

Action Steps to Keep Your Federal Workforce Healthy

Regardless of the size or type of your government operation, planning and taking action *now* can help ensure continuity of operations and help protect your employees from the flu.

Plan Now

- ▶ **Update employee emergency contact information.**
- ▶ **Review your current emergency plans or develop a new plan to ensure continuity of operations.** Share the plan and policies with your employees to make sure they understand their roles and responsibilities.
- ▶ **Review relevant agency and Government-wide human resource policies and practices.** Visit www.opm.gov/pandemic.
- ▶ **Develop human resource management strategies to deal with circumstances that may arise if flu conditions become more severe.**
- ▶ **Review your respective collective bargaining agreement and specific policies about leave options,** telework, and other flexible work plans that may be available to employees. Consult with human resource offices as needed.
- ▶ **Add a “widget” or “button” to your agency’s web page** or employee web site so employees can access the latest information on the flu:
 - www.cdc.gov/widgets
 - www.cdc.gov/SocialMedia/Campaigns/H1N1/buttons.html
 - www.hhs.gov/web/library/hhsfluwidgets.html
 - www.flu.gov/news/socialmedia

Take Steps Now

Take steps now and continue during the flu season to help protect the health of your employees.

- ▶ **Promote hand washing and covering coughs and sneezes.** Provide tissues, no-touch trash cans and hand soap. Also provide alcohol-based hand rubs for use if soap and water are not available. Offer education on hand washing and covering coughs and sneezes in an easy-to-understand format and in appropriate languages. Go to www.flu.gov for more information.
- ▶ **Clean surfaces and items that are more likely to have frequent hand contact** with cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas. Additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is not recommended.
- ▶ **Encourage all employees who want protection from flu to get vaccinated for seasonal flu.** Also encourage employees who are recommended to get the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine to receive it when it becomes available. For more information about priority groups for vaccinations, visit www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu/vaccination/acip.htm
- ▶ **Encourage sick employees at higher risk of complications from flu to contact their health care provider as soon as possible.** People at higher risk for flu complications include pregnant women and people with certain chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, heart disease, or diabetes). Taking antiviral medicines early might prevent severe complications from the flu, such as hospitalization or death.
- ▶ **Provide information to employees overseas** about what to do if they become sick.



- ▶ **Employees who are sick should request leave from their supervisors and once approved, stay home** until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever (have chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating). Make sure fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicines (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen).
- ▶ **Employees who get sick at work should request leave from their supervisors and once approved, go home as soon as possible.**
- ▶ **Prepare for school dismissal or closure of early childhood development programs.** School dismissals and closure of early childhood development programs are more likely when flu conditions are more severe. Be prepared to allow workers to stay home to care for their children if schools are dismissed or early childhood development programs are closed.

Take Additional Steps if Flu Conditions are More Severe

The flu may become more severe and additional steps may be necessary to slow the spread of flu and maintain a healthy workforce.

- ▶ **Consider active screening of employees who report to work, where health practitioners are present at the worksite.** At the beginning of the workday or the beginning of each shift, ask all employees about flu-like symptoms and those with symptoms should be encouraged to go home.
- ▶ **Extend the time sick employees stay home to at least 7 days.** People who are still sick after 7 days should continue to stay home until at least 24 hours after symptoms have gone away, even if they feel better sooner.
- ▶ **Try to change work duties, workspace, or work schedules for employees who are at higher risk for flu complications** to reduce the possibility of getting sick at work. If this cannot be done, allow these employees to work from home, or stay home if feasible.
- ▶ **Plan to minimize face-to-face contact between employees.** Encourage the use of tele-work and alternative work schedules to reduce the number of employees who must be at the work site at the same time or in one specific location.
- ▶ **Provide guidance to employees who are traveling overseas on what to do if they become sick.** Also provide information about possible travel delays, health screenings, and other activities targeted towards travelers.

For more information:

- ▶ **Visit: www.flu.gov**
- ▶ **Contact CDC 24 Hours/Every Day**
 - 1 (800) CDC-INFO (232-4636)
 - TTY: (888) 232-6348
 - cdcinfo@cdc.gov