

# Sahara Club COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

The **Sahara Club Service Board** is committed to providing a **safe and healthy meeting space** for all our members. Therefore, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. Each Sahara group that wishes to conduct in-person meetings within the Club is responsible for following and implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our communities, and that requires full cooperation by our members and groups.

## A. General

1. This plan is effective beginning on Monday, June 1, 2020 at 12:01 am.
2. This plan establishes **MANDATORY guidelines** that allow the Sahara Club groups to begin meeting inside the Club on a limited occupancy basis.
3. This plan has been developed to comply with the requirements of Minnesota Executive Order 20-48, 20-56 and 20-62, as well as other federal, state, and local policies using the references, templates and checklists here: <https://mn.gov/deed/newscenter/covid/safework/safe-reopening/>
4. Please note that large gatherings continue to present a risk for increasing the spread of COVID-19; therefore, groups are encouraged to provide virtual meetings as an alternative, or in addition to, in-person meetings.
  - a. The Club has purchased a **Zoom subscription** for Sahara groups to use on a temporary basis. Trusted Servants/Meeting Hosts can use these credentials to schedule meetings for their groups:
    - i. Zoom Login: <https://zoom.us/signin>
    - ii. Email address: aasaharaclub@gmail.com
    - iii. Password: SaharaClub2020
    - iv. Instructions for scheduling Zoom meetings: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362413-Scheduling-meetings>
  - b. Online meetings are also available at A.A. Online Intergroup ([www.aa-intergroup.org](http://www.aa-intergroup.org)).
  - c. Each group must notify the Minneapolis Intergroup office of changes or updates to the status of your meeting (virtual, in-person or both) so it can be accurately reflected as such on the Intergroup website ([aaminneapolis.org](http://aaminneapolis.org)).

## B. Sick and “at risk” people must stay home

1. Anyone showing any symptoms of sickness, or anyone who has a household member who is sick or showing symptoms of sickness should not come to the Club.
2. All “at risk” persons of vulnerable populations are strongly encouraged to stay home and participate in meetings remotely. See Executive Order 20-55 (<https://www.leg.state.mn.us/archive/execorders/20-55.pdf>); CDC’s People Who are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-athigher-risk.html>) and Executive Order 20-55 (<https://www.leg.state.mn.us/archive/execorders/20-55.pdf>).

## C. Social distancing

1. Groups must **limit in-person attendance** to no more than **10 people** and maintain six feet “social distancing” space between individuals. Club furniture has been rearranged to facilitate social distancing.
2. Groups will need to develop ways to ensure that this capacity limit is strictly followed, such as by implementing online signups or having greeters in place to ensure meeting size is limited to no more than 10 persons.
3. People within the Club should not engage in any physical contact such as shaking hands, handholding or hugging.
4. Avoid passing items during the meeting such as literature, phone lists or baskets. Seventh Tradition donations can be made online at [www.saharaAA.org](http://www.saharaAA.org)
5. Bring your own Big Book. Books will be available on the Sahara bookshelf for people to take for personal use, but these books should not be shared or distributed.

6. People must not congregate in the entryway, kitchen, or meeting space. Signs will be posted to encourage social distancing inside the Club.

#### D. Handwashing, hygiene & respiratory etiquette

1. All persons entering the Club are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings or masks for the safety and protection of others in attendance.
2. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water when you enter the Club and before you leave, and after using the toilet. Handwashing supplies and/or hand-sanitizer is readily available in the kitchen and bathroom.
3. Cover your mouth and nose with a sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and avoid touching your face with hands – particularly your mouth, nose and eyes. Dispose of tissues in the trash and wash or sanitize hands immediately afterward.
4. Signs and other instructions will encourage normal safe practices necessary to avoid the spread (e.g. cough or sneeze into a shirtsleeve, handkerchief, or tissue; avoid touching the eyes, nose, and mouth).
5. On-site preparation or sharing of food and beverages is prohibited. Food or beverages may only be brought into the Club for personal use.

#### E. Cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation

1. Groups must **thoroughly clean and disinfect before and after each meeting**, including all countertops, tabletops, chairs, sinks, faucets and door handles. Cleaning instructions will be posted at the Club.
2. Hand sanitizer and approved cleaning products are available and stocked in the kitchen and bathroom.
3. Ventilation in the Club has been improved with the installation of MERV 13 filters in the roof-top HVAC system. In order to circulate fresh air within the Club, ensure the thermostat FAN switch is set to “ON,” select “HEAT” or “COOL” as desired, and use the UP/DOWN arrows to adjust the temperature. Groups may also prop open the side door to allow for increased air flow if weather permits.
4. A UV germicidal irradiation (UVGI) air purifier has been installed on the wall above the speaker couch. Press the POWER button to run the air purifier during your meeting. UV air purifiers are designed to use short-wave ultraviolet light (UV-C light) to inactivate airborne pathogens and microorganisms like mold, bacteria and viruses.
5. Professional cleaning and disinfection of the entire Club, including the bathroom, kitchen, meeting area and entryway will be conducted on a weekly basis by a cleaning company. In addition, G&B Environmental Inc. will also apply a fogging disinfectant to all surfaces once per week using an electrostatic sprayer.
6. Members must notify the Sahara Service Board (contacts below) if they are diagnosed with COVID-19 and have attended one or more meetings at the Club.
7. The facility will be thoroughly decontaminated if a member becomes ill with COVID-19 and the Board will provide notification to groups who have been potentially exposed to COVID-19.

#### F. Communications and contacts

1. This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan was communicated **via email** to all contacts listed on the Sahara Group Contact list.
2. Sahara group contacts – such as the Group Rep, Treasurer or Chair – are responsible for communicating the requirements of this plan to all group members and must ensure all guidelines are strictly followed for in-person meetings inside the Club.
3. This plan is also posted on the bulletin board at the Club and online at [saharaAA.org](http://saharaAA.org).
4. If you have questions or concerns about this plan, please contact a Sahara Club Service Board member:
  - a. Vince Jones (Sahara Group Council Chair) – 952-221-6802, [vjonesmuth@gmail.com](mailto:vjonesmuth@gmail.com)
  - b. Kim Ellenberg (Sahara Service Board) – 651-253-6037, [kimellenberg@yahoo.com](mailto:kimellenberg@yahoo.com)
  - c. Mike Waterston (Sahara Treasurer) – 612-325-1009, [mwaterston@comcast.net](mailto:mwaterston@comcast.net)
  - d. Steve Wilder (Sahara Service Board) – 612-220-6013, [w330324@yahoo.com](mailto:w330324@yahoo.com)

## **APPENDIX: Additional information & references**

### **General**

CDC Coronavirus (COVID-19) – [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV)

MDH Coronavirus – [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus)

State of Minnesota COVID-19 response – <https://mn.gov/covid19/>

### **Businesses**

CDC Resources for businesses and employers – [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html)

CDC General business FAQ – [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html)

MDH Businesses and employers: COVID-19 – [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html)

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) COVID-19 information and resources – <https://mn.gov/deed/newscenter/covid/>

### **Handwashing**

[www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html](http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html)

[www.cdc.gov/handwashing](http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing)

<https://youtu.be/d914EnpU4Fo>

### **Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze**

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html)

[www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html)

[www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing\\_sneezing.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing_sneezing.html)

### **Social distancing**

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html)

[www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html)

### **Housekeeping**

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html)

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html)

[www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2](http://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2)

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html)

### **Exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19**

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html)

[www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html)

[www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf)

### **Training**

[www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/about.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/about.pdf)

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html)

[www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf)

## COVID-19 HVAC Protection Information from G&B Environmental Inc.

G&B Environmental, Inc is committed to providing our clients with the most recent information for helping them select the right products to protect their employee's and family members during the most recent COVID-19 Pandemic. According to ASHRAE Journal Newsletter, March 24, 2020:

*Basic principles of social distancing (1 to 2 m or 3 to 6.5 ft), surface cleaning and disinfection, handwashing and other strategies of good hygiene are far more important than anything related to the HVAC system. But, once those basics above are covered, they have a few recommendations for HVAC systems:*

- *Increase outdoor air ventilation (use caution in highly polluted areas); with a lower population in the building, this increases the effective dilution ventilation per person.*
  - *Disable demand-controlled ventilation (DCV).*
  - *Further open minimum outdoor air dampers, as high as 100%, thus eliminating recirculation (in the mild weather season, this need not affect thermal comfort or humidity, but clearly becomes more difficult in extreme weather).*
- *Improve central air filtration to the MERV-1311 or the highest compatible with the filter rack, and seal edges of the filter<sup>12</sup> to limit bypass.*
- *Keep systems running longer hours, if possible 24/7, to enhance the two actions above.*
- *Consider portable room air cleaners with HEPA filters.*
- *Consider UVGI (ultraviolet germicidal irradiation), protecting occupants from radiation,<sup>13</sup> particularly in high-risk spaces such as waiting rooms, prisons and shelters.*

We all have a role to play to control the spread of this disease. HVAC is part of it and even more significant are social distancing, hygiene and the influence we can have on personal behavior.

Call us at 952-469-3024 or check out the website for more info on how it works.

Glen Bergman  
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