

**Gratiot County COVID-19
Preparedness and Response Plan**

Effective June 1, 2020

Revised November 23, 2020

**This Plan is available on the Gratiot County Website at www.gratiotmi.com.
Hard Copies are Available for Review in the Administration Offices, Gratiot
County Courthouse**

Gratiot County COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan Table of Contents

I. Service Delivery; Safety Measures	
A. Authorities.....	3
B. Protective Safety Measures	4
Employee Screening Before Entering the Workplace	4
Paid Time Off	4
Personal Protection Equipment.....	5
Enhanced Social Distancing	5
Enhanced Hygiene	5
Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting.....	6
Remote Work.....	6
Tools and Equipment.....	6
Visitors.....	6
II. Employees with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases	
Suspected Cases	6
Confirmed Cases.....	7
III. Business Continuity Plans.....	8
Appendices	
A: Protective Measures Taken by Gratiot County.....	9
B: Sample Health Screening Questionnaires	11
Certification	13

COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan

In order to respond to the current state of emergency related to the novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”) and to comply with relevant state and local orders related to COVID-19, Gratiot County has prepared the following COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan (“Plan”).

This Plan is to provide guidance to County leaders and employees¹ for getting back to work in the “new normal” which includes establishing protocols in accordance with relevant state and local orders related to COVID-19. At such time as “Stay Home” orders are rescinded, this Plan provides a framework for safely and efficiently re-opening the County Offices to all employees and the general public.

The County Administrator and Court Administrator serve as the COVID-19 Workplace Coordinators. As such, the Coordinators will update this Plan as needed and communicate important messages to employees and the general public. Additionally, the Administrators will work with Department Heads² to maintain adequate staffing levels to perform essential functions and identify alternate supply chains for critical goods and services in the event of disruption. This Plan will remain in effect until further notice and may be updated as this situation evolves or as state or local orders related to COVID-19, including those of the Chief Judge of the Circuit or the Chief Justice, are issued or amended.

I. Service Delivery; Safety Measures

A. Authorities.

Executive Order 2020-42 and subsequent Executive Order 2020-59, when in effect, prohibited businesses or operations to operate a business or conduct operations that required workers to leave their homes except to the extent those workers were necessary to sustain or protect life (*i.e.*, critical infrastructure workers) or to conduct minimum basic operations. Many other Executive Orders followed.

In October 2020, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Midwest Inst of Health, PLLC v Governor of Michigan (In re Certified Questions from the United States Dist Court)* that the Governor exceeded her authority under the Emergency Management Act of 1976 and the Emergency Powers of the Governor Act of 1945. This decision nullified all Executive Orders as of and after April 30, 2020. Subsequent Orders by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration have largely replicated the safety provisions of the Governor’s Executive Orders. As a practical matter, then, our practices are largely unchanged by the ruling of the Supreme Court.

¹ References to “employee” or “staff” shall include all persons providing services on behalf of Gratiot County, including volunteers, co-op workers, and any other individual assigned to a county office through any employment program.

² References to “Department Heads” shall include Elected Officials.

The Gratiot County Courthouse and County offices reopened to the public on June 15, 2020, although with some restrictions in service. The Courts continue to take their direction from the Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court. As COVID cases begin to rise, individual work units have taken measures deemed most appropriate for the work function and level of risk. These include rotating staff and allowing other remote work on a schedule determined by each office. Our Veterans' Services Office continues to serve veterans entirely remotely. The Courts have held some proceedings remotely and delayed others.

B. Protective Safety Measures

A complete list, to date, of protective measures taken by Gratiot County and those under development, is provided at Appendix A. These include:

Employee and Visitor Health Screening at Entryway

A health screening questionnaire must be completed by all employees and visitors before proceeding beyond the security screening station or prior to entering office areas in satellite Gratiot County government facilities. Sample screening questionnaires are attached as Appendix B; these may be revised from time-to-time as more becomes known about COVID-19.

Temperatures of those entering the Courthouse will be detected by a thermal camera. If an individual's temperatures registers at 100 degrees or above, a second reading will be taken via a hand-held device to confirm the reading of an elevated temperature. Temperatures at some satellite locations are taken via the hand-held device only. Those with temperatures at 100 degrees or above will be denied entry to the building. Staff who take employee temperatures are required to wear appropriate personal protective equipment.

County or Court employees working or meeting in the North or South Annex buildings must first report to the main security station for the screening process before entering the Annex offices.

Paid Time Off

The Gratiot County Commissioners and the Courts committed to paying staff full wages and benefits during the stay-home period through June 12, 2020. When unable to work at the remote work station or in their on-site work station, time off was treated according to the provisions of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, applicable collective bargaining agreement or Gratiot County policies, depending on the circumstances.

Then and now, any onsite employee who appears to be ill or who fails the below-mentioned entry screening process will be separated from other employees and sent home. This time off will be treated according to the provisions of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, applicable collective bargaining agreement or Gratiot County policies, depending on the circumstances.

Personal Protective Equipment

Gratiot County has provided and made available to any worker performing in-person work, personal protective equipment (PPE), specifically, gloves and face masks as appropriate for the activity being performed. Physical barriers have been installed for employees commensurate with their level of risk of exposure to COVID-19.

All employees able to medically tolerate a face covering must wear a covering over his/her nose and mouth as follows:

- When walking through public hallways, including utilization of restrooms;
- If someone enters your office or workspace, both parties should wear masks; and
- During in-person meetings

Masks worn throughout the day while in employees' own offices will be at the discretion of each Department Head.

Masks have been assigned to employees by the Human Resources Officer. Cleaning equipment, such as anti-viral solution and paper towels have been supplied to each office and are placed in each meeting area, and are refilled by the Buildings and Grounds staff.

Enhanced Social Distancing

Department heads and deputy department heads are responsible for directing their employees to perform their work in such a way as to reasonably avoid coming within six feet of other individuals. Where possible, employees may be relocated or provided additional resources in order to avoid shared use of offices, desks, telephones, and tools/equipment, or to thoroughly clean such equipment between uses. Employees are discouraged from entering a work area that is other than where their normal work station is located.

The number of employees permitted in any break room or lunch room, if not closed altogether, have been limited to ensure social distancing restrictions can be followed. No more than two persons may utilize the elevator at any given time. Hand shaking is prohibited to ensure good hand hygiene.

Markers have been placed on the floors at each department doorway to mark the required six feet of distance that shall be maintained while visitors wait for service.

Enhanced Hygiene

Employees have been instructed to wash their hands frequently, to cover their coughs and sneezes, and to avoid touching their faces. Employees shall use existing restroom facilities to frequently wash hands. Signs regarding proper hand washing methods have been posted in all restrooms. Hand sanitizer and hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed in work areas and throughout common areas.

Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting

Increased cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other elements of the work environment are performed regularly throughout each day using products containing anti-viral disinfectants. This is done through a combined effort of our custodial staff and each employee. Employees will be provided with access to disposable disinfectant materials so that any commonly used surfaces can be wiped down before and after each use. Each employee must participate in using the products provided to sanitize high touch spots in his/her work area several times each day.

In the event that an employee that has been in the workplace in the past 14 days tests positive for COVID-19, Gratiot County will thoroughly clean and sanitize the area following protocols provided by the Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control.

Remote Work

Employees whose job duties reasonably allow them to work remotely, either fully or partially, may continue to do so at intervals directed by their department head. Additional equipment for off-site work has been procured and ongoing needs will be monitored.

Tools and Equipment

Employees are required to limit the sharing of tools and equipment. Tools and equipment that are shared must be thoroughly wiped and disinfected both before and after an individual employee's use. Employees are advised to wear gloves while handling tools and equipment if possible. Gratiot County will provide employees with disinfectant wipes and other disinfecting products for this purpose.

Visitors

Gratiot County requires that any visitor able to medically tolerate a face covering must wear a covering over his/her nose and mouth, such as a homemade mask, scarf, bandana or handkerchief, during the period of his/her visit.

II. Employees with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

Suspected Cases

Employees will be considered to have a suspected case of COVID-19 if:

- They are experiencing any of the following COVID-19 symptoms:
 - Fever;
 - Shortness of breath; and/or
 - Continuous cough.
- OR
- They are experiencing at least two of the following symptoms:
 - Fever

- Chills
 - Repeated shaking with chills
 - Muscle pain
 - Headache
 - Sore throat and/or
 - New loss of taste or smell
- They have been exposed to a COVID-19 positive person, meaning:
 - An immediate family member has tested positive for or exhibited symptoms of COVID-19; or
 - In the last 14 days, the employee came in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Symptoms may vary and increase as more becomes known about COVID-19. It will be the practice of Gratiot County to adhere to guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

If an employee believes that he or she qualifies as a Suspected Case (as described above), he or she must:

- Not enter any county government building;
- Immediately notify supervisor and/or Human Resources contact;
- Self-quarantine for 14 days; and

We recommend that such employees seek immediate medical care or advice.

If an employee qualifies as a Suspected Case, Gratiot County will:

- Immediately notify the Health Department and seek their assistance in performing a thorough contact tracing, i.e. determine all who have had contact with the individual suspect to be carrying the coronavirus.
- In cooperation with the Health Department, notify all employees who may have come into close contact (being within approximately six feet for a prolonged period of time without PPE) with the employee in the past 14 days (while not disclosing the identity of the employee to ensure the individual's privacy); and
- Require that the employee remain out of the workplace until he/she is cleared to return to work or the employee's circumstances adhere to CDC guidelines.

Confirmed Cases

An employee will be considered a confirmed case of COVID-19 if the employee tests positive for COVID-19.

If an employee believes that he or she qualifies as a confirmed case, he or she must:

- Immediately notify supervisor and/or the Gratiot County Human Resources Officer of his or her diagnosis; and

- Remain out of the workplace until he/she is cleared to return to work.

If an employee qualifies as a confirmed case, Gratiot County will:

- Immediately notify the Health Department and seek their assistance in performing a thorough contact tracing, i.e. determine all who have had contact with the individual suspect to be carrying the coronavirus.
- In cooperation with the Health Department, notify all employees who may have come into close contact with the employee (being within approximately six feet for a prolonged period of time without PPE) in the past 14 days (while not disclosing the identity of the employee to ensure the individual's privacy);
- Ensure that the entire work area, or affected parts thereof (depending on employee's presence in the workplace), is thoroughly cleaned and disinfected;
- If necessary, close the work area or workplace, until all necessary cleaning and disinfecting is completed; and

III. Business Continuity Plans

Department Heads are responsible for ensuring that employees in the work unit are cross-trained to perform essential functions so the workplace can operate while other employees are absent.

APPENDIX A

PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN BY GRATIOT COUNTY

1. Cough/sneeze barriers installed at each public counter and in offices where close public contact is routine.
2. Technology available to perform work remotely by all staff whenever possible, including conducting meetings, casework, court proceedings, and other such gatherings via a videoconferencing system.
3. Entryway health screening that includes a health questionnaire and equipment for taking temperatures without requiring direct contact between the deputy and the individual entering the building.
4. Staggering employee arrival times in 15 minute increments to avoid crowding at the screening station.
5. Placing markers at the security screening station, lobby areas, inside and outside of offices, and in waiting areas to aid in maintaining spatial distancing between people of at least six feet.
6. Designate certain stairwells for accessing upper level offices and other stairwells for returning to lower floors in the Courthouse, if spacing and access allow.
7. Limited use of the current employee break room to use of the refrigerator and microwave oven. Only two individuals may be in the break room at any time. Meals may be taken in the office area outside of the IT office, provided employees maintain spacing from others of at least six feet in each direction. Department heads will stagger employee lunch periods to ease demand for these spaces.
8. Only one person is permitted at any given time in the mail room.
9. Closure to the public of the lobby to the Sheriff's administrative offices and the jail. When the lobby reopens, limiting the number of individuals in the space at any given time, and adjusting hours of access as determined by the Gratiot County Sheriff.
10. Any travel not necessary for daily operations is prohibited.
11. Informational signage placed throughout building.
12. Limiting elevator occupancy to two persons. Post sign notifying staff and the public to this limitation.
13. Masks to be issued to all employees and will be issued to members of the public who have business in a county building. Masks must be worn by staff and the public in common areas, such as hallways, restrooms, meeting rooms.

14. Employees are to maintain spatial distancing from one another and members of the public of at least six feet at all times. The public will be encouraged to do so through signage throughout county buildings.
15. Technology and access is available for continuing to conduct meetings via electronic means.
16. Education of custodial staff on enhanced cleaning practices.
17. Cleaning supplies placed in each office, work area and meeting/conference/hearing room for use by users before and after each use of the space.
18. Supplies provided for thoroughly wiping tools, equipment and vehicles before and after each use.
19. Procuring and placing hand sanitizing units throughout common areas and providing hand sanitizer to each work area.
20. Training for all employees regarding workplace practices to protect health.

**APPENDIX B
EMPLOYEE ENTRY SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE**

*Name: _____

Date: _____

Time in: _____

Temperature: _____

In order to access the workplace, I affirm that in the past 24 hours, I have not experienced:

_____ Atypical cough

_____ Atypical shortness of breath

Or at least two of the following:

_____ Fever of 100 degrees F or 37.8 degrees C, or above

_____ Chills/Repeated Shaking

_____ Muscle Pain

_____ Sore Throat

_____ Headache

_____ New or Loss of Taste or Smell

If you answer “yes” to any of the symptoms listed above, you will not be permitted access to the premises. Please self-isolate at home and contact your primary care physician for direction.

- You should isolate at home for a minimum of 7 days since symptoms first appear.
- You must also have 3 days without fever and improvement in respiratory symptoms.

In the past 14 days have you:

_____ Had close contact (within six feet for a prolonged period of time) with someone with a diagnosis of COVID-19?

_____ Traveled internationally or domestically?

If you answer “yes” to either of these questions, you are not permitted access to the premises. Self-quarantine at home for 14 days. If no to all of the above, you may enter and remain on the premises provided you wear protective face covering while in enclosed spaces and common areas where it is not possible to remain at least six feet away from others.

*This information will not be utilized or distributed for any purpose other than Contact Tracing, i.e. to investigate contacts should you later experience symptoms of Covid-19 or be determined to have had contact with another individual who subsequently displays symptoms. The information is held in a secure area for not longer than 30 days.

VISITOR COVID-19 SCREENING FORM

*Name: _____ *Telephone #: _____

Court/Office Visiting: _____

Date: _____ Time In: _____ Temperature: _____

In the past 24 hours, have you experienced any of the following symptoms:

_____ Atypical cough

_____ Atypical shortness of breath

Or at least two of the following:

_____ Fever of 100 degrees F or 37.8 degrees C, or above

_____ Chills/Repeated Shaking

_____ Muscle Pain

_____ Sore Throat

_____ Headache

_____ New or Loss of Taste or Smell

In the past 14 days have you:

_____ Had close contact (within six feet for a prolonged period of time) with someone with a diagnosis of COVID-19?

_____ Traveled internationally or domestically?

If visitor answered “yes” to any of the above, visitor is not permitted access to the premises.

Visitors permitted access to any county building must wear a face mask for the duration of the visit.

Security Officer or Employee:

Contacted Court/Office and informed them the visitor was not allowed into the building.

Date: _____ Time: _____ Spoke to: _____

*This information will not be utilized or distributed for any purpose other than Contact Tracing, i.e. to investigate contacts should you later experience symptoms of Covid-19 or be determined to have had contact with another individual who subsequently displays symptoms. The information is held in a secure area for not longer than 30 days.

**GRATIOT COUNTY
COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PLAN
CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that I have reviewed the Gratiot County COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan attached hereto and to the best of my knowledge and belief:

1. It complies with Michigan Executive Order #2020-42 dated Thursday, April 9, 2020. Michigan Executive Order 2020-59 dated April 24, 2020 and successor Executive Orders.
2. The plan is consistent with the guidance from U. S. Department of Labor, Occupational Health and Safety Administration publication OSHA 3990-03-2020, Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID -19.
3. The plan is available on the Gratiot County website www.gratiotmi.com and in the office of the County Administrator at 214 E. Center Street, Ithaca, MI 48847.

I declare that the foregoing is true and correct.

Signature: /s/
Name of Official: George Bailey
Title: Chair, Gratiot County Board of Commissioners
Date: June 2, 2020

Revisions available to the Gratiot County Board of Commissioners prior to their regularly scheduled meeting on December 1, 2020.