

Introduction:

Small Business Pandemic Flu Plan

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COVID-19 like any other flu spreads more quickly when people are close, such as within 6 feet of one another. This may be reflected when employees work in small working groups, clusters or on projects in small conference rooms.

Several employees working in small areas may accelerate employees getting sick faster and at a higher rate. In addition workers in open office spaces take more sick days than people in enclosed offices, so the company's work environment affects their risk.

Your company may also be affected from local quarantines, travel controls and restrictions and limitations on public assemblies. Public transportation may be closed or limited. These indirect effects are causing most of the economic damage in China.

Your workflow may also be affected even if you employees are healthy, as they take time to care for sick family members.

1.0 Immediate Steps: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/billconerly/2020/03/01/business-planning-for-the-covid-19-coronavirus/#50e5916b43a9>

- **Tell sick employees to stay home.** Businesses that do not offer paid sick leave should consider temporarily offering sick leave.
- **Identify critical employee groups.** This could be a shipping department, payment processing team, or any functions that the company absolutely must have operating every day. Then consider whether some of these functions can be covered by employees at a different location. For example, is it possible for one regional office to provide service to another regional office whose employees are sick?
- **Ensure that work-at-home systems are running well,** which includes computer security. Many businesses are now scammed by a fake email that tells an employee to send a payment to a new supplier. With many people working at home, businesses need protocols for phone conversations to limit this risk.
- **Talk to critical suppliers** of both goods and services about their ability to deliver reliably. Forward this article along to them, then have a conversation. Consider setting up alternative suppliers.
- **Identify employees with critical skills** who are not easily replaced on short notice. Look for others who could learn the task, recent retirees, or consider an outsourcing plan.
- **Plan to close some of your locations.** Think through security and equipment maintenance issues ahead of time.

2.0 How a Severe Pandemic Influenza Could Affect Workplaces

Unlike natural disasters or terrorist events, an influenza pandemic will be widespread, affecting multiple areas of the United States and other countries at the same time. A pandemic will also be an extended event, with multiple waves of outbreaks in the same geographic area; each outbreak could last from 6 to 8 weeks. Waves of outbreaks may occur over a year or more. Your workplace will likely experience:

Absenteeism - A pandemic could affect as many as 40 percent of the workforce during periods of peak influenza illness. Employees could be absent because they are sick, must care for sick family members or for children if schools or day care centers are closed, are afraid to come to work, or the employer might not be notified that the employee has died.

Change in patterns of commerce - During a pandemic, consumer demand for items related to infection control is likely to increase dramatically, while consumer interest in other goods may decline. Consumers may also change the ways in which they shop as a result of the pandemic. Consumers may try to shop at off-peak hours to reduce contact with other people, show increased interest in home delivery services, or prefer other options, such as drive-through service, to reduce person-to-person contact.

Interrupted supply/delivery - Shipments of items from those geographic areas severely affected by the pandemic may be delayed or cancelled.

3.0 Who Should Plan for a Pandemic

To reduce the impact of a pandemic on your operations, employees, customers and the general public, it is important for all businesses and organizations to begin continuity planning for a pandemic now. Lack of continuity planning can result in a cascade of failures as employers attempt to address challenges of a pandemic with insufficient resources and employees who might not be adequately trained in the jobs they will be asked to perform. Proper planning will allow employers to better protect their employees and prepare for changing patterns of commerce and potential disruptions in supplies or services. Important tools for pandemic planning for employers are located at www.pandemicflu.gov.

The U.S. government has placed a special emphasis on supporting pandemic influenza planning for public and private sector businesses deemed to be critical industries and key resources (CI/KR). Critical infrastructure are the thirteen sectors that provide the production of essential goods and services, interconnectedness and operability, public safety, and security that contribute to a strong national defense and thriving economy. Key resources are facilities, sites, and groups of organized people whose destruction could cause large-scale injury, death, or destruction of property and/or profoundly damage our national prestige and confidence. With 85 percent of the nation's critical infrastructure in the hands of the private sector, the business community plays a vital role in ensuring national pandemic preparedness and response. Additional guidance for CI/KR business is available at: www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/pdf.

4.0 How Influenza Can Spread Between People

Influenza is thought to be primarily spread through large droplets (droplet transmission) that directly contact the nose, mouth or eyes. These droplets are produced when infected people cough, sneeze or talk, sending the relatively large infectious droplets and very small sprays (aerosols) into the nearby air and into contact with other people. Large droplets can only travel a limited range; therefore, people should limit close contact (within 6 feet) with others when possible. To a lesser degree, human influenza is spread by touching objects contaminated with influenza viruses and then transferring the infected material from the hands to the nose, mouth or eyes. Influenza may also be spread by very small infectious particles (aerosols) traveling in the air. The contribution of each route of exposure to influenza transmission is uncertain at this time and may vary based upon the characteristics of the influenza strain.

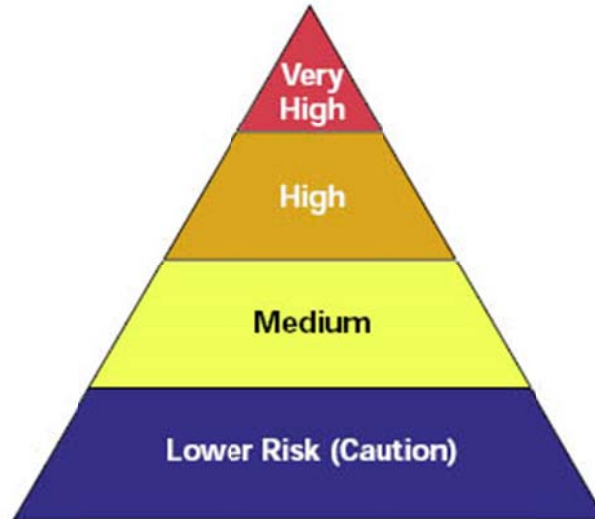
5.0 Classifying Employee Exposure to Pandemic Influenza at Work

Employee risks of occupational exposure to influenza during a pandemic may vary from very high to high, medium, or lower (caution) risk. The level of risk depends in part on whether or not jobs require close proximity to people potentially infected with the pandemic influenza virus, or whether they are required to have either repeated or extended contact with known or suspected sources of pandemic influenza virus such as coworkers, the general public, outpatients, school children or other such individuals or groups.

- **Very high exposure risk occupations** are those with high potential exposure to high concentrations of known or suspected sources of pandemic influenza during specific medical or laboratory procedures.
- **High exposure risk occupations** are those with high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of pandemic influenza virus.
- **Medium exposure risk occupations** include jobs that require frequent, close contact (within 6 feet) exposures to known or suspected sources of pandemic influenza virus such as coworkers, the general public, outpatients, school children or other such individuals or groups.
- **Lower exposure risk (caution) occupations** are those that do not require contact with people known to be infected with the pandemic virus, nor frequent close contact (within 6 feet) with the public. Even at lower risk levels, however, employers should be cautious and develop preparedness plans to minimize employee infections.
- **Employers of critical infrastructure and key resource employees (such as law enforcement, emergency response, or public utility employees) may consider upgrading protective measures for these employees beyond what would be suggested by their exposure risk due to the necessity of such services for the functioning of society as well as the potential difficulties in replacing them during a pandemic (for example, due to extensive training or licensing requirements).**

6.0 Occupational Risk Pyramid https://www.osha.gov/Publications/influenza_pandemic.html

Occupational Risk Pyramid for Pandemic Influenza



To help employers determine appropriate work practices and precautions, OSHA has divided workplaces and work operations into four risk zones, according to the likelihood of employees' occupational exposure to pandemic influenza.

These zones are shown in the shape of a pyramid to represent how the risk will likely be distributed. The vast majority of American workplaces are likely to be in the medium exposure risk or lower exposure risk (caution) groups.

1. Very High Exposure Risk:

Healthcare employees (for example, doctors, nurses, dentists) performing aerosol-generating procedures on known or suspected pandemic patients (for example, cough induction procedures, bronchoscopies, some dental procedures, or invasive specimen collection).

Healthcare or laboratory personnel collecting or handling specimens from known or suspected pandemic patients (for example, manipulating cultures from known or suspected pandemic influenza patients).

2. High Exposure Risk:

Healthcare delivery and support staff exposed to known or suspected pandemic patients (for example, doctors, nurses, and other hospital staff that must enter patients' rooms).

Medical transport of known or suspected pandemic patients in enclosed vehicles (for example, emergency medical technicians).

Performing autopsies on known or suspected pandemic patients (for example, morgue and mortuary employees).

3. Medium Exposure Risk:

Employees with high-frequency contact with the general population (such as schools, high population density work environments, and some high volume retail).

4. Lower Exposure Risk (Caution):

Employees who have minimal occupational contact with the general public and other coworkers (for example, office employees).

7.0 How to Maintain Operations During a Pandemic

As an employer, you have an important role in protecting employee health and safety and limiting the impact of an influenza pandemic. It is important to work with community planners to integrate your pandemic plan into local and state planning, particularly if your operations are part of the nation's critical infrastructure or key resources. Integration with local community planners will allow you to access resources and information promptly to maintain operations and keep your employees safe.

- Develop a Disaster Plan - Develop a disaster plan that includes pandemic preparedness (See www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/businesschecklist.html) and review it and conduct drills regularly.
- Be aware of and review federal, state and local health department pandemic influenza plans. Incorporate appropriate actions from these plans into workplace disaster plans.
- Prepare and plan for operations with a reduced workforce.
- Work with your suppliers to ensure that you can continue to operate and provide services.
- Develop a sick leave policy that does not penalize sick employees, thereby encouraging employees who have influenza-related symptoms (e.g., fever, headache, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches, or upset stomach) to stay home so that they do not infect other employees. Recognize that employees with ill family members may need to stay home to care for them.
- Identify possible exposure and health risks to your employees. Are employees potentially in contact with people with influenza such as in a hospital or clinic? Are your employees expected to have a lot of contact with the general public?
- Minimize exposure to fellow employees or the public. For example, will more of your employees work from home? This may require enhancement of technology and communications equipment.
- Identify business-essential positions and people required to sustain business-necessary functions and operations. Prepare to cross-train or develop ways to function in the absence of these positions. It is recommended that employers train three or more employees to be able to sustain business-necessary functions and operations and communicate the expectation for available employees to perform these functions if needed during a pandemic.

- Plan for downsizing services but also anticipate any scenario which may require a surge in your services.
- Recognize that, in the course of normal daily life, all employees will have non-occupational risk factors at home and in community settings that should be reduced to the extent possible. Some employees will also have individual risk factors that should be considered by employers as they plan how the organization will respond to a potential pandemic (e.g., immuno-compromised individuals and pregnant women).
- Stockpile items such as soap, tissue, hand sanitizer, cleaning supplies and recommended personal protective equipment. When stockpiling items, be aware of each product's shelf life and storage conditions (e.g., avoid areas that are damp or have temperature extremes) and incorporate product rotation (e.g., consume oldest supplies first) into your stockpile management program.
- Make sure that your disaster plan protects and supports your employees, customers and the general public. Be aware of your employees' concerns about pay, leave, safety and health. Informed employees who feel safe at work are less likely to be absent.
- Develop policies and practices that distance employees from each other, customers and the general public. Consider practices to minimize face-to-face contact between employees such as e-mail, websites and teleconferences. Policies and practices that allow employees to work from home or to stagger their work shifts may be important as absenteeism rises.
- Organize and identify a central team of people or focal point to serve as a communication source so that your employees and customers can have accurate information during the crisis.
- Work with your employees and their union(s) to address leave, pay, transportation, travel, childcare, absence and other human resource issues.
- Provide your employees and customers in your workplace with easy access to infection control supplies, such as soap, hand sanitizers, personal protective equipment (such as gloves or surgical masks), tissues, and office cleaning supplies.
- Provide training, education and informational material about business-essential job functions and employee health and safety, including proper hygiene practices and the use of any personal protective equipment to be used in the workplace. Be sure that informational material is available in a usable format for individuals with sensory disabilities and/or limited English proficiency. Encourage employees to take care of their health by eating right, getting plenty of rest and getting a seasonal flu vaccination.
- Work with your insurance companies, and state and local health agencies to provide information to employees and customers about medical care in the event of a pandemic.
- Assist employees in managing additional stressors related to the pandemic. These are likely to include distress related to personal or family illness, life disruption, grief related to loss of family, friends or coworkers, loss of routine support systems, and similar challenges. Assuring

timely and accurate communication will also be important throughout the duration of the pandemic in decreasing fear or worry. Employers should provide opportunities for support, counseling, and mental health assessment and referral should these be necessary. If present, Employee Assistance Programs can offer training and provide resources and other guidance on mental health and resiliency before and during a pandemic.

8.0 Protect Employees and Customers

Educate and train employees in proper hand hygiene, cough etiquette and social distancing techniques. Understand and develop work practice and engineering controls that could provide additional protection to your employees and customers, such as: drive-through service windows, clear plastic sneeze barriers, ventilation, and the proper selection, use and disposal of personal protective equipment.

These are not comprehensive recommendations. The most important part of pandemic planning is to work with your employees, local and state agencies and other employers to develop cooperative pandemic plans to maintain your operations and keep your employees and the public safe. Share what you know, be open to ideas from your employees, then identify and share effective health practices with other employers in your community and with your local chamber of commerce.

9.0 How Organizations Can Protect Their Employees

For most employers, protecting their employees will depend on emphasizing proper hygiene (disinfecting hands and surfaces) and practicing social distancing. Social distancing means reducing the frequency, proximity, and duration of contact between people (both employees and customers) to reduce the chances of spreading pandemic influenza from person-to-person. All employers should implement good hygiene and infection control practices.

Occupational safety and health professionals use a framework called the "hierarchy of controls" to select ways of dealing with workplace hazards. The hierarchy of controls prioritizes intervention strategies based on the premise that the best way to control a hazard is to systematically remove it from the workplace, rather than relying on employees to reduce their exposure.

In the setting of a pandemic, this hierarchy should be used in concert with current public health recommendations.

The types of measures that may be used to protect yourself, your employees, and your customers (listed from most effective to least effective) are **engineering controls, administrative controls, work practices, and personal protective equipment (PPE)**. Most employers will use a combination of control methods. There are advantages and disadvantages to each type of control measure when considering the ease of implementation, effectiveness, and cost. For example, hygiene and social distancing can be implemented relatively easily and with little expense, but this control method requires employees to modify and maintain their behavior, which may be difficult to sustain.

On the other hand, installing clear plastic barriers or a drive-through window will be more expensive and take a longer time to implement, although in the long run may be more effective at preventing transmission during a pandemic. Employers must evaluate their particular workplace to develop a

plan for protecting their employees that may combine both immediate actions as well as longer term solutions.

9.1 Here is a description of each type of control:

Work Practice and Engineering Controls - Historically, infection control professionals have relied on personal protective equipment (for example, surgical masks and gloves) to serve as a physical barrier in order to prevent the transmission of an infectious disease from one person to another.

This reflects the fact that close interactions with infectious patients is an unavoidable part of many healthcare occupations. The principles of industrial hygiene demonstrate that work practice controls and engineering controls can also serve as barriers to transmission and are less reliant on employee behavior to provide protection.

Work practice controls are procedures for safe and proper work that are used to reduce the duration, frequency or intensity of exposure to a hazard. When defining safe work practice controls, it is a good idea to ask your employees for their suggestions, since they have firsthand experience with the tasks. These controls should be understood and followed by managers, supervisors and employees. When work practice controls are insufficient to protect employees, some employers may also need engineering controls.

Engineering controls involve making changes to the work environment to reduce work-related hazards. These types of controls are preferred over all others because they make permanent changes that reduce exposure to hazards and do not rely on employee or customer behavior. By reducing a hazard in the workplace, engineering controls can be the most cost-effective solutions for employers to implement.

During a pandemic, engineering controls may be effective in reducing exposure to some sources of pandemic influenza and not others.

For example, installing sneeze guards between customers and employees would provide a barrier to transmission. The use of barrier protections, such as sneeze guards, is common practice for both infection control and industrial hygiene. However, while the installation of sneeze guards may reduce or prevent transmission between customers and employees, transmission may still occur between coworkers. Therefore, administrative controls and public health measures should be implemented along with engineering controls.

Examples of work practice controls include:

- Providing resources and a work environment that promotes personal hygiene. For example, provide tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, hand sanitizer, disinfectants and disposable towels for employees to clean their work surfaces.
- Encouraging employees to obtain a seasonal influenza vaccine (this helps to prevent illness from seasonal influenza strains that may continue to circulate).

- Providing employees with up-to-date education and training on influenza risk factors, protective behaviors, and instruction on proper behaviors (for example, cough etiquette and care of personal protective equipment).
- Developing policies to minimize contacts between employees and between employees and clients or customers.

More information about protecting yourself, your coworkers and employees, and your family can be found at www.pandemicflu.gov.

Examples of engineering controls include:

- Installing physical barriers, such as clear plastic sneeze guards.
- Installing a drive-through window for customer service.
- In some limited healthcare settings, for aerosol generating procedures, specialized negative pressure ventilation may be indicated.

Administrative Controls - Administrative controls include controlling employees' exposure by scheduling their work tasks in ways that minimize their exposure levels. Examples of administrative controls include:

- Developing policies that encourage ill employees to stay at home without fear of any reprisals.
- The discontinuation of unessential travel to locations with high illness transmission rates.
- Consider practices to minimize face-to-face contact between employees such as e-mail, websites and teleconferences. Where possible, encourage flexible work arrangements such as telecommuting or flexible work hours to reduce the number of your employees who must be at work at one time or in one specific location.
- Consider home delivery of goods and services to reduce the number of clients or customers who must visit your workplace.
- Developing emergency communications plans. Maintain a forum for answering employees' concerns. Develop internet-based communications if feasible.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - While administrative and engineering controls and proper work practices are considered to be more effective in minimizing exposure to the influenza virus, the use of PPE may also be indicated during certain exposures. If used correctly, PPE can help prevent some exposures; however, they should not take the place of other prevention interventions, such as engineering controls, cough etiquette, and hand hygiene (see www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/stopgerms.htm).

Examples of personal protective equipment are gloves, goggles, face shields, surgical masks, and respirators (for example, N-95). It is important that personal protective equipment be:

- Selected based upon the hazard to the employee;
- Properly fitted and some must be periodically refitted (e.g., respirators);
- Conscientiously and properly worn;
- Regularly maintained and replaced, as necessary;
- Properly removed and disposed of to avoid contamination of self, others or the environment.
- Employers are obligated to provide their employees with protective gear needed to keep them safe while performing their jobs. The types of PPE recommended for pandemic influenza will be based on the risk of contracting influenza while working and the availability of PPE. Check the www.pandemicflu.gov website for the latest guidance.

The Difference Between a Surgical Mask and a Respirator

It is important that employers and employees understand the significant differences between these types of personal protective equipment. The decision on whether or not to require employees to use either surgical/procedure masks or respirators must be based upon a hazard analysis of the employees' specific work environment and the differing protective properties of each type of personal protective equipment. The use of surgical masks or respirators is one component of infection control practices that may reduce transmission between infected and non-infected persons.

It should be noted that there is limited information on the use of surgical masks for the control of a pandemic in settings where there is no identified source of infection. There is no information on respirator use in such scenarios since modern respirators did not exist during the last pandemic. However, respirators are now routinely used to protect employees against occupational hazards, including biological hazards such as tuberculosis, anthrax, and hantavirus. The effectiveness of surgical masks and respirators has been inferred on the basis of the mode of influenza transmission, particle size, and professional judgment.

To offer protection, both surgical masks and respirators must be worn correctly and consistently throughout the time they are being used. If used properly, surgical masks and respirators both have a role in preventing different types of exposures. During an influenza pandemic, surgical masks and respirators should be used in conjunction with interventions that are known to prevent the spread of infection, such as respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, and avoidance of large gatherings.

Surgical Masks - Surgical masks are used as a physical barrier to protect employees from hazards such as splashes of large droplets of blood or body fluids. Surgical masks also prevent contamination by trapping large particles of body fluids that may contain bacteria or viruses when they are expelled by the wearer, thus protecting other people against infection from the person wearing the surgical mask.

Surgical/procedure masks are used for several different purposes, including the following:

- Placed on sick people to limit the spread of infectious respiratory secretions to others.
- Worn by healthcare providers to prevent accidental contamination of patients' wounds by the organisms normally present in mucus and saliva.
- Worn by employees to protect themselves from splashes or sprays of blood or body fluids; they may also have the effect of keeping contaminated fingers/hands away from the mouth and nose.
- Surgical masks are not designed or certified to prevent the inhalation of small airborne contaminants. These small airborne contaminants are too little to see with the naked eye but may still be capable of causing infection. Surgical/procedure masks are not designed to seal tightly against the user's face. During inhalation, much of the potentially contaminated air passes through gaps between the face and the surgical mask, thus avoiding being pulled through the material of the mask and losing any filtration that it may provide. Their ability to filter small particles varies significantly based upon the type of material used to make the surgical mask, and so they cannot be relied upon to protect employees against airborne infectious agents. Only surgical masks that are cleared by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and legally marketed in the United States have been tested for their ability to resist blood and body fluids.

Respirators - Respirators are designed to reduce an employee's exposure to airborne contaminants. Respirators are designed to fit the face and to provide a tight seal between the respirator's edge and the face. A proper seal between the user's face and the respirator forces inhaled air to be pulled through the respirator's filter material and not through gaps between the face and respirator. Respirators must be used in the context of a comprehensive respiratory protection program, (see OSHA standard 29 CFR 1910.134, or www.osha.gov/SLTC/respiratoryprotection/index.html).

It is important to medically evaluate employees to assure that they can perform work tasks while wearing a respirator. Medical evaluation can be as simple as a questionnaire (found in Appendix C of OSHA's Respiratory Protection standard, 29 CFR 1910.134). Employers who have never before needed to consider a respiratory protection plan should note that it can take time to choose a respirator to provide to employees and to arrange for a qualified trainer and provide training, fit testing, and medical evaluation for their employees. If employers wait until an influenza pandemic actually arrives, they may be unable to provide an adequate respiratory protection program in a timely manner.

All respirators used in the workplace are required to be tested and certified by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). NIOSH-approved respirators are marked with the manufacturer's name, the part number, the protection provided by the filter (e.g., N95), and "NIOSH." This information is printed on the facepiece, exhalation valve cover, or head straps. If a respirator does not have these markings it has not been certified by NIOSH. Those respirators that are surgical N95 respirators are also cleared by the FDA and, therefore, are appropriate for circumstances in which protection from airborne and body fluid contaminants is needed.

Please note: *As of February 29, 2020 Dr. Jerome Adam US Surgeon General is asking people to not buy masks. " They are NOT effective in preventing general public from catching VOCID-19, but if healthcare providers can't get them to care for sick patients, it puts them and our*

communities at risk”

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10 Steps Every Employer Can Take to Reduce the Risk of Exposure to Pandemic Influenza in Their Workplace

The best strategy to reduce the risk of becoming infected with influenza during a pandemic is to avoid crowded settings and other situations that increase the risk of exposure to someone who may be infected. If it is absolutely necessary to be in a crowded setting, the time spent in a crowd should be as short as possible. Some basic hygiene (see www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/stopgerms.htm) and social distancing precautions that can be implemented in every workplace include the following:

- Encourage sick employees to stay at home.
- Encourage your employees to wash their hands frequently with soap and water or with hand sanitizer if there is no soap or water available. Also, encourage your employees to avoid touching their noses, mouths, and eyes.
- Encourage your employees to cover their coughs and sneezes with a tissue, or to cough and sneeze into their upper sleeves if tissues are not available. All employees should wash their hands or use a hand sanitizer after they cough, sneeze or blow their noses.
- Employees should avoid close contact with their coworkers and customers (maintain a separation of at least 6 feet). They should avoid shaking hands and always wash their hands after contact with others. Even if employees wear gloves, they should wash their hands upon removal of the gloves in case their hand(s) became contaminated during the removal process.
- Provide customers and the public with tissues and trash receptacles, and with a place to wash or disinfect their hands.
- Keep work surfaces, telephones, computer equipment and other frequently touched surfaces and office equipment clean. Be sure that any cleaner used is safe and will not harm your employees or your office equipment. Use only disinfectants registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and follow all directions and safety precautions indicated on the label.
- Discourage your employees from using other employees' phones, desks, offices or other work tools and equipment.
- Minimize situations where groups of people are crowded together, such as in a meeting. Use e-mail, phones and text messages to communicate with each other. When meetings are necessary, avoid close contact by keeping a separation of at least 6 feet, where possible, and assure that there is proper ventilation in the meeting room.

- Reducing or eliminating unnecessary social interactions can be very effective in controlling the spread of infectious diseases. Reconsider all situations that permit or require employees, customers, and visitors (including family members) to enter the workplace. Workplaces which permit family visitors on site should consider restricting/eliminating that option during an influenza pandemic. Work sites with on-site day care should consider in advance whether these facilities will remain open or will be closed, and the impact of such decisions on employees and the business.
- Promote healthy lifestyles, including good nutrition, exercise, and smoking cessation. A person's overall health impacts their body's immune system and can affect their ability to fight off, or recover from, an infectious disease.

Workplaces Classified at Lower Exposure Risk (caution) for Pandemic Influenza: What to do to protect employees

- If your workplace does not require employees to have frequent contact with the general public, basic personal hygiene practices and social distancing can help protect employees at work. Follow the general hygiene and social distancing practices previously recommended for all workplaces).
- Also, try the following:
 - Communicate to employees what options may be available to them for working from home.
 - Communicate the office leave policies, policies for getting paid, transportation issues, and day care concerns.
 - Make sure that your employees know where supplies for hand hygiene are located.
 - Monitor public health communications about pandemic flu recommendations and ensure that your employees also have access to that information.
 - Work with your employees to designate a person(s), website, bulletin board or other means of communicating important pandemic flu information.

More information about protecting employees and their families can be found at:
www.pandemicflu.gov

11. What Employees Living Abroad or Who Travel Internationally for Work Should Know

Employees living abroad and international business travelers should note that other geographic areas have different influenza seasons and will likely be affected by a pandemic at different times than the United States. The U.S. Department of State emphasizes that, in the event of a pandemic, its ability to assist Americans traveling and residing abroad may be severely limited by restrictions on local and international movement imposed for public health reasons, either by foreign governments and/or

the United States.

Furthermore, American citizens should take note that the Department of State cannot provide Americans traveling or living abroad with medications or supplies even in the event of a pandemic.

In addition, the Department of State has asked its embassies and consulates to consider preparedness measures that take into consideration the fact that travel into or out of a country may not be possible, safe, or medically advisable during a pandemic. Guidance on how private citizens can prepare to shelter in place, including stocking food, water, and medical supplies, is available at the www.pandemicflu.gov website. Embassy stocks cannot be made available to private American citizens abroad, therefore, employers and employees are encouraged to prepare appropriately. It is also likely that governments will respond to a pandemic by imposing public health measures that restrict domestic and international movement, further limiting the U.S. government's ability to assist Americans in these countries. As it is possible that these measures may be implemented very quickly, it is important that employers and employees plan appropriately.

More information on pandemic influenza planning for employees living and traveling abroad can be found at:

- www.pandemicflu.gov/travel/index.html
- www.cdc.gov/travel
- www.state.gov/travelandbusiness

For More Information

Federal, state and local government agencies are your best source of information should an influenza pandemic take place. It is important to stay informed about the latest developments and recommendations since specific guidance may change based upon the characteristics of the eventual pandemic influenza strain, (for example, severity of disease, importance of various modes of transmission).

Below are several recommended websites that you can rely on for the most current and accurate information:

- www.pandemicflu.gov - (Managed by the Department of Health and Human Services; offers one-stop access, including toll-free phone numbers, to U.S. government avian and pandemic flu information.)
- www.osha.gov - (Occupational Safety and Health Administration website)
- www.cdc.gov/niosh - (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health website)
- www.cdc.gov - (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website)
- www.fda.gov/cdrh/ppe/fluoutbreaks.html - (U.S. Food and Drug Administration website)

**Emergency Preparedness
Continuity of Operations**

Organization – _____

Recovery Time Objective - _____ (*days, weeks, months*)

Key Business Units/Core Services –

Critical Functions

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