Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement

Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

Driver and Vehicle Services

Emergency Communication Networks

Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Minnesota State Patrol

Office of Communications

Office of Justice Programs

Office of Pipeline Safety

Office of Traffic Safety

State Fire Marshal

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SEOC Update #18: Visit State's COVID-19 Website for the Latest Information and Updates

ST. PAUL — Minnesotans looking for the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak are reminded to visit the state's COVID-19 website. The site includes case data from the Minnesota Department of Health, response and preparation information, and Minnesota modeling data.

The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) is fully activated to support all state agencies with their COVID-19 response following Gov. Walz's March 13 executive order issuing a Peacetime State of Emergency in response to the nationwide pandemic.

SEOC continues alternate care facility planning

The SEOC remains fully activated and staffed either physically or virtually by all state agencies and several volunteer organizations.

- SEOC officials are finalizing plans for alternate care facilities should they become necessary. Staff are ranking possible sites and planning for staffing and stocking the facilities if they are activated.
- Officials are coordinating delivery of personal protective equipment (PPE) across the state. PPE needs continue to be assessed and prioritized.
- The SEOC continues to plan for non-congregate care. Planning includes how to best care for those experiencing homelessness and those who may live in close quarters, such as an apartment, and how they can self-isolate if they test positive for COVID-19.
- Planning continues for social distancing in the SEOC. Staff in some positions are now working remotely.
- The SEOC is supporting the state hotline. The hotline received 160 calls on April 9. State employees are staffing the hotline and are answering calls from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily at either 651-297-1304 or 800-657-3504.

Here are today's updates and actions from state agencies and volunteer organizations:

As Minnesota flood concerns rise, flood insurance policy renewal deadline is extended

To help serve National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) customers who may be experiencing financial hardships due to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, FEMA is extending the grace period to renew flood insurance policies from 30 to 120 days.

- The extension applies to NFIP flood insurance policies with an expiration date between Feb. 13 and June 15, 2020.
- For more information about renewing flood insurance policies or resolving an underpayment, policyholders can contact their insurance carriers or call the National Flood Insurance Program Call Center at 877-336-2627.

New emergency food support website launched

The Minnesota Department of Human Services launched an emergency food support website page today in response to the many Minnesotans who are finding themselves without adequate food for themselves and their families, maybe for the first time, due to COVID-19 pandemic.

- The site links to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which can help families buy food while budgets are tight.
- Fill out an application online. After applying online, most applicants must complete a phone interview with a county or tribal human service office.
- For help applying or additional food resources, contact the Food Helpline at 888-711-1151 or visit Hunger Solutions.

State fire marshal working with chiefs association to ensure adequate fire department staffing

Minnesota State Fire Marshal Division staff are working closely with the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association COVID Task Force to monitor staffing and mutual aid around the state to ensure adequate staffing at fire departments.

Minnesota granted flexibility on existing federal funding for schools

Minnesota has received approval for a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education to help provide relief for schools on some fiscal and program requirements of existing federal Title program funding. The waiver will allow Minnesota to:

- Approve a district or charter school to carry more than 15 percent of its Title I, Part A funds into next year, even if such a waiver has been granted in the previous three years.
- Extend the period of availability of FY 2018 funds for programs included in Minnesota's consolidated ESSA State Plan to allow additional time to use those funds.
- Permit a district, charter school, or consortium of districts to use Title IV, Part A funds to meet needs without regard to content-area spending requirements, spending limits on technology infrastructure, or completing a needs assessment.
- Allow districts and schools to use professional development funds to conduct time-sensitive, one-time or stand-alone training focused on supporting educators in providing effective distance learning.

Guidance for districts and charter schools will be published to the MDE COVID-19 Updates web page by the end of the day on Friday, April 10, 2020, and we will continue to add guidance as we learn more. More information about the waiver is available on the MDE website.

More than 700 people out of isolation

- 1,336 lab-confirmed cases in Minnesota — up 94 cases from April 9.
- 57 reported deaths — up seven from April 9.
- 143 patients are currently hospitalized with 64 in the ICU; 732 patients out of isolation.
- Learn more about the latest lab-diagnosed cases on the COVID-19 public dashboard.

Red Cross: Blood and platelets donors will need to wear face mask or covering

- Through the generosity of donors in Minnesota and across the country, the Red Cross is meeting the immediate needs of patients. Blood and platelet donations are by appointment only at donation centers and sponsored drives.
- In accordance with revised CDC guidelines, starting April 15 blood donors will be required to wear a face mask or covering while donating blood or platelets. If donors do not have one, then the Red Cross will provide one. If they do not want to wear one, they will be asked to postpone their donation.
- This is the time to take care of one another. If you are healthy and feeling well, please make an appointment to donate in the weeks ahead by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org or calling 800-RED CROSS (800-733-2767).

Traffic volumes rise but remain significantly below 2019 levels

The Minnesota Department of Transportation continues to monitor traffic volumes statewide.

- Metro area: Traffic volumes on April 9 were down 35 percent compared to Thursday averages for April 2019.
- Statewide: Traffic volumes on April 9 were down 31 percent compared to Thursday averages for April 2019.

Grace period extended for Sales and Use Tax payments

The Minnesota Department of Revenue is extending the Sales and Use Tax grace period on Sales and Use Tax payments for businesses identified in Executive Order 20-04. Identified businesses with a monthly Sales and Use Tax payment due March 20, 2020, will now have until May 20, 2020, to make that payment. Identified businesses with a monthly or quarterly Sales and Use Tax payment due April 20, 2020, will now have until May 20, 2020, to make that payment. The department will not assess penalties or interest during this time. These businesses should still file their returns by the due dates but do not have to make payments until May 20, 2020.