



## Albuquerque Area Indian Health Board Inc. COVID-19 Reopening Plan

The Albuquerque Area Indian Health Board, Inc. is a tribally owned non-profit public health organization. Our mission is to advocate on behalf of American Indians through the delivery of quality health care services, which honors spiritual and cultural values.

As we navigate through this pandemic, it is important that we communicate a plan across our entire organization to ensure the health and wellness of our employees and the communities that we serve. The development of this plan has been guided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Resuming Business Toolkit—Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) <sup>1</sup>, current national, regional, and local data including but not limited to confirmed cases, deaths, and recovery. We will continue to update this plan as information becomes available.

The staff at AAIHB and ASSTEC will continue to work remotely through the month of August 2020. At which time the senior leadership within the organization will reassess the current conditions of the disease and its spread in our community to determine if staff can safely return to the office, continue to work remotely, or a hybrid work environment. At present, each program can have one staff member work from the office per day. Staff members who share an office space are strongly encouraged to stagger their schedules so that only one person is in the office.

The following procedures will be implemented immediately to ensure the continued safety and wellbeing of staff that are working in the building. Thank you all for your continued hard work and dedication to the organization. I appreciated your flexibility as we make decisions with information that is available to us. Continue to take care of yourself and each other. Together we will work towards creating a work environment in these uncertain times is that safe for us while continuing to meet the needs of the communities we serve.

Ahé' hee',

Ayn N. Whyte, M.S.

AAIHB Executive Director

## I. Prevention and Reducing Transmission Among Employees

AAIHB employees are asked to actively participate in these strategies to prevent and reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in the workplace. The AASTEC Service Area COVID-19 Situational Report will be sent via email to ensure staff have access to current COVID-19 information.

If a staff member is sick with COVID-19 or think they might have COVID-19, they need to contact their immediate supervisor and stay home. They should follow the CDC steps on what to do when sick <sup>2</sup>.

Close contact is anyone who has had one of the following contacts with a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 <sup>3</sup>:

- living in the same household as someone with COVID-19
- having spent two hours or longer in the same room or vehicle as someone with COVID-19
- having been face-to-face within six feet or less of someone with COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes in any other setting not listed above

You will need to:

- Take your temperature twice a day for all 14 days, and avoid the use of fever reducing medications (e.g. acetaminophen, ibuprofen, Tylenol, Advil) as much as possible. Report a fever to your health care provider. These medicines could hide an early symptom of COVID-19.
- Stay home until 14 days after last exposure and maintain social distance (at least 6 feet) from others at all times.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds – or use a hand sanitizer that has at least 60% alcohol.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid sharing household items like cups, dishes, eating utensils, towels and bedding.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as doorknobs, countertops, handrails, phones, computer keyboards, etc.

We encourage staff to practice CDC recommended precautions for preventing COVID-19<sup>4</sup>.

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol when soap and water are not readily

available.

- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or inside of the elbow when coughing or sneezing and immediately throw away tissue and wash hands.

Staff who are in the office should only work from their assigned work area and avoid using other employee's work supplies and equipment. They will also be encouraged to sanitize their work areas at the beginning and end of each work day.

The In and Out Board will be maintained ONLY by the front office staff. Please do not move magnets or write on the board. You can email AAIHB Administrative Assistant, Jessica White your daily status to put on the board. Please keep this information to a minimum. (i.e. Annual Leave, Sick Leave, Return Time and Date)

When in the office staff are asked to practice physical distancing<sup>5</sup> by maintaining 6 feet between themselves and others and avoid large gatherings. Physical distancing practices in the office will include the following:

- Kitchens, bathrooms, copy room, and other common areas in the building will be used one person at a time.
- Hallways will flow in a single direction throughout the building. Signs have been posted on the hallway walls to remind staff the direction of foot traffic.
- Stairs on the SW side of the building will ONLY be used to come up to the second floor, the stairs on the NE side of the building will ONLY be used for going down to the first floor.
- The stairs on the NE corner to the basement will ONLY be used to go down and the stairs on the south side will ONLY be used to access the first floor from the basement.
- There are small hallways that do not allow for just one way access, please wait for these spaces to be cleared if another person is waiting to get through.
- For visitors who are entering the building markers will be placed on the floor indicating where to stand to promote physical distancing. A clear loft wall will also be installed on the front desk counter. The sign in sheet will be maintained by front office staff ONLY.

Beginning, May 18, 2020, face coverings will be required for everyone who enters the AAIHB, Inc. building located at 7001 Prospect Pl. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110. Individuals who arrive without a face covering will receive a disposable face covering through the mail slot in the south entrance door. Additional information on how face coverings<sup>6</sup> can help slow the spread of COVID-19 can be found on CDC's website. Face coverings can ONLY be removed during eating, drinking, and if you are working alone in your office with the door closed.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) gave employers the green light to take employees' temperatures to try and ward off the spread of the coronavirus in guidance updated March 18, 2020. Starting July 6, 2020, no contact temperature checks will be conducted at the front desk. Staff who present with a low grade fever will be asked to return home and work remotely until they are fever-free for three consecutive days without medication (>100.4°).

AAIHB/AASTEAC staff are encouraged to get tested<sup>7</sup> but not required before they return to the office. In addition to IHS/Tribal/Urban Indian health facilities, testing sites<sup>8</sup> and testing information provided by the New Mexico Department of Health and private partners can be found online at the New Mexico Department of Health website. If internet access is unavailable or unreliable, call the New Mexico Department of Health Coronavirus Hotline at 1-855-600-3453 and ask for assistance with finding a testing location near you.

All staff are required to view *Preventing Disease Related Stigma during a Pandemic* presentation<sup>9</sup>. The presentation is located on the share drive. Upon review of this presentation, staff must sign an acknowledgement statement via their staff folder on the Bambee Human Resource platform.

## **II. Maintaining Healthy Business Operations**

The Executive Director will communicate all COVID-19 issues and it's impact on the workplace with staff. If staff have questions or concerns they can share them during staff meetings on Monday morning and/or communicate them directly to the Executive Director.

AAIHB has leave policies that follow federal workplace laws. AAIHB implements an employee leave policy based on annual and sick leave. Under this policy, eligible employees accrue leave each pay period. Employees who have completed their Orientation Period are eligible to receive paid time off. An Introductory Employee accumulates annual leave during the Orientation Period, but may not use the accumulated annual leave until successful completion of the Orientation Period. These policies are detailed further in the AAIHB Policy Manual<sup>10</sup> and available on the AAIHB share drive. If you cannot access the policy manual please contact Kristen Barton, who will email a copy to you directly.

## **III. Maintaining a Healthy Work Environment**

Face coverings for staff who do not have one or forgot them before coming into the office will be issued a disposable face covering.

AAIHB, Inc. office building's HVAC system was serviced in June 2020 to ensure proper airflow throughout the building.

AAIHB, Inc. will supply employees and visitors supplies necessary to practice precautions necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19. COVID-19 prevention posters have been displayed throughout the building to encourage cough/ sneeze etiquette and hand hygiene.

The custodial staff during their scheduled work hours will perform routine cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces throughout the building.

Staff will be asked to minimize non-essential travel. Travel that is deemed necessary, staff will be asked to check for symptoms of COVID-19 before their trip and will utilize the CDC's Traveler's Health Notices for guidance about current health issues that impact travelers' health, like disease outbreaks, special events or gatherings, and natural disasters, in specific destinations. If an employee becomes sick while conducting AAIHB business they should notify their immediate supervisor and follow the CDC's steps on what to do if you are sick.

Meetings should be conducted on virtual platforms until further notice. Upon which time in person meetings resume the following meeting room occupancy limits should be followed.

- Meeting room occupancy limit will be as follows:
  - ◆ Downstairs Meeting Room: 3 persons
  - ◆ Mountain View Room: 4 persons
  - ◆ Training Room: 6 persons

## Resources Sited:

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2020. Resuming Business Toolkit Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/Resuming-Business-Toolkit.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3IAAnF2WxuY93OxCo6ZVaz1HBABUbd0Zrh3v1E1CsMc2DtulnQ6ZpL58eSM>
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2020. What to do if you are sick—steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>
3. Albuquerque Area Southwest Tribal Epidemiology Center. 2020. Information For People Who have Had Close Contact with Someone with COVID-19. [http://db.aastec.net/covid-19/pdfs/aastec\\_covid\\_close-contact\\_NEW-5-13.pdf](http://db.aastec.net/covid-19/pdfs/aastec_covid_close-contact_NEW-5-13.pdf)
4. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2020. How to Protect Yourself and Others. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention-H.pdf>
5. Albuquerque Area Southwest Tribal Epidemiology Center. 2020. Social Distancing During COVID-19. [http://db.aastec.net/covid-19/pdfs/SocialDistancing\\_Final.pdf](http://db.aastec.net/covid-19/pdfs/SocialDistancing_Final.pdf).
6. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2020. Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.
7. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2020. Testing for COVID-19. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.
8. New Mexico Department of Health. 2020. Sites for COVID-19 Screening & Testing (Swab/Specimen Collection). <https://cv.nmhealth.org/public-health-screening-and-testing/>
9. Albuquerque Area Indian Health Board, Inc. 2020. Preventing Disease Related Stigma during a Pandemic. S:\Shared\COVID-19 Stigma Presentation.mp4.
10. Albuquerque Area Indian Health Board, Inc. 2020. AAIHB Policy Manual. S:\Shared\Policy Manual\AAIHB Policy Manual\_June2020.pdf.
11. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2020. Travel Health Notices. <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>