

TEMPLATE

Pandemic Response Plan: K-12 & Higher Ed

WRITTEN BY

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I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose

[Insert Jurisdiction Here] has established a Pandemic Flu Response Plan to guide the district in preparing for and responding to an influenza outbreak.

The goals of the plan are:

- To protect the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors;
- To minimize the adverse impact on operations, personnel and facilities;
- To provide for continuity of operations to the greatest extent possible;
- To effectively communicate with all involved parties throughout the duration of a pandemic; and
- To recover following a pandemic as soon as possible.

Authority

The Pandemic Flu Response Plan is authorized by the [Insert Authority Here]. The plan is designed to work in conjunction with national, state and local public health officials and local first responders. The United States Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that a comprehensive approach of a community college to the management of a pandemic influenza outbreak consider performance in four key areas:

- Planning and Coordination;
- Continuity of Student Learning and Operations;
- Infection Control Policies and Procedures; and
- Communications Planning.

This plan addresses each area and is consistent with the mission and values of [Insert Organization Here]. A copy of the plan will be provided to the local emergency management offices, city police and fire departments, and county public health agencies. The Pandemic Response Plan will be maintained by the office of the [Insert Administrator].

II. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

A Pandemic Emergency

A pandemic emergency may have characteristics which are different than many other emergencies, including a longer planning timeframe and the likelihood of an extended period of implementation. During the implementation of a pandemic response, a major goal will be the continuation of critical functions, including instruction, security, payroll, and other functions defined by the [Insert Administrator].

Under foreseeable conditions during a pandemic flu response, [insert organization] organizational structure for decision-making and implementation will coincide with existing non-emergency roles. To the extent possible, the [Insert organization structure here] will serve the command staff functions. Roles and/or responsibilities for pandemic responses are defined in this plan for students and employees.

The [Insert Administrator Here] may activate an Expanded Pandemic Advisory Committee to help create and implement plans and inform the president and the cabinet. Members of the committee may represent: [Insert organization here]

An emergency response organizational structure which follows the concepts of the National Incident Management System has been created for other emergency situations. At any time, the [Insert Administrator Here] may activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and impose the organizational structure defined in the All Hazards Emergency Operations Plan.

If the [Insert Administrator Here] activates the EOC, a message will be sent from the [Insert Administrator Here] to the Emergency Command and General Staffs by Titan HST informing personnel to take appropriate action. Due to the threat of contagion, staff will NOT convene at a physical Emergency Operations Center during Stage 4 pandemic emergencies. Meetings and communications will be conducted via Titan HST.

III. PANDEMIC CLASSIFICATION STAGES

The Pandemic Response Plan establishes four stages of response to the threat of a pandemic. The [Insert Administrator] will designate which stage of pandemic flu emergency exists, based on available information and reports.

| STAGE | DEFINITION | EXAMPLE SITUATIONS |
|---------|---|--|
| STAGE 1 | CDC, state or local health department warnings of impending threat. | Highly contagious and/or severe flu strains in the U.S. that seem likely to spread to the Northwest. |
| STAGE 2 | Pandemic flu with severe health outcomes present in [Insert State Here]. | Press and/or public health reports and warnings of widespread flu outbreaks in or near [Insert State Here]. |
| STAGE 3 | Pandemic flu cases rising locally. | Rising number of local cases reported. Spike in infections among staff or students. |
| STAGE 4 | A declaration by the [insert administration here] that a pandemic emergency exists. | Threat or existence of a rising number of illnesses among employees or students. Absenteeism rates which inhibit the conduct of normal business. |



IV. BASIC STEPS FOR CONTAMINATION PREVENTION

The WHO and the CDC have recommended basic steps to help stop the spread of the current pandemic (COVID-19). Stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak, available on the WHO and CDC websites and follow your local public health authority.

Most people who become infected experience mild illness and recover, but it can be more severe for others. Take care of your health and protect others by doing the following:

If You Have a Fever and Difficulty Breathing, Seek Medical Help Early

Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of your local health authority. **WHY?** National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on the situation in your area. Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also protect you and help prevent spread of viruses and other infections.

Stay Informed and Follow Medical Advice Given by Your Healthcare Provider

Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19. Follow advice given by your healthcare provider, your national and local public health authority or your employer on how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. **WHY?** National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on whether COVID-19 is spreading in your area. They are best placed to advise on what people in your area should be doing to protect themselves.



Wash Your Hands Frequently

Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and warm water. When washing your hands do so for at least 40 seconds (sing the ABC's twice). **WHY?** Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.



Maintain Social Distancing

Maintain at least 6 feet distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing. **WHY?** When someone coughs or sneezes, they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.



Don't Touch Nose, Eyes & Mouth

Avoid touching your nose, your eyes and your mouth with unwashed hands. **WHY?** Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.



Practice Respiratory Hygiene

Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately. **WHY?** Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

V. BASIC CONSIDERATIONS AND PREPERATIONS

PREPERATIONS: IMMEDIATE & ONGOING

In order for any response to pandemic to be effective, proper preparations and training must occur. The [Insert Administrator Here] will designate staff to lead and report the completion of the performance objectives, and to report obstacles and gaps discovered.

The legal authorities will be reviewed, and a policy framework prepared, including infection control policies and procedures. The [Insert Organization Here] has long-standing infection control policies and procedures that will help limit the effect of pandemic on campus, including the promotion of hand hygiene, cough/sneeze etiquette, and bloodborne/airborne pathogens awareness and training. During this period, employees will be asked to implement surface-cleaning, hygiene and social distancing protocols.

Budget and responsibility will be assigned for the procurement, storage and provision of a broad variety of infection prevention supplies such as soap, alcohol-based hand hygiene products, sanitary wipes, tissues, disposal receptacles, latex and non-latex gloves, sanitary masks, public health posters, appropriate signage, etc.

Policies for student and employee leave related to circumstances arising from a pandemic event have been and continue to be developed. The adoption of pandemic travel restrictions will be considered. CDC and State Department websites will be consulted for advisories.

Performance Objectives for the Preparation Period

- Complete, adopt and post the Pandemic Flu Response Plan.
- Name the members of a pandemic advisory committee and the Expanded Committee Inform employees of the Plan.
- Encourage employees to become vaccinated, if possible (seasonal and/or other virus). Inform students of the Plan at the beginning of each quarter.
- Provide the Plan to local public health officials and first responders. Conduct appropriate training.
- Key personnel establish home computer access links Identify critical functions and critical personnel:
 - o Assign staff, back-up staff and support personnel for critical functions. Prepare faculty to sustain instruction.

- o IT establish hardware, software and training.
- o Develop continuity plans for all classes and inform students. Draft communications for each stage of pandemic response.

Collaborate with and develop plans and communication for: [Insert Partners, other schools, contractors, service providers, etc.]

Monitor these sites for recommendations:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/index.htm>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/index.htm>
- https://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs_laboratory/en/

VI. DECLARATIONS OF PANDEMIC RESPONSE

STAGE 1

[Insert Administrator Here] issues a declaration of stage 1 Pandemic Response.

Communications:

- [Insert Administrator Here]: Email to all employees
- [Insert Administrator Here]: Email to all students (and parents K-12)
- [Insert Administrator Here]: Forward president's message to all classes
- [Insert Administrator Here]: Forward president's email and review hygiene precautions PIO: release news to press
- [Insert Administrator Here]: post public health posters, brochures
- [Insert Administrator Here]: distribute alcohol wipes, gloves, masks, disposal containers Liaison: notify public health and first responder community

Cabinet meets to review plans identify gaps or unanticipated events or circumstances assign responsibility for addressing each item.

Stage 1 Performance Objectives

All personnel review, discuss and implement public health hygiene protocols. Communicate to all students the critical need to observe hygiene.

Adopt and publicize policy that anyone with symptoms stay home per CDC.

STAGE 2

[Insert Administrator Here] issues declaration of stage 2 Pandemic Flu Response.

President and cabinet meet and establish Stage 2 strategies, including the need to forcefully reiterate hygiene behaviors and self-isolation for employees and students.

Communications:

- [Insert Administrator Here]: email to all employees
- [Insert Administrator Here]: email to all students (and Parents K-12)
- [Insert Administrator Here]: forward president's message to all classes; discuss continuity plan Supervisors: forward president's email and review unit plans
- [Insert Administrator Here]: notify public health and first responder community

Stage 2 Performance Objectives

Review the reliability and dependability of information flow to [Insert Organization Here]: Absenteeism rates among employees, students.
Reports of rumors, anxieties or community feedback.
Plans for future events, trips and activities with students or in facilities Communication regarding legal, ethical, logistical or other barriers to actions.
Faculty: prepare all classes for instruction based on continuity plan. Faculty: positive report of email/Bb/Angel test

Communications:

- email to Trustees, School Board:
- email to all personnel
- email to all students (or parents K-12)
- PIO: release news to press and appropriate signage

STAGE 3

[Insert Administrator Here] issues declaration of stage 3 Pandemic Response.

Communications:

- [Insert Administrator Here]: communicate with faculty, assess continuity plan Faculty: voluntarily move instruction to the

Internet, based on plan. **[Insert Administrator Here]**: coordinate message with public health and first responder community

Stage 3 Performance Objectives

Determine responsibility, in the event a decision is made, for implementing cancellation or modification of:

- athletic events
- public events
- student field trips and student travel
- employee travel
- rental of facilities by outside groups
- conversation partner program.

Finalize Fact Sheet and distribute to front-line personnel Positive reporting by faculty of communications with students via email **[Insert Administrator Here]**: Request faculty implement continuity plans if convenient.

Seek and discuss information about operations:

Leadership and Administration - analyze trigger points for Stage 4, other actions Instructional Units – feedback regarding absenteeism, instruction

Consider obstacles/obligations/problems with any further action steps:

Instructional Units – special considerations for students in labs, etc. reporting and federal reporting
Facilities – accepting deliveries, protecting physical plant Business Operations – bank deposits, costs of response options
Communications – community perception, alignment with other agency actions.

STAGE 4

[Insert Administrator Here] issues declaration of stage 4 Pandemic Response.

[Insert Administrator Here/Organization] meet/conference call to discuss options. Based on reports of absenteeism, the severity of the flu, public health recommendations, and other information, options to be considered include:

Convening meeting of the Expanded Pandemic Advisory Committee Mandatory move to online instruction

Cancellation of any or all:

- athletic events
- public events

- student field trips and student travel
- employee travel
- rental of facilities by outside groups
- conversation partner program
- closure or partial closure of campuses

Communications:

Inform personnel, students, community of status, planned actions
Liaison: coordinate message with public health and first responder community

Stage 4 Performance Objectives

Review and assure information flow to Cabinet:

IT - level of IT and infrastructure use vs. capacity issues–

HR - payroll and personnel issues

Facilities - building maintenance, cleaning protocols Business

Operations - bank deposits, campus deliveries

Communications - community perception and feedback

Student Responsibilities

All students are responsible for knowing the personal hygiene behaviors recommended by public health authorities for limiting the spread of any virus. Students are expected to observe these behaviors at all times.

Every class is planned to continue in the event of a closure due to a pandemic. You will be able to continue coursework via the Internet.

At the start of each quarter, students will learn the specific alternative delivery arrangements for each of their classes. When notified, students are responsible for following the procedures established by their instructor to receive instructions, complete assignments, and interact with faculty and/or other students.

It is your responsibility to notify your instructor immediately if you do not have home computer access or have other obstacles to your participation in class from off-campus.

Beginning immediately, students (and parents K-12) are responsible for monitoring their own health for any symptoms identified by public health officials as possible signs of influenza/Cold. Upon experiencing any such symptoms (Those with flu like symptoms should remain isolated until they have experienced no fever for twenty-four (24) hours without the use of fever-reducing medications).

All students/parents should note: the CDC regards the following groups as high risk of complications from influenza if they get sick:

- children younger than 5 years old;
- people aged 65 years or older;
- adolescents (younger than 18 years) who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy and who might be at risk for experiencing Reye's syndrome after influenza virus infection;
- pregnant women;
- adults and children who have asthma, other chronic pulmonary, cardiovascular, hepatic, hematological, neurologic, neuromuscular, or metabolic disorders such as diabetes;
- and adults and children with immunosuppression (including immunosuppression caused by medications or by HIV).

People at high risk for influenza complications who become ill with influenza-like illness should call their health care provider as soon as possible to determine if they need antiviral treatment.

Safety will be the first priority of personnel. Students and Parents should follow the instructions of faculty, security or other school personnel.

Employee Responsibilities

The Pandemic Response Plan provides procedures for minimizing the risk to health and safety of employees, students and the public. All employees are responsible for knowing the personal hygiene behaviors recommended by public health authorities to minimize the spread of the virus. Employees are expected to observe these behaviors at all times.

Beginning immediately, employees are responsible for monitoring their own health for any symptoms identified by public health officials as possible signs of influenza. Upon experiencing any such symptoms, employees are strongly advised to leave college premises and remain away per CDC recommendations. (Those with flu like symptoms should remain isolated until they have experienced no fever for twenty-four (24) hours without the use of fever-reducing medications).

All employees should note: the CDC regards the following groups as high risk of complications from influenza if they get sick:

- children younger than 5 years old;
- people aged 65 years or older;
- adolescents (younger than 18 years) who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy and who might be at risk for experiencing Reye's syndrome after influenza virus infection;
- pregnant women;
- adults and children who have asthma, other chronic pulmonary,



cardiovascular, hepatic, hematological, neurologic, neuromuscular, or metabolic disorders such as diabetes;

- and adults and children with immunosuppression (including immunosuppression caused by medications or by HIV).

People at high risk for influenza complications who become ill with influenza-like illness should call their health care provider as soon as possible to determine if they need antiviral treatment. Employees will receive communication from supervisors and from the administration regarding the status of pandemic preparations.

All communications about policy or the status of operations originate with the president and go through the Public Information Officer.

From the leave policy standpoint, the Labor Relations Office views this outbreak as the flu – short-term – and leave, including sick leave, is for that purpose. will use similar guidelines for all other staff (faculty and administrative/exempt).

If employees are out because of the Flu Like Symptoms, the school will not request a note from a physician as we might otherwise request for other types of illnesses and extended leaves.

The school may consider a “suspended operation” for all or any portion of college operations. Any suspended operations must be declared by the [Insert Administrator Here] or a designee.

VII. CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

All communication regarding planning, implementing or concluding pandemic flu responses shall be approved by the president and occur through the PIO, the liaison or other delegated personnel.

It is the policy to fully and regularly inform the community about plans and actions taken in regard to a pandemic threat. Effective communications will help reduce rumors, maintain morale, and ensure continued, orderly operations.

The Public Information Officer will take the lead in conveying the actions to the community and the public. The PIO or other designated staff will coordinate media contacts and act as the spokesperson for the school. The Liaison will coordinate with public health and emergency response agencies to plan the release of information to the media.

After approval by the [Insert Administrator Here], the key messages and fact sheets will be released internally and externally. The [Insert Administrator Here] will coordinate communication to the Trustees/School board.

