

2020 Health Guidance for Polling Places

This guidance is for city clerks preparing and managing polling places during the COVID-19 pandemic based on recommendations from MDH and the MN Secretary of State's Office.

Preparing for election day

- Promote absentee voting by mail as much as possible to reduce potential foot traffic through polling place.
 - Consider promoting and expanding the use of curbside voting to reduce potential foot traffic through the polling place.
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Polling place setup

- Election Judges wear cloth face mask when unable to maintain 6 ft. distance.
- Election Judges wear gloves when handling or exchanging materials.
- Place plexiglass shields at each judge duty station.
- Separate each judge duty station by at least 6 ft.
 - Separate each individual poll book by at least 6 ft.
- Separate voting booths and tables for marking ballots by at least 6 ft.
- Mark 6 ft. increments on ground or floor to ensure social distancing for voters while waiting in line in the polling place.
 - Use colored tape, chalk, etc.
 - Use stanchions, cones, or other tools to guide voters.
- Use different doors for voting room entry and exit.
- Set up hand sanitizer stations at the entrance and exit to the voting room.
- Set up self-service "I Voted" sticker station.

During voting hours

For sanitizing surfaces, poll books, AutoMARK, and ballot counter, we recommend using Clorox Wipes, Lysol Wipes or other wipe with 70% alcohol content.

- Election Judges wear cloth face mask when unable to maintain 6 ft. distance.
- Election Judges wear gloves when handling or exchanging materials.
- If possible, offer face mask to voters as needed.
- Ensure voters maintain distance of at least 6 ft. from others while in the polling place.
 - Assign a Greeter Judge to ensure this protocol is followed.
 - Limit the number of people in the polling place at the same time.
 - Exception: Voters will need to be within 6 ft. of Election Judges while working with them at duty stations or while receiving assistance.
 - Consider use of surgical mask, eye protection, and gloves during extended interactions (more than a few seconds).
- Poll books
 - Each Election Judge uses their own stylus(es).
 - Do not use the ID scan function of the poll book.
 - Do not allow voters to touch the poll book.
 - Sanitize stylus after use by a voter.
 - Sanitize poll books after use with disinfecting wipes.
- Sanitize voting booths, tables, and other surfaces voters are using to mark their ballot after use by a voter.
- Sanitize the AutoMARK screen, buttons, and ballot feed with disinfecting wipes after use by a voter.
- Sanitize ballot counter ballot feed with disinfecting wipes often

Sources

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
 - List of disinfectants for use against COVID-19: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - Recommendations for Election Polling Locations: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/election-polling-locations.html>
- Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)
 - Guidance on when to wear a mask: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html#mask>
- Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State
 - Elections and COVID-19: <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/election-administration-campaigns/elections-calendar/2020-elections-and-covid-19/>
- Election Systems & Software (ES&S)
 - COVID-19 best practices for cleaning and disinfecting ES&S equipment: https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/electionofficials/coronavirus/ESS_BestPractices_Cleaning_Disinfecting.pdf
- Apple
 - Disinfecting Apple products: https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT204172?mod=article_inline