

COVID-19 policies and procedures for in-person trainings and events

Welcome. Thank you for wearing your face covering!

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) adheres to the Centers for Disease and Control, and Minnesota Department of Health guidelines to reduce the spread of COVID-19, including policies outlined in [Minnesota's Stay Safe Plan for Indoor Events](#).

Please follow these safe practices for the duration of our events:



Wash hands for at least 20 seconds – often!



Facial coverings are required according to [Executive Order 20-81](#).



Stay home when sick



Always stay six feet away from others.

Screening process

Participants and external instructors must take their temperature and assess any symptoms or exposures before arriving at the event. MPCA staff will ask the questions below and screen participation to minimize the risk of exposing others to COVID-19. While you are not legally required to provide the requested information, you will need to leave the premises and forfeit any fees paid if you refuse to answer the health screening questions.

MPCA staff will ask the questions verbally and will not record specific responses. The screening results, however, are considered public data. Individuals who answer “yes” to any of the questions will be asked to leave the facility and may request a refund or reschedule their participation once their circumstances have improved.

MPCA staff must comply with agency screening protocols and answer the same questions.

Upon arrival, everyone must answer these questions before entering the event:

1. Within the last 14 calendar days, have you been in close and prolonged physical contact (within less than six feet for at least 15 minutes) with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, or have you been diagnosed with COVID-19?
2. Do you have new or worsening onset of any of the following symptoms that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
 - Fever of 100.4°F or higher or feeling feverish; chills; a new cough; shortness of breath; a new sore throat; new muscle aches; new headache; new loss of taste or smell

Facility preparedness and hygiene practices

The MPCA has verified that event facilities have adopted and are implementing a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan, which may be obtained and reviewed upon request from the contracted facility. These plans dictate enhanced cleaning and disinfection procedures, methods to ensure distancing requirements can be met, and other policies in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Instructors and participants must:

1. Follow basic health practices to prevent infection spread. At the entrance to event facilities, signage will guide participants to clean their hands, cover their cough/sneeze, and wear a mask.
2. Frequently wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. When hand washing is not feasible, individuals may use hand sanitizer as guided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in place of soap and water.
3. Cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing. They must dispose of tissues in the trash and wash or sanitize hands immediately afterwards. Additionally, in order to prevent the spread of germs, everyone should avoid touching their face, in particular their mouth, nose and eyes.

Facial covering

Instructors and participants are required to wear facial covering according to [Executive Order 20-81](#). Participants must provide their own masks, which must cover their nose and mouth when being worn. Individuals who qualify for an exemption as described in the executive order or related guidance must wear an alternative face covering, e.g. face shield, at the event. MPCA reserves the right to deny participation of any attendee not complying with face covering requirements according to the cancellation and refund policy below. Instructors may wear a face shield instead of a cloth mask when presenting, provided that physical distancing is always maintained.

Physical distancing

Participants and instructors must comply with the following protocols in place to maintain six-foot distancing at all times:

1. Seating will be placed at least six feet apart. Participants must sit in the same space for the duration of the event.
2. Stay six feet away from the nearest person at all times.
3. Abide by capacity limitations set forth by Minnesota's Stay Safe Plan guidance and posted on signage provided by the MPCA.
4. Follow signage and floor markings to direct traffic and prevent congestion.

Restrooms and elevators

Participants and instructors will follow the venue guidance on restrooms and elevators, including capacity limitations and distancing.

Food and beverage

Food and beverage may be served during the event. Participants will eat in the space reserved for them. Facial covering may be removed only for eating and drinking. Individuals are encouraged to further distance and eat outdoors if facility and conditions allow. Water fountains will not be used.

Course supplies, handouts, and materials

Participants must bring their own writing utensil and calculator. Training materials will be minimally-handled by MPCA staff. Efforts to minimize contact should be made, and handwashing or use of hand sanitizer must be used as much as practical.

Cancelation and refund policy

Cancelations and refunds will be based on the following scenarios:

1. If an event is canceled by the MPCA due to changes in guidance in Minnesota's Stay Safe Plan for Indoor Events, or other reason identified by the MPCA, a full refund may be issued.
2. If a participant cancels due to COVID-19 symptoms, medically-advised quarantine, caring for others, or another COVID-19 cause, a full refund may be issued.
3. If a participant fails the health screening, a full refund may be issued.
4. If a participant is asked to leave the event for not complying with the requirements for health screening, face covering, or physical distancing, the participant may forfeit any fees paid.
5. All cancelations for non-COVID-19 reasons are subject to standard program policies, which state that cancelations must be received in advance for any refund or credit to be issued.

Right to refuse entry

The MPCA reserves the right to refuse entry to an event based on these protocols. Individuals observed disregarding aspects of these protocols may be asked to leave the event. For events hosted by other entities where MPCA is a participant, MPCA staff will be advised to leave the premises if they observe non-compliance with these protocols. Refunds will be issued as outlined above and in accordance with standard program policies.