



Iowa Department of Public Health Advancing Health Through the Generations

Thomas J. Vilsack
Governor

Sally J. Pederson
Lt. Governor

Mary Mincer Hansen, R.N., Ph.D.
Director

Dear Iowa Business Council Members, Owners and Managers,

As members of Iowa's business community, a business owner or manager have you begun to contemplate how your company will manage the impact of an outbreak of Pandemic Influenza? The impact to your employees? Your services?

The Iowa Department of Public Health has developed the Iowa Pandemic Influenza Response Plan, an Annex to the State of Iowa Bio-Emergency Response Plan. This plan is specifically designed to ensure an effective response in the event of an influenza pandemic. The plan addresses the roles of the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), Iowa's Public Health Laboratory the University Hygienic Laboratory (UHL), and other state agencies should an influenza pandemic occur.

In our planning efforts we have worked in concert with other state agencies and our local partners including public health, hospitals, emergency medical services, emergency management agencies and others. However, we cannot function independently of private business and industry to protect the health and critical infrastructure of Iowa. The businesses and employers of our state play key roles in protecting employees' health; safety and limiting the impact an influenza pandemic may have on the economy and society.

The impact of an influenza pandemic on the local economy and business could be potentially devastating. In Iowa 15-35% of Iowa's population may be affected. There is a potential for high levels of employee absenteeism as well as illness and death making these planning and preparedness efforts for the next influenza pandemic imperative. Every business, regardless of services provided, products manufactured or number of employees will benefit from pandemic influenza planning.

Therefore, for your use, we have created a "Pandemic Influenza Business Planning Kit". This kit provides a checklist of items for your consideration during your planning, fact sheets for employee education and a planning guide. This information and more can be found at <http://www.protectioniowahealth.org>. We highly recommend that you closely collaborate with your Local County Public Health Agency in your pandemic influenza planning; they are critical assets and excellent resources in your preparedness efforts.

These documents are provided for your use. Please utilize them to meet the planning needs of your specific business. If you have any questions related to this planning kit or the included documents do not hesitate to contact the Iowa Department of Public Health's Center for Disaster Operation and Response at 515-242-5206.

Sincerely,

Mary Mincer Hansen, R.N., PhD
Director

Patricia Quinlisk, M.D.
State Public Health Medical Director/Epidemiologist

What is “pandemic influenza”?

Pandemic influenza refers to a very severe strain of influenza that has the ability to spread across the world. The word, “pandemic”, means that a disease has caused illness in a person on nearly every continent. Many other diseases throughout the history of the world have been pandemic. An example is HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS is currently pandemic since it has become widespread throughout the world.

Influenza occurs at different times throughout the world. Influenza season strikes in the U.S. in the fall and winter months likely because people stay inside often and are in close contact with others who may be ill.

What is the difference between influenza (flu) and pandemic influenza?

Influenza (flu) happens every year in nearly every country in the world. It spreads through a population for a few months and then will disappear or will move onto another country. Influenza usually occurs in the fall and winter months. Also, people who usually become ill with influenza are the elderly, the very young and people with chronic medical conditions.

Pandemic influenza could strike at any time in the year. The strain will be one never seen before and there will not likely be a vaccine immediately available. It will spread quicker and easier from person to person compared to non-pandemic influenza. Pandemic influenza may cause illness in any person, and in the past has caused illness in more healthy, middle-aged people than those who usually become ill with influenza. It will probably circulate several times around the world, or in “waves”. Overall, pandemic influenza will cause more disease and death than seasonal influenza.

How often do influenza pandemics occur?

Pandemics of influenza have occurred three times about every 100 years. From 1900-2000, there were three influenza pandemics, all about 30 years apart.

What is Avian or Bird Flu?

Avian influenza is currently making many different types of birds in Asia sick. There are several different types of avian influenza and most types are found in birds. Avian influenza is often found in birds and is not easily spread from birds to people. The type found in birds in Asia right now has spread to a few people, but has not spread from person to person. There is concern about this type of avian influenza because it is a type of influenza that has caused serious illness in people in the past. The influenza virus changes all the time so there is also worry if this type of avian influenza ever changed so that it could spread person to person, many people would become ill.

Can pandemic influenza infect animals?

Influenza infects different types of animals, usually pigs, birds and sometimes horses, cats, dogs and other animals. Pandemic influenza will likely be able to infect animals and may even infect people because of their contact with infected animals.

Most household pets in the U.S. do not carry or are able to catch strains of influenza that make people ill therefore you do not need to worry about your household pet infecting you or your family with influenza during normal influenza season. If pandemic influenza occurs, you may need to take action to protect your pet and your family.

What is the Iowa Department of Public Health doing to prevent and/or prepare for pandemic influenza?

Throughout every “flu season”, usually in the fall and winter months, Iowa Dept. of Public Health (IDPH) tracks the different types of influenza that occur in people who visit their doctor, attend

school, child care or live in a long term care facility. IDPH is also developing a pandemic influenza response plan. For more information on influenza, pandemic influenza and avian influenza refer to our website at www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/flu.asp.

Is there a vaccine for pandemic influenza?

Currently, there is not a vaccine for pandemic influenza because we do not know what strain will cause pandemic influenza. Many national governments are working with researchers and scientists on a vaccine against the H5N1 strain of avian influenza, which has infected people and birds in Asia.

Is Iowa stockpiling vaccine for the public?

IDPH is not stockpiling vaccine or antiviral medication for pandemic influenza for three reasons.

- The federal government has started to stockpile antiviral medication.
- For a vaccine to provide protection, it must be specific against the new strain of influenza (the vaccine must “match” the strain causing human illness).
- Even though the federal government has started to stockpile antiviral medication, there is no guarantee this medication will be effective or prevent illness due to a new strain of influenza.

The best preparation and defense for a possible pandemic is the ability to detect and identify a new strain of influenza virus quickly, and then determine the best response measures to limit exposure and spread, and identify medication(s) to effectively treat the disease.

Is there medicine for pandemic influenza?

Depending on the type of influenza, there may be no medicine or a limited amount of medicine to treat those who are ill. Once a pandemic strain is identified, then public health officials will have to determine if any current medications may be used or if new ones need to be developed. The federal government is stockpiling antiviral medication in the event that a pandemic of influenza happens. However, there is no guarantee that the medication they are stockpiling will work against the pandemic strain of influenza.

Is Iowa or the U.S. government stockpiling medication for pandemic influenza?

Iowa is not stockpiling medication and does not the Iowa Dept. of Public Health recommend health care professional stockpile antiviral medication. The U.S. government is currently increasing the stockpile of an antiviral drug in the event that it may be effective against the kind of influenza virus causing the pandemic.

How can I protect my family from pandemic influenza?

The best way to protect yourself and others is to do the following:

- Wash your hands frequently with warm water and soap and scrubbing for at least 15 seconds.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing and to use disposable tissues.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when hands are not visibly soiled.
- Get the influenza vaccine every year to significantly lower your chances of getting pneumonia due to influenza.
- People over the age of 65 and others with underlying illness should also receive the pneumococcal vaccine to lower their chances of getting a bacterial pneumonia and / or along with influenza.
- If you are ill, stay home and call your doctor.

Links

- [Information about influenza pandemics \(Centers for Disease Control\)](#)
- [National Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response Plan \(Health and Human Services\)](#)
- [WHO](#)

FLU FIGHTERS

Tips on how to keep your office healthy this winter

By Cindy Hadish

Telephones, indispensable at the office, at the same time are notorious for spreading disease when shared.

Add to the mix shared computers, drinking fountains, handrails and doorknobs, and the work environment can become an illness incubator during flu season.

Employers and employees can reduce the risk of getting sick with basic hygiene, said Meghan Harris, epidemiologist with the Iowa Department of Public Health.

The "three-foot rule" applies to active coughing or sneezing.

Three feet or more is considered a safe distance to stay away while coughing or sneezing to prevent spreading airborne illness, Harris said, and a tissue should always be used and immediately thrown away.

Staying at home can not only help the sick employee recover, but also prevent co-workers from getting ill, she said.

That doesn't necessarily mean staying home for the duration of a cold.

On the Net

► For more information, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/flu.asp

Harris said if a person is actively coughing, has a fever, sore throat and body aches, that worker likely has the flu and should be advised to stay home.

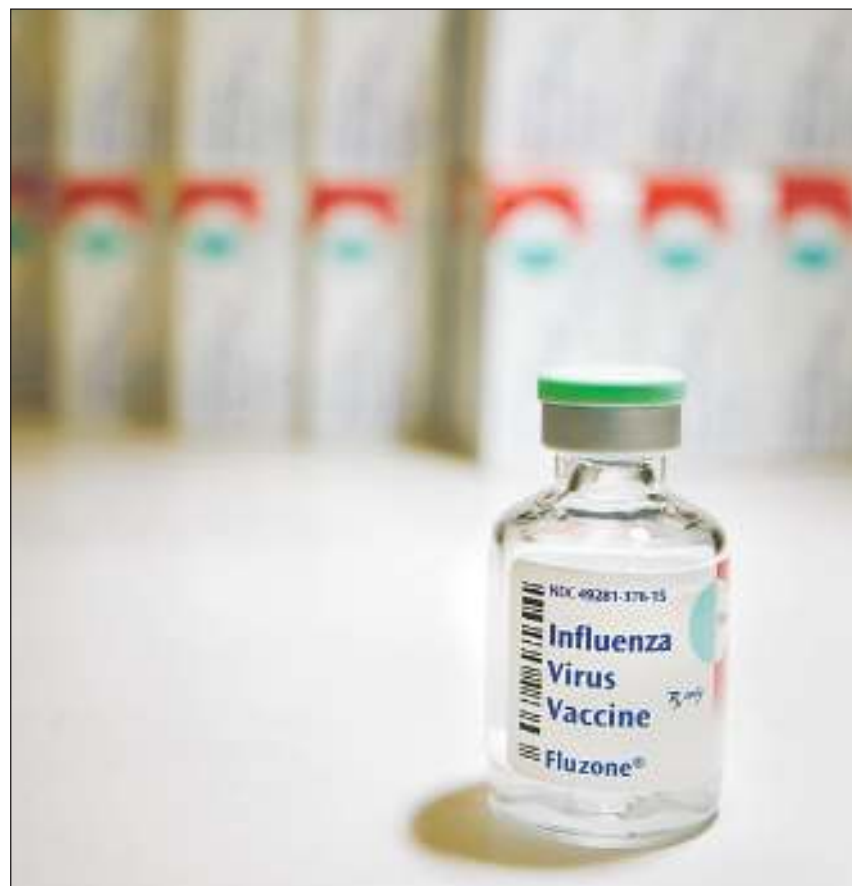
Employees also should be encouraged to get an annual flu shot, she said, to prevent getting the flu, or getting a milder version if the person does get sick.

Those shared telephones, computers and common surfaces should be regularly cleaned, Harris said.

Commercial disinfectants or bleach solutions of one-fourth cup bleach mixed with 1 gallon of water work well.

Other business tips offered by the Iowa Department of Public Health's Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology:

- **Influenza is often spread** by coughs and sneezes. Make sure disposable tissues are



Jim Slosiarek photo/The Edge

available in work areas for runny noses and sneezing.

- **Restrooms should be checked regularly** to ensure soap and paper towels are available for employee use.

- **Encourage the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer** at employee desks. Hand sanitizer is effective in killing germs on hands when they are not visibly soiled. Appropriate times to use hand sanitizer are after coughing, sneezing or contact with infected surfaces, such as a keyboard or phone.

- **People often catch**

influenza and other viruses by picking up the virus on their hands, and then touching the nose, eyes or mouth, so wash hands several times a day, using soap and warm water for 15 to 20 seconds.

- **Employees should be encouraged** to contact their doctors when they become ill during flu season. If they are ill with influenza, anti-viral drugs may reduce the severity and length of illness when taken early in the illness. Antivirals need to be started within 48 hours of becoming ill to be effective.



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NOT YOUR TYPICAL CPAs

Influenza (“the flu”) is a sudden, respiratory disease that spreads easily. It is characterized by the sudden onset of fever, body aches, sore throat, headache, tiredness and cough.

Tips for the workplace:

- Employees with symptoms of influenza should not come to work. Excluding ill employees from the work place can help reduce the spread of the illness to other employees. If possible, allowing employees to work from home when ill can help reduce the spread of disease.
- People often catch influenza and other viruses by picking up the virus on their hands, and then touching their nose, eyes, or mouth. Wash hands several times a day, using soap and warm water for 15-20 seconds (this is generally around the time it takes to sing the ABC song). Dry hands with paper towels or automatic hand dryers. Restrooms should be checked regularly to ensure that soap and paper towels are available for employee use.
- Influenza is often spread by coughs and sneezes. Make sure disposable tissues are available in work areas for runny noses and sneezing. Individuals should always cover their mouths with their upper arm or a tissue when coughing and use a tissue when sneezing or blowing their nose. Tissues should be thrown away immediately, and then hands should be washed. (If you cannot wash hands, rub hands with an alcohol hand gel).
- Encourage the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer at employee desks. Hand sanitizer is effective in killing germs on hands when they are not visibly soiled. Appropriate times to use hand sanitizer are after coughing, sneezing, or contact with infected surfaces (e.g. contact with a keyboard, phone)
- Employees should be encouraged to contact their physician when they become ill during influenza season. If they are ill with influenza, anti-viral drugs may reduce the severity and length of illness when they are taken early in the illness. Antivirals need to be started within 48 hours of becoming ill to be effective.
- Employees should avoid sharing of saliva by not sharing glasses, forks, spoons, etc.
- Common use surfaces, such as water fountains, door handles, handrails, eating surfaces, desks, etc., should be cleaned frequently with disinfectants. Commercial disinfectants or bleach solutions are appropriate. (Mixing ¼ cup bleach with 1 gallon of water makes bleach solution. This should be mixed fresh daily).

Who should get the influenza vaccine?

It is recommended that everyone get the influenza vaccine however certain people are at risk for developing severe illness or complications from influenza and are strongly encouraged to get the influenza vaccine every year. Those groups include the following:

- persons aged ≥ 2 years with chronic health conditions (e.g. heart and lung disease, asthma, diabetes, etc.);
- residents of long-term-care facilities;
- persons aged ≥ 50 years, especially those over age 65;
- children aged 6--23 months;
- pregnant women;
- health-care personnel who provide direct patient care;
- household contacts and out-of-home caregivers of children aged < 6 months.

Any otherwise healthy non-pregnant person aged 5-49 is eligible for the influenza nasal vaccine (FluMist®).

BUSINESS PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PLANNING CHECKLIST



In the event of pandemic influenza, businesses will play a key role in protecting employees' health and safety as well as limiting the negative impact to the economy and society. Planning for pandemic influenza is critical. To assist you in your efforts, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have developed the following checklist for large businesses. It identifies important, specific activities large businesses can do now to prepare, many of which will also help you in other emergencies. Further information can be found at www.pandemicflu.gov and www.cdc.gov/business.

1.1 Plan for the impact of a pandemic on your business:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify a pandemic coordinator and/or team with defined roles and responsibilities for preparedness and response planning. The planning process should include input from labor representatives.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify essential employees and other critical inputs (e.g. raw materials, suppliers, sub-contractor services/products, and logistics) required to maintain business operations by location and function during a pandemic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Train and prepare ancillary workforce (e.g. contractors, employees in other job titles/descriptions, retirees).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop and plan for scenarios likely to result in an increase or decrease in demand for your products and/or services during a pandemic (e.g. effect of restriction on mass gatherings, need for hygiene supplies).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine potential impact of a pandemic on company business financials using multiple possible scenarios that affect different product lines and/or production sites.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine potential impact of a pandemic on business-related domestic and international travel (e.g. quarantines, border closures).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Find up-to-date, reliable pandemic information from community public health, emergency management, and other sources and make sustainable links.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish an emergency communications plan and revise periodically. This plan includes identification of key contacts (with back-ups), chain of communications (including suppliers and customers), and processes for tracking and communicating business and employee status.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Implement an exercise/drill to test your plan, and revise periodically.

1.2 Plan for the impact of a pandemic on your employees and customers:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Forecast and allow for employee absences during a pandemic due to factors such as personal illness, family member illness, community containment measures and quarantines, school and/or business closures, and public transportation closures.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Implement guidelines to modify the frequency and type of face-to-face contact (e.g. hand-shaking, seating in meetings, office layout, shared workstations) among employees and between employees and customers (refer to CDC recommendations).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Encourage and track annual influenza vaccination for employees.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evaluate employee access to and availability of healthcare services during a pandemic, and improve services as needed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evaluate employee access to and availability of mental health and social services during a pandemic, including corporate, community, and faith-based resources, and improve services as needed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify employees and key customers with special needs, and incorporate the requirements of such persons into your preparedness plan.

1.3 Establish policies to be implemented during a pandemic:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish policies for employee compensation and sick-leave absences unique to a pandemic (e.g. non-punitive, liberal leave), including policies on when a previously ill person is no longer infectious and can return to work after illness.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish policies for flexible worksite (e.g. telecommuting) and flexible work hours (e.g. staggered shifts).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish policies for preventing influenza spread at the worksite (e.g. promoting respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette, and prompt exclusion of people with influenza symptoms).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish policies for employees who have been exposed to pandemic influenza, are suspected to be ill, or become ill at the worksite (e.g. infection control response, immediate mandatory sick leave).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish policies for restricting travel to affected geographic areas (consider both domestic and international sites), evacuating employees working in or near an affected area when an outbreak begins, and guidance for employees returning from affected areas (refer to CDC travel recommendations).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Set up authorities, triggers, and procedures for activating and terminating the company's response plan, altering business operations (e.g. shutting down operations in affected areas), and transferring business knowledge to key employees.

1.4 Allocate resources to protect your employees and customers during a pandemic:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide sufficient and accessible infection control supplies (e.g. hand-hygiene products, tissues and receptacles for their disposal) in all business locations.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enhance communications and information technology infrastructures as needed to support employee telecommuting and remote customer access.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure availability of medical consultation and advice for emergency response.

1.5 Communicate to and educate your employees:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop and disseminate programs and materials covering pandemic fundamentals (e.g. signs and symptoms of influenza, modes of transmission), personal and family protection and response strategies (e.g. hand hygiene, coughing/sneezing etiquette, contingency plans).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anticipate employee fear and anxiety, rumors and misinformation and plan communications accordingly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disseminate information to employees about your pandemic preparedness and response plan.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide information for the at-home care of ill employees and family members.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop platforms (e.g. hotlines, dedicated websites) for communicating pandemic status and actions to employees, vendors, suppliers, and customers inside and outside the worksite in a consistent and timely way, including redundancies in the emergency contact system.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify community sources for timely and accurate pandemic information (domestic and international) and resources for obtaining counter-measures (e.g. vaccines and antivirals).

1.6 Coordinate with external organizations and help your community:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Collaborate with insurers, health plans, and major local healthcare facilities to share your pandemic plans and understand their capabilities and plans.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Collaborate with federal, state, and local public health agencies and/or emergency responders to participate in their planning processes, share your pandemic plans, and understand their capabilities and plans.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communicate with local and/or state public health agencies and/or emergency responders about the assets and/or services your business could contribute to the community.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Share best practices with other businesses in your communities, chambers of commerce, and associations to improve community response efforts.

Thomas J. Vilsack, Governor



Sally J. Pederson, Lt. Governor

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Pandemic Influenza Planning Guide for Iowa Businesses

January 2006

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Iowa workplaces often have multiple locations/sites and some establishments may employ their own health staff, characteristics will vary from business to business, and need to be taken into account in adapting this plan to their own situation.

Background

According to the World Health Organization (WHO),

“An influenza pandemic occurs when a new influenza virus appears against which the human population has no immunity, resulting in several simultaneous epidemics worldwide with enormous numbers of deaths and illness. With the increase in global transport and communications, as well as urbanization and overcrowded conditions, epidemics due to the new influenza virus are likely to quickly take hold around the world.”

Influenza is a highly contagious respiratory virus that is responsible for annual epidemics in the United States and other countries. Each year an average of 200,000 people are hospitalized and 36,000 die in the U.S. from influenza infection or a secondary complication. During an influenza pandemic the level of illness and death from influenza will likely increase dramatically worldwide.

The impact of an influenza pandemic on the local economy and business processes could be devastating. It is likely that 15-35% of Iowa's population will be affected. There is a potential for high levels of illness and death, as well as significant disruption to society and our economy, making planning for the next influenza pandemic imperative.

Assumptions

Predicted spread and severity:

- Illness rates in Iowa's population: 15-35%
- Global spread in: 3 months
- Vaccine availability: 6 months after initial outbreak
- Anti-viral treatment: Likely to be in short supply and may not be effective

Potential Effects:

- Large percentages of the working population may be unable to work for days to weeks during the pandemic.
- Diminished numbers of people and expertise.
- Diminished emergency and essential services – fire, police, and medical.
- Diminished other services – retail, transport, government departments, etc.

Business Effects:

- Loss of people to operate the business
- Loss of services from suppliers
- Operations (e.g. production) and support (e.g. information technology) may be affected.
- Business travel may be affected.

Guide Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to assist in managing the impact of an influenza pandemic on employees and business based on two main strategies:

- Reducing spread of the virus within business facilities; and
- Sustaining essential services

This guide provides recommendations for businesses to develop a pandemic plan including the following:

- Communication to business from external or internal sources regarding the pandemic virus
- Activities to reduce the spread of the virus
 - o Reducing risk of infected persons entering the business facility
 - o Social distancing (reduce person to person interactions) i.e. postponing conferences, conducting telephone meetings.
 - o Cleaning of facilities.
 - o Educating employees to reduce concern.
 - o Handling employees who become ill at work and those who may have been exposed to the virus at work.
- For Travelers
 - o Travel advice
- Prevention/Treatment
 - o Influenza vaccine
 - o Anti-viral medication
 - o Antibiotics
- Maintenance of Essential Business Activities
 - o Identification of essential people and business functions.
 - o Planning for absenteeism and supplier disruption.
 - o Communication with employees and customers.
 - o Education for employees and customers.
 - o Short, medium and long term planning.

Communication

Business Communication for Professionals

- The business approach to the pandemic influenza threat is to align with the local public health agency and the Iowa Department of Public Health recommendations to avoid causing unnecessary panic. Key: partner closely with the local public health agency and establish communication mechanisms.
- A primary communication channel will be the health website at <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/flu.asp>. Specific professional information for business health practitioner(s) will also be made available both through this website and through your local public health agency; Local communication plans should be planned.

Communications to Employees

- Communications to employees should be managed per your individual

Business Continuity Plan.

- Communications may be via email, Internet and Intranet website, telephone, or postal services.
- Links to relevant business or external sites should be utilized.
- Educate employees regarding informational hotline numbers that may be provided by your company.
- The business should assure that all communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate.
- Educational communications should be provided to encourage employees to acquire and maintain regular healthcare services.
- Educational communications should be provided regarding company policies for employee's compensation and sick leave absences that may be unique to a pandemic.

Reducing the Spread of the Virus

- Reducing the risk of infected persons entering the work/business site
- Appoint a pandemic coordinator and/or team. This individual or team should have defined roles and ensures that preparedness and pandemic response planning occurs.
- All planning activities should include input from labor/employee representatives as appropriate.
- The pandemic coordinator and/or team should compose and maintain the Pandemic Influenza Plan for the company/business, manage health related activities, coordinate communication and education.
- Upon notification that a pandemic is occurring, the pandemic coordinator and/or team for each facility should do the following:
 - o Set up prominent notices at all entry points to facility, advising staff and visitors not to enter if they have symptoms of influenza
 - o Educate employees on how to stop the spread of the virus and notices may be placed around the workplace (including entrances, notice boards, meeting rooms and restrooms). Notices should contain information regarding hand hygiene, covering coughs and sneezes, and social distancing.
 - o Ensure adequate supplies of tissues, hand sanitizing gels, and cleaning supplies are available for employees.
 - o The pandemic coordinator should ensure that employee education includes a pandemic influenza fact sheet containing information regarding stopping the spread of the virus and performing effective social distancing.
 - o Shared work areas such as desktops, tables, door knobs, stair rails, etc. should be cleaned between shifts or more often if possible.

Social Distancing

Social distancing refers to strategies to reduce the spread of the virus between people; For example, postponing conferences, conducting meetings over the phone or working from home.

- Education on social distancing should be distributed to all employees.

- Where operationally allowed, shift changes should be managed as follows: when one shift goes off duty, there should be an interval before the next shift begins so that the worksite can be thoroughly ventilated and cleaned (either opening all doors and windows or turning up air conditioning/heating systems).
- Social distancing strategies may include:
 - o Avoid meeting people face to face – use the telephone, video conferencing and the Internet to conduct business as much as possible even when participants are in the same building.
 - o Avoid any unnecessary travel and cancel or postpone non-essential meetings, gatherings, workshops and training sessions.
 - o If possible, arrange for employees to work from home or work flex hours to avoid crowding at the workplace.
 - o If public transportation is used, ensure good ventilation within the vehicle, wash hands often and ensure that everyone covers coughs and sneezes.
 - o Bring lunch and eat at desk or away from others (avoid crowded eating areas). Introduce staggered lunchtimes to reduce the numbers of people in the lunchroom.
 - o Minimize face-to-face interactions.
 - o If face-to-face meetings are unavoidable, minimize the meeting time. Choose a large, well ventilated meeting room and do not sit close to each other if possible; avoid shaking hands or hugging.
 - o Set up systems where customers can pre-order/request information via phone, email, fax and have order or information ready for pick-up or delivery.
 - o Encourage employees to practice social distancing outside of the workplace.

Workplace Cleaning

- Office cleaning of shared work areas, counters, railings, door knobs and stair wells should be performed more frequently during the influenza pandemic.
- Filters of the air conditioning systems should be cleaned and changed frequently.
- Telephones should not be shared.
- Specialized cleaning solutions are not essential. Standard cleaning products are adequate (including soap and water), most important is the frequency of cleaning.
- Details of cleaning solutions can be found in the fact sheets on the IDPH web site <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/flu.asp> “Recommendations for Business”

Educating Employees to Eliminate Concern

It is likely there will be anxiety regarding the pandemic influenza and this may

contribute to increased absenteeism and/or increased distress to staff,

- Suggested methods to address this:
 - o Educate employees on your business' preparedness efforts.
 - o As more information becomes available, provide timely updates.
 - o During the pandemic, continue to educate employees on the progress of the pandemic and its effects.
 - o As needed, assure support mechanisms are readily available to employees for example: mental health, social services and faith based resources.

Managing Illness in Employees

- Pandemic coordinators should post information on what to do if people get sick while at work.
- If a person becomes ill, or if someone observes that another person is exhibiting symptoms of influenza at work; make sure the ill person leaves the work place as soon as possible and that proper supervisor notification is completed.
- The employee should be encouraged to seek medical care and report back to pandemic coordinator if influenza is likely.

Travelers

Travel Related Issues

- Travel advisories are implemented by the Iowa Department of Public Health and should be communicated to all employees.
- Businesses should determine and enforce appropriate travel policies based on the Iowa Department of Public Health travel advisories.
- Advise will be provided to travelers abroad by public health officials.
- Advise to recent travelers will be provided by public health officials regarding self checking for symptoms and seeking medical care.
- Information concerning travel may be obtained from the Iowa Department of Public Health's web site <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/flu.asp>.

Treatment

Influenza Vaccine

Public health officials will make the best use of available vaccine and will inform businesses and the public on how the vaccine will be used appropriately. It may take six months or more to manufacture the vaccine from the beginning of the pandemic.

- Encourage employees to obtain the annual seasonal influenza vaccines.
- The Iowa Department of Public Health and the Center for Disease Control will provide advice on priority groups for pandemic influenza immunization.

Anti-Viral Medication

Antiviral medications may play an integral role in the treatment and prevention of

pandemic influenza; however, the certainty of their efficacy against a pandemic strain of influenza is currently unknown. Unlike the influenza vaccine, certain antiviral medications are already available, though there may be barriers in attempting to use them as a treatment and prevention tool in the event of pandemic influenza.

- The Iowa Department of Public Health will provide recommendations of the use of anti-viral medication.
- The pandemic coordinator should check the Iowa Department of Public Health's website for the latest information on the use of anti-viral medications and recommendations

Continuity of Operations

Your business' administration/management team should ensure that core functions, people and skills have been identified and that strategies are in place to manage these prior to the pandemic.

Business Plan Maintenance

- The plan should be reviewed and revised annually.
- The plan should be exercised and tested annually.
- Exercise results should be incorporated in to plans.
- Exercise and share your plan with your partners such as
 - o Your insurers
 - o Your health plans
 - o Local hospitals and healthcare providers
 - o Local public health agency

Sometimes the simplest things
have the biggest impact.



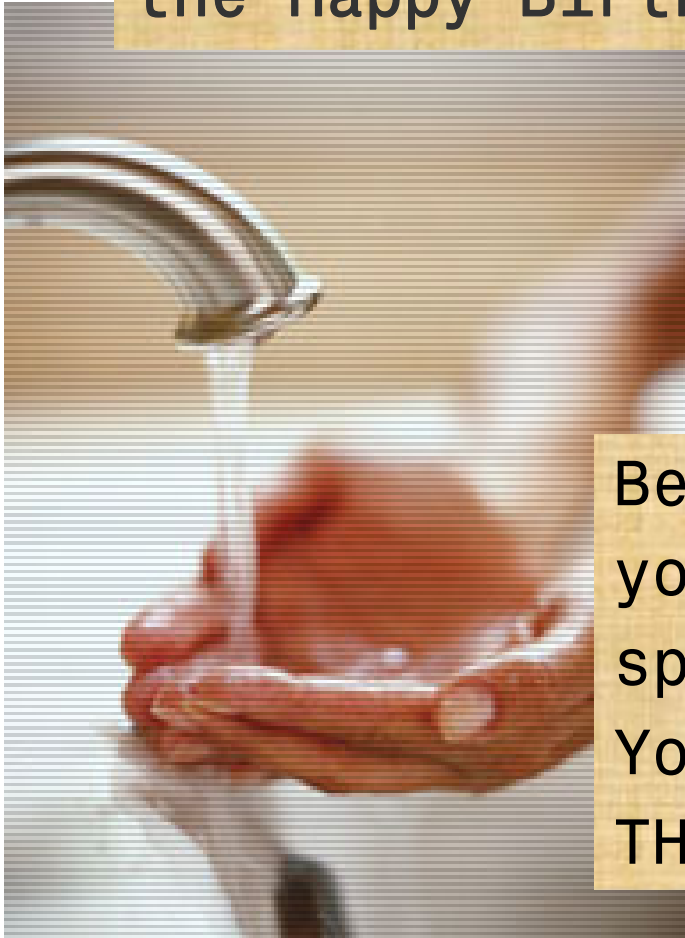
**Cover your cough with a
tissue or your elbow.**

Influenza is most easily spread if someone with flu is coughing in close proximity to another person. Flu season starts in the winter months and continues through spring. One case of influenza can spread to several people, even to healthy adults.

This message brought to you by the Iowa Department of Public Health.



15 seconds. That's twice through
the Happy Birthday song.



Better to be caught singing to
yourself than be caught
spreading germs in the office.
Your co-workers will
THANK YOU.

The best defense against influenza germs and other germs as well is frequent
and correct hand washing.

This message brought to you by the Iowa Department of Public Health.



Think kids are the only
ones with dirty hands?

Think again.



15 seconds of soap, water and
scrubbing

It's the best way to get rid of the
“grown-up” germs that can make you
sick.

The best defense against influenza germs and other germs as
well is frequent and correct hand washing.

This message brought to you by the Iowa Department of Public Health.



Want to improve office productivity?



Follow these three simple rules:

1. Stay home when ill.
2. Cover your coughs with a tissue or your elbow.
3. Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Influenza is most easily spread if someone with flu is coughing in close proximity to another person. Flu season starts in the winter months and continues through spring. One case of influenza can spread to several people, even to healthy adults.