



New Hampshire Department of Safety Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Cooling Centers Recommendations during COVID-19

General Information

When establishing a cooling center, communities are encouraged to use the [Universal Guidance](#) as a resource and to adapt it to your site. While the universal guidance is focused on employers/employees, it can be adapted for working with the public.

Above all, the [proper use of cloth face coverings](#) and social distancing is the most effective tool to combat the spread of COVID-19.

Individual Control Measures and Screenings

- Provide temperature and symptom screenings for all visitors, including any volunteers, vendors, contractors, or other workers entering the Cooling Center.
- If possible, provide alternative cooling spaces in separate rooms within Cooling Center to accommodate visitors with symptoms and separate them from others.
- Encourage visitors to wear cloth face coverings while in the Center.
- Have hand washing stations and supplies readily available such as soap, hand sanitizer, tissues, trash baskets and clean, disposable face covers.

Staff/Volunteers

- Screen staff/volunteers for symptoms and temperatures.
- Staff/volunteers should wear masks.
- Ensure enough staff to cover critical functions of the Cooling Center.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

- Perform thorough cleaning on high traffic areas and frequently disinfect commonly used surfaces, including tables, doorknobs, toilets, and handwashing facilities. Limit sharing of items and clean/disinfect shared items between users.
- Clean touchable surfaces between shifts or between users, whichever is more frequent.
- Follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) cleaning and disinfection guidelines for community facilities, and cleaning facilities if someone is sick.

Physical Distancing Guidelines

- Maintain physical distancing of at least six feet between individuals.
- Either ensure adequate space for physical distancing or limit the number of visitors if the center is small.
- Consider creating spaces for individual family units (families who live together do not need to maintain physical distancing in a Cooling Center).
- If you are having trouble finding locations with adequate space, consider partnering with community facilities such as libraries, community centers, and movie theaters, if they can be configured to safely serve as cooling centers only.

Air Handling

- If possible, ensure the air system is in the dirty to clean directional flow.
- If filtration is available, use the highest filter possible.
- Employ ceiling fans with the upward airflow rotation.

- Use ultraviolet disinfection, if available.

Communications

- Identify and address potential language, cultural, and disability barriers associated with communicating COVID-19 information to staff, volunteers, and those visiting Cooling Centers.
- Post signs at entrances and in strategic places providing instruction on hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, cough etiquette, cloth face coverings, and physical distancing.
- Provide educational materials about COVID-19 in multiple languages, as needed.

Additional Resources

[NH COVID-19 Website](#) (NH Department of Health and Human Services)

[Safer at Home New Hampshire](#) (NH Governor's Economic Reopening Taskforce)

[Safer at Home Universal Guidelines](#) (NH Governor's Economic Reopening Taskforce)

[The use of Cooling Centers to Prevent Heat-Related Illness: Summary of Evidence and Strategies for Implementation](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

[COVID-19 and Cooling Centers](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)