](#) before putting on a mask.
- Do **NOT** touch the mask when wearing it. If you have to often touch/adjust your mask, it doesn't fit you properly, and you may need to find a different mask or make adjustments.

Do wear a mask that



- Covers your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Fits snugly against the sides of your face.

How NOT to wear a mask



Around your neck



On your forehead



Under your nose



Only on your nose



On your chin



Dangling from one ear



On your arm

How to take off a mask



①

Carefully, untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops



②

Handle only by the ear loops or ties



③

Fold the outside corners together



④

Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing and wash hands immediately after removing

How to Clean

Reusable masks should be washed whenever it gets dirty or at least daily. If you have a disposable face mask, throw it away after wearing it once. Always and [wash your hands](#) after handling or touching a used mask.



Using a washing machine



- Include your mask with your regular laundry.
- Use regular laundry detergent and the appropriate settings according to the fabric label.

By hand



- Wash your mask with tap water and laundry detergent or soap.
- Rinse thoroughly with clean water to remove detergent or soap.

Dry your mask

Dryer



- Dry your mask completely in a warm or hot dryer

By hand



- Hang your mask in direct sunlight to dry completely. If you cannot hang it in direct sunlight, hang or lay it flat and let it dry completely.

For information on the sources for our mask guidance, see [Recent Studies](#).

How to Store

Store wet or dirty masks in a plastic bag



If your mask is wet or dirty from sweat, saliva, make-up, or other liquids or substances, keep it in a sealed plastic bag until you can wash it. Wash wet or dirty masks as soon as possible to prevent them from becoming moldy. Wet masks can be hard to breathe through and are less effective than dry masks.

Store masks that are not wet or dirty in a paper bag



You can store your mask temporarily to reuse later. [Remove your mask correctly](#) and [wash your hands](#) after touching a used mask. Keep it in a dry, breathable bag (like a paper or mesh fabric bag) to keep it clean between uses. When reusing your mask, keep the same side facing out.

If you are taking off your mask to eat or drink outside of your home, you can place it somewhere safe to keep it clean, such as your pocket, purse, or paper bag. Make sure to wash or sanitize your hands after removing your mask. After eating, put the mask back on with the same side facing out. Be sure to wash or sanitize your hands again after putting your mask back on.