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 #4: State Agency COVID-19 Response Actions

ST. PAUL — Staff from state agencies and volunteer organizations continue working to keep Minnesotans safe and coordinate efforts to provide essential services and information during the COVID-19 pandemic. The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) was activated to support state agencies with their COVID-19 response following Gov. Tim Walz's executive order issuing a Peacetime State of Emergency in response to the pandemic.

SEOC Activity

Staff from all state agencies, along with volunteer organizations, are staffing the SEOC either physically or virtually.

- The SEOC continues to work on locating personal protective equipment (PPE) for medical staff and first responders.
- Regional coordinators are in touch with emergency managers from all Minnesota counties to assess their needs.
- FEMA Region V is fully activated and SEOC staff are in daily contact with FEMA for any logistical needs of the state.
- The SEOC is concentrating on supporting the public hotline.
    - The hotline continues to field questions regarding business and school closures and child care.
    - Staff from the departments of Education and Human Services 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:

Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)

Global/National Update

- Worldwide: Nearly 352,000 cases and 15,300 deaths.
- U.S.: 35,241 cases (NY: 16,916; WA: 1,996; NJ: 1,914; CA: 1,816 MI: 1,050; FL: 1,007) and 473 deaths.

Minnesota Update

- Total of 235 lab-confirmed cases in Minnesota – up 169 cases from March 22.
    - Since the start of the outbreak, 21 patients in Minnesota have been hospitalized.
        - 12 patients currently hospitalized, five of whom are in intensive care.
        - The rest of the patients are recovering at home.
        - This total of 235 reflects only the results from laboratory testing.
- MDH believes there are more cases in Minnesota, and that the virus is circulating in communities.
    - It is important for everyone to follow advice on community mitigation and social distancing to help flatten the case curve.

Outreach and Actions

- 744 calls to the MDH public hotline March 22. The public hotline is open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. The number is 651-201-3920.
- More than 602,600 visits March 22 to the MDH COVID-19 website.

American Red Cross Minnesota Region

We face a severe blood shortage due to an unprecedented number of blood drive cancellations. Through March 22, nearly 6,000 Red Cross blood drives have been canceled across the country, resulting in more than 200,000 fewer blood donations.

- In the Minnesota and Dakotas region, more than 200 blood drives have been canceled, resulting in about 6,800 fewer blood donations. Appointments are booking several days out at redcrossblood.org.
- In close coordination with response partners, such as the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), we are adapting our methods of responding to assist those in need during disasters, including home fires, our most common disaster.
- Our Sound the Alarm and Home Fire Campaign smoke alarm installations have been paused and will resume when it is safe to do so.

Minnesota Department of Commerce

The Minnesota Department of Commerce is releasing a consumer alert related to the security of bank and credit unions, urging people not to withdraw large amounts of cash from ATMs or financial institution.

- The alert calls for calm and warns against large cash withdraws.
- It notes that money at home can be stolen, lost or damaged. However, money in a bank or credit union is secure.
- It reminds consumers that their deposits are secured though the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation for banks, and the National Credit Union Association for credit unions, up to $250,000

Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC)

- DOC is committed to maintaining as much access to programming in the facilities as possible while adjusting schedules and staffing to protect staff and inmate health. Each facility is developing unique plans for how to make that happen while minimizing risk.
- DOC has been analyzing its population and living situations to spread the population, minimize new intakes, and better protect those inmates who are medically more at risk.
- Inmates families and loved ones, and other members of the public can submit questions to the department and receive updates through an FAQ. Emails can be sent to DOCCommunityinfo@state.mn.us and the FAQ is posted here: https://mn.gov/doc/about/covid-19-updates/updates-for-inmate-families/

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)

- DEED is creating an emergency loan program to help Minnesota small business owners who need immediate assistance to meet their families' basic needs during COVID-19 closures.
    - The loan program was created under the Small Business Assistance Executive Order 20-15 announced by Gov. Walz on March 23.
    - The loan program is intended to help businesses temporarily closed under Executive Order 20-04, later clarified by Executive Order 20-08, which stopped onsite customer dining at restaurants and bars and closed an extensive list of other small businesses whose owners may not have adequate cash flow to withstand temporary closure.

Minnesota Housing

- Gov. Walz issued Emergency Executive Order #20-14 today suspending evictions and Writs of Recovery during the COVID-19 peacetime emergency. The emergency executive order provides a temporary moratorium on the majority of eviction actions (rental and post-foreclosure evictions) through the Peacetime Emergency for these households so that they remain stably housed as they safeguard the health of themselves, their families, and other Minnesotans to slow the community spread of COVID-19.
    - This order does not relieve renters' and homeowners' obligations to make payments.
    - Minnesota Housing is the assigned agency to coordinate the order.
    - A summary overview and FAQ document are available on Minnesota Housing's website.

Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS)

- DHS has posted a list of all waivers and modifications to human services programs and services currently in effect: https://mn.gov/dhs/waivers-and-modifications/
- Under Gov. Tim Walz's Executive Orders 20-11 and 20-12, DHS has temporary authority to waive or modify requirements so that the agency and its partners can continue to provide essential programs and services to Minnesotans safely and without undue delay during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI)

- Minnesota worker protections related to COVID-19 regarding sick leave, family medical leave, discrimination, reporting health concerns at work, unemployment

insurance and workers' compensation are on DLI's website at https://www.dli.mn.gov/updates.
- DLI is providing guidance to municipalities about continuing inspection services and help to contractors who are having trouble getting inspections www.dli.mn.gov/inspections.
- View COVID-19 related resources, information from Minnesota OSHA Compliance at www.dli.mn.gov/business/workplace-safety-and-health/mnosha-compliance-novel-coronavirus-covid-19.
- All other agency updates related to COVID-19 are at www.dli.mn.gov/updates.

Minnesota Department of Military Affairs/Minnesota National Guard (MNNG)

- The MNNG supported transport and transfer of personal protective equipment with two Logistic Support Missions from Camp Ripley to the Minnesota Department of Health including:
    - 81,336 N95 masks
    - 17,296 pandemic flu kits of various sizes
    - 1,153 each Tyvek coveralls
    - 2,265 boots
    - 2,263 pairs of gloves
    - 1,941 rolls of duct tape
    - 2,476 respirator bags (no respirators) to MDH warehouse
- The 148th Fighter Wing in Duluth Minnesota will deliver a FORTS (fold out building) to support St. Louis County this week. This asset will allow the county to expand space available for their Emergency Operations Center in order to comply with CDC protocols for social distancing while conducting their mission
- We are expanding our support to the Minnesota Department of Health by providing a logistic planning cell to assist in the further distribution of equipment
- The Minnesota National Guard Joint Operations Center is running extended hour operations in support of COVID-19 planning efforts and preparing for additional requests.
- Coordinating with State Emergency Management Office and supporting State EOC operations with Liaison officer support using Full-time personnel

Minnesota Department of Public Safety

State Fire Marshal Division (SFMD)

- The SFMD is developing safe-heating guidelines for temporary medical tents and structures used during the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines will be distributed to health care providers, local fire code officials, and tent, heater and LP gas supply companies.

Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)

- MnDOT continues to monitor traffic volumes. As of March 22, we have seen a 39 percent drop in traffic volumes statewide.
- MnDOT has begun using its changeable message signs to share COVID-19 messages and encourage Minnesota to stay home.
- Rest areas remain open statewide.

Minnesota Department of Revenue

- Minnesota Department of Revenue has announced that taxpayers filing their annual Minnesota Individual Income Tax return for tax year 2019 now have until Wednesday, July 15, 2020, to file and make their payments without any penalties or interest.
- Both the IRS and Revenue will accept federal and state 2019 individual income tax returns and payments through July 15, 2020, without assessing penalties or interest.

Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs

- The Department of Veterans Affairs has established a COVID-19 information line for families of Minnesota veterans homes residents.
    - They can call this number any time to hear a recorded message from an MDVA leader who will provide the latest general updates. The message will be

updated every day.

- The numbers are: 651-797-1599 OR 1-833-454-0147.
- This number does not accept messages. If families have specific questions about a resident, they should call the Minnesota veterans home directly and speak to their care team.
- We believe this phone line will provide a convenient way for families to stay updated and connected to the Minnesota Veterans Homes.