

GUIDELINES/PROCEDURES FOR STEP, INC. WORKERS

Revised August 31, 2017

Table of Contents

Planning and Hiring Practices	3 & 4
Job Expectations	4 & 5
Payroll and Wages	5 & 6
Leaves	6 & 7
Grievance Procedure	7 & 8

PLANNING FOR WORK AND HIRING PRACTICES

When a person starts services and at least annually thereafter, STEP will work with the person and their team to determine the person's choice for the type and scope of services that are requested. STEP will share with the person and their legal representative information about Minnesota's Employment First policy as part of making a choice as to what services they choose to request. For people that choose employment, the possibility of competitive, integrated employment will be explored first. STEP will work with the person, their legal representative and the case manager or funding source to plan for the support needed to look for a job in the community and for on-going support for a job.

When a person wants to ask for support to change their job or other services, the person or their legal representative should talk to their designated coordinator at STEP. The coordinator will work with STEP personnel and other team members to plan for changes. The request can be made at the meetings for service reviews or at any other time throughout the year.

STEP will comply with the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). As part of those requirements, each person who may be paid under a sub-minimum wage certificate will speak within 6 months of that employment with a representative from Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development to discuss choices for employment. The person's legal representative will also speak with this representative and complete a documented form. This process will also occur yearly following the initial review.

Each individual who may be engaged in work that is paid through STEP, Inc. will complete the necessary paperwork. This information may be shared with potential employers as part of job development.

As part of an initial assessment and yearly afterwards, the program coordinator assigned to the person will determine the interests of the worker. The worker or their

representative will participate in this process to assure that personal interests are acknowledged when job placement occurs.

JOB EXPECTATIONS

Customer satisfaction is the primary responsibility of everyone working for STEP, Inc. Because of this basic belief, it is important that the following Job Expectations be followed.

Attendance/Punctuality: Regular attendance and punctuality ensure even, efficient handling of daily business. If you must be late, notify the STEP, Inc. office that you attend so other workers can be scheduled for your job or other arrangements can be made. If you are going to be absent, request time off as far in advance as possible. In case of an emergency or sudden illness, contact STEP, Inc. immediately.

Hours of work will vary according to your assigned office or community job site and the requirements of the specific job. Community Based/Supported Employment hours may include nights, weekends and holidays. Job assignments will be made consistent with the employee's individual service plan and with production needs. A written notice in the communication book or a phone call will be made if there is a work schedule change.

Equipment: Tools and equipment necessary for the completion of contract work will be provided for you to be employed. You may be required to provide specialized clothing or machines if any other worker at STEP, Inc. cannot use these items.

Work Expectations: Standards and Rules of Conduct are established for efficient operation and the assurance of good service to our customers. These rules are not meant to restrict your rights but to establish clear expectations of work behavior and to help you work well with others. Violation of the following may cause disciplinary action.

- Smoking in non-designated areas
- Excessive personal visitors and telephone calls
- Improper work attire/hygiene
- Stealing
- Inappropriate social interactions
- Excessive tardiness/absenteeism

- Excessive accidents or breakage
- Entrance to prohibited areas or use of prohibited materials
- Violation of work site rules established by the employer
- Frequent unexcused absences
- Intentional misuse or abuse of equipment

Disciplinary Actions may include:

1. Written or verbal reprimands with documentation
2. Removal from the job temporarily
3. Removal from the job and a meeting of the Interdisciplinary Team to discuss the problem.
4. Termination from the job.

These disciplinary actions are not progressive. Termination can occur after the first problem if that is appropriate.

WAGES AND PAYROLL

Wages at STEP, Inc. are paid in several different ways. Wages may be paid by STEP, Inc. for individuals who work on community crews or contracted work. In that case, the worker is on our payroll and we are responsible for all payroll taxes. These paychecks are distributed according to STEP's published payroll schedule. These wages are figured on an hourly basis with the hours worked, all deductions, and net pay listed on the check stub.

For some STEP jobs, the wages are figured on a per piece basis. STEP staff are responsible for daily recording of time and production. Depending on the speed of the individual working, the work may be paid at a rate less than the minimum wage. These wages are governed by the Department of Labor Standards and are covered under a Sub-minimum Wage Certificate that is issued to STEP, Inc. All time studies and related work documents are available for the client and/or their representative to review. These wages are included in checks issued by STEP.

For those individuals hired directly by an employer, the individual will follow the employer's policies and procedures. As needed and according to the person's plan, STEP,

Inc. staff will assist the client at the job site with accurately completing all necessary payroll functions so that they get paid properly. These payments are done according to the established schedule of each employer.

STEP, Inc. does experience times of work shortages. During these times additional non-work activities are implemented.

LEAVES

For individuals that are paid by STEP, only actual days or hours worked will be paid. Any time of that is taken will be without pay.

Days Off: STEP, Inc. facilities will be closed for the following days. New Year's Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas, between Christmas and New Year's Day, and other days as shown on the published schedule.

Although facility services will be closed on these days, individuals may be requested to work at community job sites. Written notice using the communication book or a phone call will be used to notify you if you are scheduled to work.

If any of the holidays fall on a Saturday or Sunday, the preceding Friday or following Monday will be observed as a holiday. Holidays are unpaid.

Vacations: When requesting vacation, please notify the site manager where you work using the communication book or a phone call. Please notify them as soon as possible so they can arrange other workers to cover you when you're gone.

Sick Days: If you are sick, please do not come to work. You may spread your illness to others and then they will have to miss work also. Notify STEP, Inc. by 8:00 A.M. or before your transportation pick-up time so staffing and transportation adjustments can be made if necessary. If you become sick during the day, STEP will make the arrangements for you to be taken home.

For planned or unplanned absences, we would ask that the person or their caregiver not only notify STEP, Inc. but also the provider of transportation if that is someone other than STEP, Inc.

Funeral Leave: Clients will be granted time to attend funerals of members of their immediate family. The suggested length of these funeral leaves is up to 5 days. Please notify the Site Manager so that staffing and transportation changes can be made.

Immediate family refers to the client's parents, siblings, and grandparents.

Medical Appointments: It is preferred that medical appointments are scheduled before or after client work hours. Production demands, fiscal constraints, and staffing patterns require that workers have an uninterrupted day on the job.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

This procedure is meant to help individuals served by STEP, Inc. when the individual, the guardian, friend, family member or residential provider has a problem with something that is going on at work or with STEP, Inc.

The purpose of this procedure is to make sure the individual knows who to tell the problem to and how to get the problem fixed.

The individual can get someone to help them, tell STEP, Inc. about the problem, such as a staff, advocate, friend, brother, sister, or parent.

These are the steps to take to solve the problem:

1. When there is a problem, talk to your supervisor first and the supervisor of the site.
2. If you don't like the answer your supervisor gives you, talk to the site manager or coordinator.
3. If you don't like the answer the site manager or coordinator gives you, write down the problem and give it to the Executive Director within 30 days of the incident. Be sure the letter has the date and your name on it. If you need someone to help you write it down, ask a staff, a friend, or an advocate, case manager, family member or someone you live with at home.
4. The Executive Director will answer you within 14 days.
5. If you don't like the Director's answer, within 5 days send a copy of your letter about the problem to the Chairperson of the Board so the appropriate committee of the Board can review it. The Committee will send you a letter within 14 days that says how they think the problem can be solved.

6. If you don't like the Committee's answer, ask that your letter be given to the full Board of Directors. The Board will meet with you and anyone you would like to represent you within 20 days. They will give you an answer in writing in 14 days after the meeting.
7. Other people that may be able to assist you include the Office of the Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities at 651 757-1800 or 1 800 657-3506 or the Minnesota Disability Law Center at mndlc@mylegalaid.org.

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for STEP, Inc.

STEP, Inc. is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our workers, and to provide services in a safe and healthy way for both the people receiving services and STEP employees. To ensure that, we have developed the following Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. All employees are responsible for implementing and following through in this plan. Our goal is to minimize the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our workplaces and services. This plan will continue to change as there are new development and discoveries in the course of the COVID-19 virus. Through the cooperative effort of staff, clients, caregivers and others involved we hope to maintain the safety and health of our employees, clients and others involved with STEP. This plan follows guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Guidelines, the Minnesota Department of Labor (DOL) and federal OSHA standards as it relates to the COVID-19. The plan also adheres to the new licensing requirements of the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) as issued May 29, 2020 and June 18, 2020 and effective at least through the State of Minnesota peacetime emergency.

Planning for Services

Services will be planned on an individual basis, with input and consensus from an individual client's team, including the person receiving services, their legal representatives, case managers, other residential caregivers and STEP staff. Planning will be based on the current requirements of the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the individual's wishes, needs and plans as determined by the team. Plans will take into consideration any additional needs for health and safety that the person may have due to the Covid 19 pandemic, including the person's status as an "at-risk person". Planning will include any additional strategies beyond the general preparedness plan that may be necessary due to the individual's status. The plan will also include consideration of the individual's service related right to make an informed choice about whether to receive day services in the facility, community or remotely during the peacetime emergency, or to receive no day services.

General plans for Covid 19 Preparedness will include

- Remote Work When Possible
- Screening for Covid 19/Other Illness
- Handwashing and Hygiene
- Masks and Face Coverings (Source Control)
- Social Distancing, Physical Spacing, (including Arrivals and Departures)
- Food Preparation
- Ventilation
- Procedures for People Exhibiting Signs and Symptoms/Communications Regarding Exposure to Covid 19
- Cleaning and disinfecting
- Sick Leave
- Communications and Training about the Plan

REMOTE EMPLOYMENT AND SERVICES

When an employee's job duties and completion of those job duties allows for it, employees will work remotely as much as possible, consistent with Emergency Executive Order 20-63.

When possible based on funding and a person's interests and needs, clients will be given the opportunity to receive services remotely.

SCREENING FOR EMPLOYEES AND CLIENTS EXHIBITING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 OR ILLNESS

Staff, clients and client caregivers will be informed of and encouraged to monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and are asked to stay away from STEP and its services should they be ill. The following procedures are being implemented to assess workers' and clients' health status prior to entering the workplace and for workers to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms.

Prior to coming to work

All staff, clients and their caregivers should determine if they are sick in any way or exhibiting any symptoms including

- Fever (100 F or higher) or feeling feverish
- Chills
- A cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Muscle aches
- Headaches
- Loss of smell or taste
- Other symptoms of illness

If staff or clients are sick or experiencing symptoms **they are to stay home** and notify STEP as soon as possible.

- STEP I: 507-238-4341
- STEP II: 507 238-2030
- STEP III: 507-238-4390
- STEP Blue Earth: 507-526-3013

Staff are to notify their direct supervisor as soon as possible if they are sick or experiencing any of the above.

Upon entering STEP Buildings or Beginning STEP Services

At the time of entering STEP buildings or beginning STEP services in a STEP vehicle or community location, staff and clients will be screened for symptoms of the COVID 19 virus.

Staff and clients will be asked or will be assessed as to their symptoms and experiences related to Covid 19. Temperatures will be taken for all employees and clients entering STEP buildings or vehicles or participating in STEP services in community locations. Individuals who display symptoms or who have a fever of 100 F or higher will be immediately separated from others, and arrangements will be made for them to leave STEP services and return home. Caregivers will be immediately notified of any individual with symptoms upon initial screening or who develop symptoms during the service time and will be asked to arrange for the person to leave STEP. Any individual who is exhibiting symptoms of illness will be kept isolated from other individuals until they leave the building or service. Any staff member caring for an individual in this situation will wear personal protective equipment, including something that shields their face and eyes. Any area that an individual with symptoms uses will be cleaned and disinfected per CDC guidelines.

Staff should continue to follow the reporting requirements outlined in “Communicable Disease and Contagious Illness Policy.”

HAND WASHING, HYGIENE, AND PERSONAL CARES

Staff and clients should continue to follow Universal Precautions and infection control procedures as previously directed in “Blood borne Pathogens” procedures. Special attention will be given to hand washing. Staff and clients are instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, including:

- Upon entering a STEP building and prior to entering a STEP vehicle
- Beginning and end of the work period
- When moving between community work sites or other public places
- Prior to any food preparation, snack or meal times
- Between contact with different people
- Before and after using the rest room
- Prior to and after assisting in giving medications, taking temperatures or other medically related activities
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing

Hand sanitizer will also be available in vehicles at building entrances and throughout buildings, and can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water, as long as hands are not visibly soiled.

When providing close personal cares for individuals (less than 6 feet), staff will wear gloves, masks, eye protection or face shields, and other personal protective equipment as needed. Staff will also wash their hands after removing gloves or other protective equipment

If unmasked, staff and clients are instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Staff and clients are asked to avoid touching their faces, in particular their mouth, nose and eyes with their hands. Tissues should be disposed of immediately in the trash and hands washed or sanitized immediately after sneezing or coughing. Respiratory etiquette will be demonstrated on posters and supported by making tissues and receptacles available to all staff and clients.

Paper towels and a trash receptacle will be placed by bathroom doors so towels can be disposed of when operating the door.

MASKS AND FACE COVERINGS (SOURCE CONTROL)

As of July 25, 2020, the Governor of Minnesota ordered that all Minnesotans must wear a face covering in indoor businesses and indoor public settings. Workers must also wear a face covering outdoors when it is not possible to maintain social distancing. Face coverings are mandatory in indoor businesses, public indoor spaces, while riding on public transportation, and in a vehicle that is being used for business purposes. For purposes of STEP, face coverings may be temporarily removed when eating or drinking indoors provided that at least 6 feet of distance is maintained between persons, and when communicating with an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing or has another disability that makes communication with an individual while wearing a face mask difficult. Face coverings may also be removed when an individual is alone in an office, a room, a vehicle or an enclosed work area. STEP staff and clients should still carry a face covering to be prepared for person to person interactions. While STEP requires all staff to wear face coverings and encourages all clients to wear face coverings, the Governor's order provides for an exemption for individuals with a medical condition, mental health condition or disability, including individuals who have a medical condition that compromises their ability to breath and individuals who are unable to remove a face covering without assistance.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services has modified STEP's licensing requirements to include that staff are required to wear masks at all times while working with people receiving services. STEP will encourage clients to use masks and provide training and instruction to clients to assist in them tolerating and using masks when away from their home setting.

Staff and clients are instructed to wear cloth masks while in the STEP buildings, while at jobs in the community, in STEP vehicles, when performing close personal cares and in any place where you will be in contact with individuals who are not members of your household. Social distancing will continued to be adhered to in situations that allow for that. Masks are not intended to be a substitute for social distancing.

STEP will make masks available for staff and clients, or to promote compliance, individuals may provide their own masks. Cloth masks should be washed daily, by either washing the masks at a STEP location or by individuals washing the masks at home.

Staff will remind and direct clients to keep their masks on throughout the day. As needed due to health or compliance reasons, alternative protection may be used. Staff will develop teaching strategies to improve their compliance with wearing masks over time.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing is being implemented in the workplace through the following methods.

General Guidelines

All staff and clients will maintain at least 6 feet between individuals as much as possible, including in office settings, break and lunch times, etc. Offices, program areas, waiting areas, common areas and other areas of congestion will be arranged to allow for social distancing of at least 6 feet. If appropriate, visual aids for social distancing and traffic flow will be used. Seating will be arranged in appropriate distances, and will be arranged so that individuals sharing tables, desks or other spaces are facing the same direction (not facing each other) to reduce possibility of transmission.

Partition and barriers may be used to maintain physical distancing and to protect staff and clients from transmission of the virus.

Arrivals and Departures

As much as possible, arrival and departure times will be staggered so that over 10 people are not arriving or departing from the building at the same time and there is not congregating in entrance and exit doorways. Multiple or alternate entrances and exits may be used to allow for smaller numbers of people using doorways.

Prior to moving in the building, staff and clients will have their temperature taken, reminded to keep their masks on and wash their hands when they enter the building.

Services and Programs

Based on DHS guidelines, STEP will limit building occupancy to no more than 50% of the licensed capacity for program services.

STEP will create and maintain consistent teams of the same staff and persons receiving services. Cohorts must consist of 10 or fewer people, including staff. Cohorts must be maintained throughout the program day, including meal times, and should also be maintained during the programming week whenever possible. STEP may arrange these teams by shared community jobs or residential households to reduce potential exposure.

STEP will stagger shifts or days of services to limit the number of people in the building at one time. STEP will deliver services in shifts, with a maximum duration of three hours throughout the day for each person receiving services. STEP will document the start and end time of each shift and the staff who worked those shifts, and must ensure the facility is cleaned and disinfected between shifts.

During meal times, staff who work directly with individuals should eat at different times and in a separate area at least 6 feet away from others.

Staff and clients will be asked to use designated bathrooms to limit interaction between cohorts. If needed, staff will be asked to schedule bathroom use so that cohorts are not using the bathroom areas at the same time.

Work spaces will be changed to implement social distancing. STEP will rearrange any seating spaces to maximize the space between persons receiving services with at least six feet between seats. Whenever possible, seating should be turned in the same direction (rather than facing each other) to reduce transmission caused from virus-containing droplets created when people talk, cough, or sneeze.

Tables, desks, and chairs will be arranged to allow at least 6 feet of space between people. Staff will assure/assist clients in maintaining this spacing while participating in vocational and leisure activities. As much as possible, staff and clients will complete all their daily activities in their assigned room to limit exposure to other "teams."

Staff and clients will be monitored to minimize contact with other teams. Staff and clients will not use another person's personal protective equipment, work tools and personal items.

Transportation

Transportation will be designed to limit the number of people in the vehicle, or to allow social distancing as much as possible. Routes will be altered and planned to minimize exposure as much as possible. Personal masks will be donned before entering the vehicle. Masks, thermometers, screening records, hand sanitizers and cleaning materials will be available in each vehicle.

Areas of the vehicles that are frequently touched (such as door handles, seat arms, steering wheel, etc.) will be cleaned and disinfected between separate groups of passengers.

Meetings

Whenever possible, client review meetings and other meetings will be done virtually. Face to face meetings will only be held in locations and in ways when appropriate social distancing is possible.

Visitors

Visitors will have restricted access to STEP buildings at this time. Only individuals who are essential to the provision of services or to the health and safety of individuals will be permitted in the buildings. Non STEP individuals who must enter the building for essential activities (such as to make a repair) and for a longer period of time will be asked to use a mask and complete health screening. As much as possible, deliveries and product sales will be completed without individuals entering the building or being around STEP staff and clients.

FOOD AND MEAL PREPARATION

If scheduled to be at STEP during a meal time, clients and staff will be asked to bring food in individual, single use containers. Food (including condiments) and beverages will not be shared between individuals. Break and meal times will be staggered to maximize social distancing. Consistent groups will share break and meal times.

VENTILATION

STEP staff will work to maximize the amount of fresh air being brought into buildings by opening windows as possible. STEP staff will take steps to minimize air flow blowing across people by repositioning seating and positioning fans blowing away from people. Ventilation systems will be maintained as recommended by HVAC personnel.

PROCEDURES FOR INDIVIDUALS EXHIBITING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF COVID 19

STEP staff and clients will be screened following procedures above and any individual exhibiting symptoms of Covid 19 will be asked to stay away from STEP services and locations. Staff and clients exhibiting symptoms will be asked to contact their medical provider and provide to STEP documentation of the outcome and recommendations following consultation with the medical provider.

STEP staff and clients who exhibit Covid 19 symptoms outside of STEP services and who receive notification of a confirmed case of Covid 19 are asked to contact their usual STEP Program Manager to notify them of the confirmed case. If a person living with a STEP staff or client is confirmed to have Covid 19, STEP also requests notification of the situation and ask that the recommendations of the MN Department of Health and/or the medical provider be followed.

Per MN Department of Human Services requirements, to prevent the spread of the virus, individuals are prohibited from attending a day service facility if they live with any person with an active case of COVID-19 or have had COVID-19 exposure in the last 14 days.

If a person with a confirmed case of Covid 19 has been onsite or in services in the previous 48 hours, the designated Program Manager and/or the Executive Director will determine what locations the person has been at, what people the person has had contact with, and what degree of contact the person had. This information will be gathered in order to provide adequate information to the Minnesota Department of Health or other designated representatives.

When there is a confirmed case of Covid 19 in the above situations, a STEP representative will notify the Minnesota Department of Health by calling 651-297-1304 or 1-800-657-3504 (available Monday through Friday, 8AM-5 PM). STEP will comply with the directions of the MN Department of Health when received.

Based on the directions of MDH, STEP will notify affected staff and clients, caregivers, legal representatives and case managers of any protocols that should be followed following a confirmed case of Covid 19. Information will be shared ensuring that an individual's identity is not disclosed, other than to a person authorized to receive the information.

Guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health will be followed in individual situations for determining when people can return to STEP. Current CDC guidelines indicate that individuals should not return to work until the person has had no fever for at least 72 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine, **and** other symptoms have improved (such as cough or shortness of breath) **and** at least 10 days have passed since the symptoms first appeared.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Regular housekeeping practices are being implemented including routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment and tools and areas in the work environment, including restrooms, work rooms, and hallways. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted in high touch areas, such as railings, door handles, light switches, copy machines, key boards etc.

Surfaces and other used spaces will be cleaned and disinfected between shifts of people using the building for program services.

Staff will be responsible for cleaning their work areas, including tables and desks, and other frequently touched areas following use of the area. Staff will also clean highly touched areas (door handles, chair handles, etc.) of vehicles before use.

Each STEP location will establish a cleaning and disinfecting schedule and checklist, and document the cleaning and disinfecting.

Procedures recommended by the Minnesota Department of Health and the CDC will be used for cleaning and disinfecting should someone at STEP test positive for COVID 19.

SICK LEAVE

As above, all staff and clients are asked to stay home when they are sick to prevent the spread of illness. STEP will follow their current sick leave policies and will also implement leave time as required by federal and state statues that relate to COVID 19 situations. STEP will follow the recommendations of the Minnesota Department of Health in situations that involve Covid 10 exposure and quarantine.

COMMUNICATIONS AND TRAINING

Staff and clients will be trained on Covid 19 symptoms and spread and on STEP's Covid 19 Preparedness Plan. Training will be provided to staff and clients upon returning to work and as needed on an ongoing basis. Additional communication and training will be ongoing and provided to all workers as conditions changed.

Staff will instruct and direct clients as needed on applicable portions of the plan, including learning new schedules and routines that allow for social distancing.

STEP's Covid 19 Preparedness Plan will be posted at all of STEP's locations accessible for staff and others to review.

All clients, client caregivers, family and legal representatives will be notified of the existence of the plan. Upon request, a copy of the plan will be distributed electronically or in print to support team members and others who request it.

Staff members with concerns about STEP's Covid 19 Preparedness Plan should contact the Executive Director regarding their concern, or contact MNOSHA Compliance at osha.compliance@state.mn.us or 651-282-5050 or 877 470-6742.

PLAN REVIEW

This plan has been reviewed by STEP staff management and STEP Board of Directors. It is expected that plan will continue to be reviewed as situations change and updated as needed. The plan will be posted at all STEP locations.

Date Reviewed: June 21, 2020

Revised July 17, 2020 to DHS Standards

Revised August 14, 2020 to Governor's Order 20-81

