

Recommendations for Phase 1 Weatherization Activities

This document contains recommendations for Montana Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) sub-grantees, during Phase-1 of the post COVID-19 reopening process. This guidance is in line with the Governor's Directive for a phased reopening of Montana, which was developed to protect the health and safety of all Montanans.

The intent of this document is not to mandate any one specific approach, rather to present information and resources for consideration in the development of regionally and locally appropriate, agency specific COVID-19 protocols. The focus of this document will be specific to Weatherization activities.

Agencies should continue to assess the conditions in their jurisdictions and modify their approach(s) accordingly. As with prior Directives from the Governor's office, nothing in this Directive prohibits local public health authorities from adopting more restrictive approaches based on local need. County Health office contact information for the state can be found here:

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/FCSS/countytribalhealthdepts>

NOTE: NorthWestern Energy has continued the suspension of weatherization work until further notice. Homes funded with NorthWestern Energy Free Weatherization funds cannot be worked at this time.

Guidance Applicable to All Phases of Resuming Activities/Re-opening offices:

- Per OSHA guidance, programs and/or agencies are encouraged to develop written Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plans that address level(s) of risk associated with various worksites and job tasks workers perform at those sites. Please see the attached "Guidance for Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19" document for additional details and resources.
- A specific cleaning plan must be implemented, and employees must be trained in proper sanitation practices. Reference materials will be available on the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) food and consumer services website. Although WAP workers are well trained in the use of PPE, WAP managers are encouraged to train on COVID specific jobsite practices, as well as ensure that respirator fit tests are current. Please keep an eye out for online COVID related trainings and PPE refreshers from the Weatherization Training Center (WTC) as well as other reputable training sources.
- Individuals should continue to practice good hygiene by adhering the following guidelines:
 - Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, especially after touching frequently used items or surfaces.
 - Avoid touching your face.
 - Sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the inside of your elbow.
 - Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible.
 - Strongly consider using non-medical face coverings while in public, especially in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing (e.g., grocery/retail stores, pharmacies, public transportation).
- People who feel sick should stay at home.
 - Do not go to work or school.
 - Contact and follow the advice of your medical provider.

- Follow local health department guidance on isolation and quarantine.
- ALL VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS should continue to follow the stay home guidance. Members of households with vulnerable residents should be aware that by returning to work or other environments where distancing is not practical, they could carry the virus back home. Precautions should be taken to isolate from vulnerable residents.
 - Vulnerable Individuals: people over 65 years of age and/or those with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune system is compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy.
- Unrelated individuals (non-household) should maximize physical distance from others when in public.

Phase One: Employers should:

- Implement health assessments including temperature checks and/or symptom screening for all employees at the beginning of each shift.
- Continue to encourage telework for appropriate positions whenever possible. Employers are encouraged to accommodate alternative work schedules such as shift work and staggered scheduling in order to adhere to social distancing guidelines (office and shop/warehouse staff).
- Close common areas in offices and shop areas where personnel are likely to congregate and interact or enforce strict social distancing protocols.
- Identify and address Phase-1 jobsite and office/shop practices in your written Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plan. Policies should be informed by industry best practices and in deference to Federal, State, and local regulations and guidance. Basic provisions will include engineering, administrative and PPE based controls including but not limited to:
 - Social distancing and protective equipment.
 - Sanitation.
 - Use and disinfection of common and high-traffic areas.
 - Monitor workforce for indicative symptoms. Do not allow people with symptoms of COVID-19 to work.
 - Collaborate with public health when implementing policies and procedures for workforce contact tracing following an employee COVID+ test.
 - Include routine, daily disinfecting of equipment and tools being used in the field. When choosing cleaning chemicals, consult information in the EPA approved disinfectant labels with claims against viral pathogens. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for use of all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, PPE).

Prepare & Implement Changes to Field Work:

- Training and equipping all field workers with PPE and how to properly use it, remove it and clean it to avoid contamination of self and others. Examples of PPE include gloves, goggles, face shields and masks, N95 filtering respirators.
- Provide sanitary wipes to crews that can be used to clean surfaces in client homes both before and after they are performing work. See the EPA list of disinfectants for use against SARS-CoV-2.
- Ensure all vehicles and crew members are equipped with hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

- Consider prioritizing the completion of all exterior work first, and then address the interior work in the client home..
- Try to reduce the number of crew and clients in the home at the time of interior work, consider asking clients if they would leave the home during the interior work or try to isolate them to one room.
- Consider establishing a policy that crews conducting interior work will wear PPE, this may also help assure clients who are fearful of people entering their home.
- Consider offering face masks to clients to contain respiratory secretions.
- Consider installing a physical barrier, such as a clear sheet of plastic, to isolate a client while interior work is being conducted. Consult the OSHA guidance document on best practices regarding engineering, administrative and PPE based controls
- One driver per vehicle per day, disinfect the drivers controls after use.
- Create Inventory checklist for field crew: Is there adequate inventory for the following categories before going into the field?
 - ✓ Sanitary Wipes
 - ✓ Respirators
 - ✓ N95 face masks
 - ✓ Gloves
 - ✓ Tyvek Suits
 - ✓ Booties
 - ✓ Paper towels
 - ✓ Hand soap
 - ✓ Hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol
 - ✓ Cleaners
 - ✓ Client education materials
 - ✓ Client face masks

Client Interaction:

- Screen customers prior to each day's activities:
 1. Has anyone in the household tested positive for COVID-19? If so, how long ago?
 2. Is anyone in your household experiencing fever, cough or shortness of breath in the last two weeks?
 3. Has anyone in your household been in contact with someone who has had a fever, cough or shortness of breath in the last two weeks?
 4. Has anyone in your household returned from travelling out of the state or the country in the past two weeks?
 5. Consider using the COVID-19 self-screening tool to help determine if clients should be serviced or deferred for a period. Check your risk for COVID-19 - <https://c19check.com/start>
 6. Explain safety/preventative measures procedures followed by weatherization workers when visiting the home.
 7. Ask the client whether they are comfortable with workers coming to the home at this time or if they believe the job should be deferred until a later date. Explain that deferral will cause the weatherization job to be worked back into the schedule at a later date.

- For symptoms of fever, shortness of breath or a cough. Customers that have any of these symptoms must be rescheduled.
 - Defer Wx job. Use CDS EA Deferral reason COVID-19
 - Mail copy of Deferral Notice to client (with worker sign-off)
- Utilize a face mask for staff and for customers when practical.
- If workers arrive at a site and determine a client is exhibiting respiratory illness defer the home for a period to ensure worker safety.
 - Defer Wx job. Use CDS EA Deferral reason COVID-19
 - Mail copy of Deferral Notice to client (with worker sign-off)

.ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 - OSHA3990
<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>
- County Health Department Lookup:
<https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/FCSS/countytribalhealthdepts>
- COVID-19 Checklist for Employers and Employees
 Source: North American Home Builders - <https://www.nahb.org/Advocacy/Industry-Issues/Emergency-Preparedness-and-Response/Coronavirus-Preparedness/Protect-Your-Business/Construction-Jobsite-Safety-Recommendations>