**eQuality-Pathways to Potential Covid-19 Pandemic Response**

**Action and Prevention Plan**

**Written April 2020**

**Purpose**

eQuality-Pathways to Potential is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all staff and associates. This Covid-19 Preparedness Plan details procedures to minimize hazards to human health as it relates to the Covid-19 Pandemic. eQuality staff are all responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of Covid-19 in our workplaces, which will require full cooperation among staff members. Only through this cooperative effort will we best establish and maintain the safety and health of our workers and workplaces. This document is prepared to describe implementation of precautionary and response measures to most safely and effectively execute work by eQuality employees and associates.

This Plan will be a living document, to be updated as often as new information regarding the Pandemic is released. This Plan attempts to capture specific actions, prevention plans, and procedures to address emergencies resulting from Covid-19. The provisions of the Plan will be implemented on-site and emergency action will be taken during any event that may threaten human health at any of the community sites where eQuality employees or clients are employed.

Because eQuality operations occur in the community, specific plans may also be developed to adhere to policies and procedures adopted by our business partners. These plans will be specific to business locations and associates who work therein.

Our Covid-19 Preparedness Plan follows CDC and MDH guidelines, federal OSHA standards related to Covid-19 and Executive Order 20-48, and addresses:

* Hygiene etiquette
* Social distancing guidelines
* Cleaning and disinfection guidelines
* Identification and isolation of sick persons
* Communication and training plan
* Management and supervision of protocols

This Action and Prevention Plan supplements the existing eQuality Safety and Emergency Response Policies.

eQuality will continue to assist individuals in exercising and protecting their rights as identified in Minnesota statutes, section [245D.04](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=245D.04). In addition, eQuality also recognizes the temporary modification to Minnesota statutes, section 245D.04 relating to service recipient rights during peacetime emergencies. Specifically, a person’s service-related rights include the right to:

(10) make an informed choice about whether to receive day services in the licensed facility/community or to “stay-at-home” and receive no day services or receive services remotely during the peacetime emergency to minimize their exposure to COVID-19. This right exists even if the person does not meet the definition of an “at-risk person” under Emergency Executive Order 20-55, paragraph 2.

**Screening for employees and associates**

eQuality strongly encourages any “at-risk” persons to consider staying home. “At-risk” is defined as individuals who are: 65 years and older, living in long-term care facility, immunocompromised; individuals with: chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma, serious heart conditions, severe obesity (BMI 40 or greater), diabetes, chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis or liver disease.

Staff have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Staff members experiencing symptoms have been instructed to remain at home and not come to workplaces. Parents and residential providers have also been asked to assist associates in monitoring for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Associates experiencing symptoms are instructed to remain at home as well.

Individuals will be allowed entry to eQuality vehicles and community sites according to the following guidelines.

* Employees who are able to perform their work remotely will do so.
* Support staff and associates who are employed at community sites will be monitored on an ongoing basis. The following criteria will be used to individually evaluate workplace safety:
  + If a staff member or associate tests positive for Covid-19 or has direct or indirect contact with someone who tests positive for Covid-19, current guidance states they should self-quarantine for 14 days. eQuality staff will notify residential staff if aware of potential exposure. eQuality staff will communicate with residential staff and request that potential exposure away from work are related to eQuality staff in a timely manner.

**Work Location Screening**

eQuality encourages residential staff and/or in-home supports to take clients temperatures Prior to entering eQuality work locations or vehicles, all employees and clients shall:

* Check in with eQuality staff upon initial arrival and BEFORE entering the eQuality vehicle or upon entering the work location, and
* Sanitize hands, and
* Complete Access Questionnaire, which includes a body temperature check (see Exhibit A), and
* Personnel with symptoms matching those with Covid-19 will not be granted access to the eQuality work location and/or vehicles. Residential providers will be contacted and the individual transported home.

Additional workforce management procedures shall include:

* As prescribed by eQuality business partners, face coverings may be required for the duration of the activity and transportation. The following mask types will be allowed, unless specified by individual business partners:
  + N95 respirator without exhaust valve
  + Cloth or medical masks
  + Employer supplied face covering (if applicable and available)
  + Employee supplied face covering approved by the Employer in the event other mask types listed are not available due to shortages
  + Staff will wear masks at all times while working with associates
* A 6-foot minimum distance shall be maintained whenever possible between all individuals while onsite.
* Guidelines for capacity within a business, or area within a business, will be maintained. Associates and staff will move about their work locations according to individual business plans and needs. These plans may be outlined in plans specific to individual work locations.
* All employees and associates (or residential providers) shall provide notice of any individual who develops symptoms or is confirmed for Covid-19 for up to 7 days following their work or recreation time spent through eQuality. If individuals are determined to have been potentially contagious while at the eQuality site, protocol for confirmed cases will be followed as laid out in this document.
* As possible, all community sites at which eQuality provides services shall provide notice of any employee or customer who develops symptoms or are confirmed for Covid-19 for up to 7 days following their visit to the community site. If individuals are determined to have been potentially contagious while at the community site, protocol for confirmed cases will be followed as laid out in this document.

**Work Location Procedures & Precautions**

The following are the procedures and precautionary measures that will be implemented in the work location to mitigate the transmission of Covid-19 to all personnel.

* Any individual presenting respiratory symptoms, fever, and/or meeting the criteria developed by eQuality to be categorized as a risk to human health, as it relates to Covid-19, will be denied access to the eQuality site and vehicles, kept away from other associates, and returned home. Affected individuals will be asked to proceed with recommended precautions and subject to a 14-day quarantine.
* Each individual entering the eQuality vehicle or community site shall complete the Access Questionnaire form prior to gaining access each day.
* Individuals will be required to take breaks, lunch, and meetings in assigned areas of their work or day service locations.
* All individuals will be required to participate in sanitizing tables, doorknobs, handles, and other common touch points used following each visit.
* In Farmers’ Market locations: individuals may not be able to follow social distancing guidelines. In such cases all staff and associates working at the market will wear face masks or coverings.

**Transportation**

eQuality associates may utilize assisted transportation through Metro Mobility services or residential providers and/or guardians may choose to independently transport clients to and from a service location. Metro Mobility follows and encourages its riders to follow guidelines outlined by state public health experts (<https://metrocouncil.org/About-Us/What-We-Do/COVID-19.aspx>). Metro Mobility requires all riders to sanitize their hands before entering the vehicle, wear a facemask at all times while on the vehicle, and offers diminished rider capacity on buses in order to maximize physical distance of riders on the vehicle. Additional precautions adopted by Metro Mobility include:

- Operators are allotted extra time to wipe down interior touch points with disinfectant after each passenger trip.

- On a daily basis, each bus is fully disinfected upon return to the garage.

- Operators are required to wear facemasks while escorting and securing riders.

In order to address social distancing and mitigation efforts, eQuality has adopted the following precautions when associates are transported in eQuality vehicles:

- A screening assessment (exhibit A) will be completed and documented on all associates and staff prior to boarding an eQuality vehicle

- The number of individuals riding in eQuality vehicles will be limited based on the size of vehicle and a seating chart utilized to maximize as much space as possible between all riders

- All associates and staff will sanitize their hands before entry of the vehicle

- Facemasks will be worn by all associates and staff during transportation

- A cohort approach will be followed in order to maintain as much consistency in which riders utilize each van

- Staff will offer frequent reminders and encouragement in order to minimize face touching

**Reporting Procedures & Confirmed Cases**

In the event of any of the following, reporting and response policies will be followed to minimize exposure and transmission of Covid-19. Notification of any of these events shall be conducted immediately.

* A confirmed case of Covid-19 for a client, employee, or person living with a client or employee
* An individual is denied access to an eQuality vehicle or community site or removed from the site for fever or symptoms associated with Covid-19
* Notice of an individual being otherwise impacted by Covid-19

The reporting procedure is as follows:

* All of the following eQuality leadership shall be immediately notified:
  + Executive Director
  + Director
  + Jobsite Supervisor (Coordinator)

In the event of a positively confirmed or suspected case of Covid-19:

* If the affected person is offsite, the affected person will be instructed to stay home and will not be allowed onsite.
* If the affected person had been onsite in the last 48 hours, protocols below for “onsite affected person” will also be implemented.
  + The affected person will immediately be removed from the site premises
  + eQuality staff will gain an understanding of potential locations and individuals the affected person had been in contact with over the last 5 days through a phone conversation with the individual or the individual’s residential provider/guardian.
  + All individuals who had prolonged close contact (less than 6 feet apart for more than 10 min per day) with positively tested person within the last 48 hours will be removed from site as well and will self-monitor for symptoms of Covid-19 for 14 days prior to being allowed back on site, symptom free.
  + eQuality staff and associates will cooperate fully with the work location to ensure that any impacted area of the location is adequately disinfected.
  + After the disinfection has been completed, individuals determined to not have been exposed can continue working onsite so long as it does not impact sanitizing efforts.
  + If an eQuality vehicle is involved, the vehicle will be thoroughly disinfected and remain unused for five days.
* Confirmed and suspected cases may attempt to return to the eQuality community site with the following criteria:
  + No fever within 72 hours (without the use of fever reducing medication), and
  + At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
  + In the case of a positive case, MDH will be notified and consulted.

**Best Practices Being Continuously Implemented at eQuality Workplaces**

* **Encourage sick employees and associates to stay home:** Anyone with symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath) should notify their supervisor and stay home
* **Social Distancing:**  Avoid congregating, large gatherings, and whenever possible maintain a minimum distance of approximately 6 feet from others. During breaks or activities and workplace tasks, individuals will be situated at least six feet apart. When necessary for personal care or behavioral support, staff may be within six feet of associates. When this is necessary applicable PPEs will be used.
* **Meetings:** Larger meetings will continue to be held through Zoom or another virtual meeting provider
* **Mobile Devices/Shared Computers:** Mobile devices and computers will not be shared by anyone and should be sanitized before and after each visit to the site.
* **Lunch/Break:**
  + All individuals must maintain a distance of 6 feet from other individuals while eating lunch or taking breaks.
  + **No communal food shall be permitted on the jobsite until further notice (donuts, pizza, potluck, etc.**)
* **Hygiene:** The following items will be implemented at eQuality sites:
  + Common areas will be cleaned and sanitized daily
  + Workers responsible for trash removal will maintain proper PPE/hand washing practices
  + Handwash stations will be maintained with soap, hand sanitizer, and paper towels. In addition to upon arrival, associates will wash hands before and after breaks and meals, use of restroom, when removing gloves, and before leaving for the day.
  + Staff and associates have been instructed to cover their mouths and noses with their sleeves or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and to avoid touching their faces, in particular mouths, noses, and eyes, with their hands. Immediately afterward they should dispose of tissues into the trash and wash or sanitize their hands. Staff and associates will receive trainings via video and posters will be on site when possible.
  + All individuals on site will be expected to participate in extra cleanings for frequently touched surfaces (light switches, tables, chairs, door handles, etc.) Fresh air will be incorporated as much as possible.
* **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**
  + Do not share PPE.
  + Sanitize reusable PPE per manufacturer’s recommendation before and after each use.
  + Ensure used PPE is disposed of properly.

**Communication and Training**

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan was provided to all staff and associates and necessary training was provided. Additional communication and training will be ongoing in person and via video and provided to all if and when the plan is changed or amended. All new staff and associates will receive training as part of orientation. eQuality’s COVID-19 Preparedness Plan will be posted on our website and available to staff and persons receiving services. A copy of this plan is offered to each person receiving services, their legal representative(s), and their case manager.

Plan Distributed on:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Title

**Access Questionnaire**

**EMPLOYEE/ ASSOCIATE SCREENING**

For the safety and security of our employees,

**EVERYONE must answer the questions below**

in order to enter an eQuality vehicle or community site.

1. Have you been within 6 feet for 10 minutes or more of someone diagnosed with Covid-19 in the last 14 days?
2. Do you live with someone who has been diagnosed with Covid-19 and is under quarantine?
3. Client’s current temperature? (eQuality staff will take client’s temperature and record number. Client temperature found to be at or above 100.4 degrees F must be isolated and residential providers contacted in order have client transported home.)
4. In the last 3 days, have you experienced any cold or flu-like symptoms, including: **fever at or above 100.4 degrees F, cough, sore throat, respiratory illness, or difficulty breathing**? (Not associated with allergies and not treated by a doctor where a return-to-work release was issued.)

Questions must be answered **each time** you enter.