

COVID-19 Mortuary Science Funeral Industry Guidance

UPDATED 6/8/2020

COVID-19 Peacetime Emergency

The peacetime emergency, declared in [Executive Order 20-01 \(PDF\)](#), has been extended to June 12, 2020, pursuant to [Executive Order 20-53 \(PDF\)](#). [Executive Order 20-74 \(PDF\)](#) is the current executive order with requirements and guidelines for the public, specific sectors, and activities. Executive Orders have been regularly issued to extend the peacetime emergency and modify requirements and guidelines. Information in this document is current as of June 8, 2020. Consulting Executive Orders issued after June 8 is strongly recommended. The state Legislative Reference Library maintains a [list of Executive Orders](#).

Executive Order 20-74 generally limits gathering size to 10 people if indoors or 25 people if outdoors. However, those limits are modified to allow holding funerals in places of worship, funeral homes, and in outdoor settings provided they adhere to the specific requirements in that order (paragraph 6.c.v.) and in the [MDH and DEED Industry Guidance for Safely Reopening: Faith-based communities, places of worship, weddings, and funerals \(PDF\)](#)

This guidance document replaces the MDH funeral and mortuary science guidance document dated June 1, 2020. It is intended to assist in adhering to executive orders impacting the funeral industry while protecting staff and the public during the pandemic.

Funerals, Memorials, Visitations, and Graveside Services

As provided by Executive Order 20-74, places of worship, including funeral homes, and other venues that offer gathering space for weddings, funerals, or planned services such as worship and rituals, may host such services provided that they adhere to the following:

- In all settings, ensure a minimum of 6 feet of physical distancing between households.
- In indoor settings, occupancy must not exceed 50 percent of the normal occupant capacity as determined by the fire marshal, with a maximum of 250 people in a single self-contained space.
- In outdoor settings, gatherings must not exceed 250 individuals.
- Develop and implement a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in accordance with guidance developed by the Minnesota Department of Health available at [MDH and DEED Industry Guidance for Safely Reopening: Faith-based communities, places of worship, weddings, and funerals \(PDF\)](#).

Funeral providers should:

- Provide individuals and families with the [CDC Funeral Guidance for Individuals and Families](#).
- Use technology to help families connect virtually during the grieving process.

- Ask that individuals who are sick, might have been exposed to COVID-19, or [who are at a high risk for COVID-19](#) to attend remotely, if possible, to reduce the risk of infection.
- Encourage individuals and families to wear a manufactured or homemade cloth face mask, as social distancing may be difficult to maintain at all times during the grieving process.
- Drive-in gatherings (for some or all attendees) are an option for families that need to protect attendees who are at higher risk of severe disease from COVID-19. This allows those who cannot attend a gathering an opportunity to pay their respects.

Additional Resources

- Be familiar with the [CDC Guidance for Business and Employers](#) responding to COVID-19.
- Print and use the [MDH Materials and Resources](#), published in multiple languages, at your business to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Sign up for [MDH Mortuary Science Updates](#).
- Stay informed through the [MDH COVID-19 Response](#) and the [MN Homeland Security and Emergency Management](#) website.

References

- [Executive Order 20-01 \(PDF\) \(https://mn.gov/governor/assets/EO%2020-01_tcm1055-422957.pdf\)](https://mn.gov/governor/assets/EO%2020-01_tcm1055-422957.pdf)
- [Executive Order 20-53 \(PDF\) \(https://www.leg.state.mn.us/archive/execorders/20-53.pdf\)](https://www.leg.state.mn.us/archive/execorders/20-53.pdf)
- [Executive Order 20-74 \(PDF\) \(https://www.leg.state.mn.us/archive/execorders/20-62.pdf\)](https://www.leg.state.mn.us/archive/execorders/20-62.pdf)
- [MDH and DEED Industry Guidance for Safely Reopening: Faith-based communities, places of worship, weddings, and funerals \(PDF\) \(https://mn.gov/deed/assets/worship-guidance-ACC_tcm1045-433301.pdf\)](https://mn.gov/deed/assets/worship-guidance-ACC_tcm1045-433301.pdf)
- [CISA Guidelines Version 3.0 on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce \(PDF\) \(https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Version 3.0 CISA Guidance on Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers 4.pdf\)](https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Version%203.0%20CISA%20Guidance%20on%20Essential%20Critical%20Infrastructure%20Workers%204.pdf)
- [Minnesota Statutes, section 149A.80 \(https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/149A.80\)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/149A.80)
- [CDC Social Distancing \(https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html)
- [CDC Funeral Guidance for Individuals and Families \(https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/funeral-guidance.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/funeral-guidance.html)
- [Emergency Executive Order 20-55 - Protecting the Rights and Health of At-Risk Populations during the COVID19 Peacetime Emergency \(PDF\) \(https://www.leg.state.mn.us/archive/execorders/20-55.pdf\)](https://www.leg.state.mn.us/archive/execorders/20-55.pdf)
- [CDC Cloth Face Coverings Guidance \(https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html)
- [MDH Vehicle Gatherings \(PDF\) \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/vehiclegather.pdf\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/vehiclegather.pdf)

- [CDC Guidance for Business and Employers \(https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html)
- [MDH Materials and Resources for COVID-19 Response \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/materials/index.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/materials/index.html)
- [MDH Mortuary Science Updates \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/providers/mortsci/announcements.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/providers/mortsci/announcements.html)
- [MDH COVID-19 Response \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html)
- [MN Homeland Security and Emergency Management \(https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/hsem/Pages/default.aspx\)](https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/hsem/Pages/default.aspx)

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