

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## AN UPDATE ON COVID-19: INFORMATION ABOUT SEWARD COMMUNITY CO-OP

3/16/2020, 3:00 P.M. Central Time

Yesterday, on March 15, we learned that a staff member in our Franklin store location tested positive for the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). We sent a [communication to our community](#) as soon as we could and immediately closed the Franklin store. Last night we issued a [press release](#).

Early today we provided an [update](#) on social media.

Our customer and employee safety is our highest priority as we manage this public health crisis.

This is a very fluid situation. We ask for your patience and consideration as we work to respond to the conditions at the Franklin store. We have closed the Franklin store until further notice. We are following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) environmental cleaning and disinfection guidelines. We are working with the Minnesota Department of Health to make a determination as to when we will reopen. We will communicate further when we have more information.

The employee who tested positive works in the Wellness department. We have been reluctant to release that information out of concern for the privacy of the employee who is ill. The employee worked one shift in the last two weeks. That shift was 3–10 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10. We understand that this employee contracted COVID-19 through travel. Our hope is for this person to get well soon.

We are in the process of communicating with all employees who have been in contact with this employee to alert them of this situation.

At this time no other employee has tested positive. Of our 285 employees, 17 have called in sick reporting symptoms that include one of the four symptoms of illness. These are sore throat, cough, shortness of breath and fever. We are aware that at least five employees have been tested with the one positive result that we have shared publicly. We do not have the results yet of the other four employees. We anticipate that more employees will be tested.

Our Friendship store, which is located at 317 E. 38th St., is still open. We have implemented a 50-customer capacity in the store at one time. This is due to a request

from the CDC to limit gatherings to 50 people. We ask that our owners and community members be respectful to our staff while we manage store traffic and capacity levels.

We have closed the Creamery Café out of precaution and to support social distancing.

Because administrative employees have been assisting at the Franklin store, we have closed our administrative offices and employees are working from home when they can. Administrative employees may have been exposed to COVID-19. We are monitoring this closely.

All employees who are missing work time will be paid for their scheduled hours.

We are asking all employees to monitor their well-being, and if any symptom appears, to report it to HR as soon as possible.

We hope that you take care of yourself and that you look out for others in our community who may need support.

As more information becomes available, we will provide updates.

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