

# The Mental Health Association in Tompkins County

## Safety Plan

Effective 06/01/2020

**This document applies to all of our offices/operations located at: 301 South Geneva Street, in Ithaca, NY 14850**

**Contact:** Josephine Gibson, *Executive Director*



06/01/2020

Dear Employee of the MHATC,

All employees must review and make sure they understand all guidelines outlined in this document.

The MHATC will not operate without meeting the following minimum State standards, as well as applicable federal requirements. The guidelines in this Safety Plan are minimum requirements only and the Mental Health Association in Tompkins County is free to provide additional precautions or increased restrictions.

These guidelines are based on the best-known public health practices at the time of Phase II of NY State's reopening.

The NY State standards contained within this guidance apply to all office-based work activity in operation during the COVID-19 public health emergency until rescinded or amended by the State.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me immediately on my cell phone at (607) 664-7366.

Sincerely,

Josephine Gibson  
*Executive Director*

The following guidance is organized around three distinct categories: **people, places, and processes.**

## I. PEOPLE

**Physical Distancing.** To ensure employees comply with physical distancing requirements:

- Employees shall not share work spaces/private offices.
- Ensure 6 ft. distance between personnel, unless safety or core function of the work activity requires a shorter distance. Any time personnel are less than 6 ft. apart from one another, personnel must wear acceptable face coverings.  
*\*Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and disposable masks that cover both the mouth and nose.*
- Staff only are allowed in suites 104, 106, 107, and 109.
- Limit in-person gatherings as much as possible and use tele- or video-conferencing whenever possible. Essential in-person gatherings (e.g. staff meetings) will be held in open, well-ventilated spaces with appropriate social distancing among participants.
- Limit the use of shared workstations (for visitors) to the extent practicable. To the extent that such workstations remain in use, they must be cleaned and disinfected between users.
- The use of small spaces (e.g. supply rooms, personal offices, vehicles) by more than one individual at a time is prohibited, unless all individuals in such space at the same time are wearing acceptable face coverings.
- The MHATC is closed to walk in visitors. All visitors must have a scheduled appointment.
- Visitors are only allowed in Suite 110. All in person meetings with visitors must take place in the Jenkins Center activity room only. During in person meetings, all persons must remain 6 feet apart and wear protective face masks.

## II. PLACES

**Protective Equipment.** To ensure employees comply with protective equipment requirements:

- The MHATC will obtain acceptable disposable face coverings and provide such coverings to their employees while at work at no cost to the employee. Disposable face coverings should be discarded at the end of each shift.

- The MHATC will allow employees to use their own acceptable face coverings but cannot require employees to supply their own face coverings. Further, this guidance shall not prevent employees from wearing their personally owned additional protective coverings (e.g. surgical masks, N95 respirators, or face shields). If an employee uses their own cloth face covering, they must be cleaned or replaced after each use/shift and may not be shared.
- Employees must wear face coverings when exiting their private offices, in common areas and when moving around the office.
- All visitors are required to wear an acceptable face covering. The face covering must remain on for the duration of the visit.

**Hygiene and Cleaning.** To ensure employees comply with hygiene and cleaning requirements:

- Employees must limit the sharing of objects, such as laptops, notebooks, touchscreens, and writing utensils, as well as the touching of shared surfaces, such as conference tables. If an employee must share such objects, that employee is required to wear gloves (provided by MHATC and located at the screening stations) or perform hand hygiene before and after contact.
- All employees of MHATC must adhere to hygiene and cleaning and disinfection requirements as advised by the CDC and DOH. Instructions will be posted in each suite.
- The MHATC will provide and maintain hand sanitizers throughout common areas in the office including entrances, exits, and reception desks. Touch-free hand sanitizer dispensers will be installed at the entrance of every suite.
- The MHATC must provide appropriate cleaning/disinfection supplies for shared and frequently touched surfaces and encourage their employees (or cleaning staffs) to use these supplies following manufacturer's instructions for use before and after use of these surfaces, followed by hand hygiene.
- All MHATC employees must conduct regular cleaning and disinfection of the office and more frequent cleaning and disinfection for high risk areas used by many individuals and for frequently touched surfaces. Cleaning and disinfection must be rigorous and ongoing and should occur at least daily, or more frequently as needed.
- MHATC will maintain a daily disinfection log for each office suite that includes the date, and employee name.
- The MHATC prohibits the sharing of food and beverages . Employees are encouraged bring lunch from home, and observe social distancing while eating meals.

**Communication.** To ensure the business and its employees comply with communication requirements:

- Signage will be posted throughout the site to remind personnel to adhere to proper hygiene, social distancing rules, appropriate use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and cleaning and disinfecting protocols.
- The MHATC will maintain a continuous log of every visitor with their contact information; excluding delivery persons.
- If a worker tests positive for COVID-19, the Executive Director will immediately notify state and local health departments and cooperate with contact tracing efforts, including notification of potential contacts, such as workers or visitors who had close contact with the individual, while maintaining confidentiality required by state and federal law and regulations.
- The Executive Director will stay current on state and federal guidance issued in response to COVID-19 and continue to update our policy and procedures as appropriate. As soon as possible, all employees will receive any changes in writing.

### III. PROCESSES

**Screening.** The MHATC requires COVID –19 screening for every employee (before every work day) and every visitor.

- A self-screening and temperature check is required for all employees (before every shift). A screening station with blank screen forms, a thermometer, masks and gloves will be kept at the entrances of suite 109 and suite 110. Please do not remove the thermometers from those areas. You must use gloves while operating the thermometer. Make sure the thermometer is a finger width from your forehead to obtain the most accurate reading.
- The COVID screening questionnaire determines whether the employee has:
  - a. knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19;
  - b. tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days; and/or
  - c. has experienced any symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- Employees must immediately disclose to the Executive Director if they screen positive for COVID-19 symptoms. **A positive screen means that you have answered "yes" to any of the questions on the COVID-19 Screening Form and/or you have a fever of over 100 degrees.**
- An employee who screens positive for COVID-19 symptoms is not allowed to enter the office and will be sent home immediately with instructions to contact their healthcare provider for assessment and testing. The Executive Director must immediately notify the local health department about any positive case. The

Executive Director will provide the employee with information on healthcare and testing resources.

- All COVID screening forms (if all answers are “no”) must be dated, signed and left in the mailbox of the Executive Director.
- A screening and temperature check is required for all visitors. Employees are responsible for screening their own visitors, unless an alternate arrangement has been made. Personnel performing screening activities, including temperature checks, must be appropriately protected from exposure to potentially infectious employees or visitors entering the office. During screenings, employees must wear a mask and latex gloves that are provided and kept at the screening station.
- You may not record the temperature reading, as the MHATC is prohibited from keeping records visitor health data.
- An visitor who screens positive for COVID-19 symptoms is not allowed to enter the MHATC offices. They must be provided an instruction sheet with information on healthcare and testing resources. **A positive screen means that you have answered "yes" to any of the questions on the COVID-19 Screening Form and/or you have a fever of over 100 degrees.**
- The Executive Director will review all employee and visitor responses collected by the screening process on a daily basis (M-F) and maintain a record of such review.
- The Executive Director will act as the site safety monitor whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the site safety plan.
- When notified of a positive case of COVID-19, The Executive Director will notify all staff as well as INHS of the positive case. and initiate the respective cleaning and disinfection procedures.
- If an employee has COVID-19 symptoms and tests positive for COVID-19, the individual may only return after they have recovered. The Executive Director may consult the local health department and the most up-to-date CDC and DOH standards on the minimum number of days to isolate before an individual is safely able to return to work with additional precautions to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- If an employee becomes sick during the day, the employee must be separated and sent home immediately, following the above protocol for a positive screen.

**Tracing and Tracking.** The Executive Director will notify the local health department and DOH immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 test result by an employee in their office. In the case of an employee or visitor testing positive, the MHATC and its employees will cooperate with the Tompkins County Health Department as required to trace all contacts in the workplace. Confidentiality must be maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations.

- Individuals who are alerted that they have come into close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19, and have been alerted via tracing, tracking or other mechanism, are required to self-report to their employer at the time of alert and shall not be permitted to remain or return to the building until they have completed quarantine and a negative COVID-19 screen.

## **Affirmation**

On behalf of the Mental Health Association in Tompkins County, I, Josephine Gibson, the Executive Director, affirm that I have reviewed and understand the state-issued industry guidelines, and that I will implement them.

I, Josephine Gibson, also affirm that I will stay current on state and federal guidance issued in response to COVID-19 and continue to update our policy and procedures as appropriate.

## Action Plan

The following is an Action Plan for June 1 - 5

- : Responsible parties will:

1. Post signs throughout the office, consistent with DOH COVID-19 signage. Signage will be used to remind individuals to:
  - a. Cover their nose and mouth with a mask or cloth face-covering when six feet of social distance cannot be maintained.
  - b. Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE.
  - c. Adhere to physical distancing instructions.
  - d. Report symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19, and how they should do so.
  - e. Follow hand hygiene and cleaning and disinfection guidelines.
2. Set up a reception/screening area at the entrance of suite 109 (for staff only) and 110 (for staff and visitors). Make sure screen forms, masks, gloves are available.
3. Modify seating areas arrangements (e.g. chairs, tables) to ensure that individuals are at least six feet apart in all directions (e.g. side-to-side and when facing one another).
4. Establish designated areas for pick-ups and deliveries, limiting contact to the extent possible.
5. Mark six feet distance circles around workstations and other common stationary work areas.
6. Place signage near hand sanitizer stations indicating that visibly soiled hands should be washed with soap and water; hand sanitizer is not effective on visibly soiled hands.
7. Make sure all COVID-19 fact sheets and information required in this guideline document, are available for employees and visitors.