

Guidance for Minnesota Garden Centers/Nurseries

This document provides COVID-19 operational recommendations for Minnesota Garden Centers Nurseries to implement in order to conduct business under Governor Walz's Executive Order 20-04 that closed restaurants, bars and other businesses where people gather. Minnesota Garden Centers/ Nurseries are exempt from this order as long as they do not offer onsite food consumption (including food sampling).

Garden Center/Nursery Guidelines for Sales to Public

- Limit the number of customers in Garden Center/Nursery at one time so that social distance of 6-feet between customer groups may be maintained.
- Work to minimize amount of time customers spend near one another while shopping in Garden Center/ Nursery.
- Consider encouraging customers to minimize the number of family members participating in a shopping trip, if possible, so that social distance may be maintained.
- Direct and monitor people and traffic and, where feasible, implement one-way traffic in and one-way traffic out to reduce congestion in-store and in parking areas.
 - » Have enough staff to direct and monitor people and traffic.
- Work to provide space for social distancing for customers, i.e. provide more space between shelving, tables, and check-out lanes to allow for customers to be 6-feet apart.
 - » Create boundaries (tape, chalk lines, fencing) and signage to direct traffic flow.
 - » Tape or chalk 6-foot markings in all aisles to show customers where they should stand to maintain 6-feet of separation with each other.
- Follow CDC recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting and implement sanitation practices, including for equipment such as carts, check out areas, and display stands.
- DO NOT offer any food or beverages on-site – either for sale or for free to the public.
- Provide hand sanitizers or place handwashing stations at entrances.

Limit In-Person Customer Transactions

- Work to reduce in-person payment transactions.
- Encourage online pre-orders and offer drive through or curbside pick-up areas for pre-order purchases.
- Consider different days or locations for customers to pick up pre-ordered products and will limit assistance to customers when loading large stock.
- Consider offering delivery service.

Employee Health and Safety

- Implement COVID-19 sick leave policies and follow CDC guidance and other best practices for employee health and safety.
- Implement social distancing for employees.
- Implement preventive cleanliness measures for employees and the equipment and vehicles they use.
- Sick employees MUST STAY HOME.
- Sick employees should follow [CDC-recommended steps](#). Employees should not return to work until the criteria to [discontinue home isolation](#) are met, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.
- Employees who have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) should notify their supervisor and stay home.
- Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and follow [CDC recommended precautions](#).
- Encourage employees to practice social distancing.
- Set a schedule for workers to wash hands and sanitize equipment, etc.
- Stagger eating and break times or provide additional space to increase distancing of workers.
- Consider establishing a designated area in which all employees should eat.
- Remind workers to wash hands before and after eating.

How long can COVID-19 remain viable on different surfaces?

A recent study showed that COVID-19 was most stable on plastic (72 hours), followed by stainless steel (48 hours), and cardboard (24 hours) and copper (4 hours). Based on these results, it is critical that proper hand and respiratory hygiene practices, as well as social distancing, are followed.

Facilities should actively maintain routine, scheduled cleaning and sanitization of both production and non-production areas. Focus on high risk areas (restrooms, break rooms, locker rooms, first aid areas, etc.) and surfaces (doorknobs, handrails, telephones, faucets, electronics, etc.) that employees regularly come in contact with, and clean and disinfect them frequently and on a regular and schedule.