

Pandemic Preparedness Plan

Background

Avian influenza virus, strain H5N1, is the latest flu virus with the potential to trigger a pandemic outbreak of flu due to its high lethality in birds and humans. The human population has no known natural immunity to H5N1 because it is genetically distinct from the flu strains currently circulating in humans. To date there have been 241 reported cases of Avian influenza in humans world-wide, with a fatality rate of 59 percent. No cases have been reported in Europe or the Western Hemisphere.

New influenza strains like H5N1 arise when two different viruses infect the same animal such as a bird or pig. When this mixing of different viruses takes place a new virus can be created. This rare event is called a genetic shift. In addition, other changes to the virus can take place in the form of mutations. These subtle changes create the possibility for new viral strains that are sustainable, easily transmissible and lethal to humans.

Government sources have noted that the economic and societal disruption of an influenza pandemic could be significant. Absenteeism across multiple sectors could threaten the functioning of critical infrastructure, the movement of goods and services, and operation of institutions such as schools, colleges and universities.

Plan Levels

To address a pandemic outbreak, we have activities to be undertaken based on four plan levels. We anticipate several waves of the virus which could last 3 weeks each. These waves could be spread between 6-8 week intervals. This process could last up to two years. Rates of absenteeism will depend on the severity of the pandemic. In a severe pandemic, absenteeism may reach 40 percent during the peak weeks of the outbreak. The levels we have developed are as follows:

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Emergency Operations Plan sub committee of the Health and Safety Team	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor national situation 2. Meet to assess situation 3. Involve all stakeholders to develop college plans and actions 4. Develop list of key positions and functions (e.g., payroll, IT etc.) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update / distribute policy for suspension of classes due to pandemic. 2. Distribute Pandemic Info about our procedures and follow up to be sure everyone has it. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider cancellation of public functions (e.g., fine arts, athletic events, college sponsored travel) 2. Personnel in key positions with higher likelihood of exposure than general college population receive N95 respirators and gloves from supervisors. 3. In coordination with Human Resources implement mandatory telecommuting for certain employees 4. Assume designated roles on Emergency Response Team. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recommend temporary closure of certain building(s) and suspension of certain academic and administrative activities to the President. 2. Consider recommending limiting access to campuses

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Allied - contract security guards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confidential medical evaluations performed to determine who can safely wear respirators. 2. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Training with masks and gloves for all guards. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guards trained to in pandemic issues. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Security Personnel receive personal protective equipment; gloves and masks to be worn while in contact with suspected flu victims. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secure buildings & post signage as directed. 2. Anti virals administered as recommended by Centers for Disease Control and county Health Department.
Plant Operations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confidential medical evaluations performed to determine who can safely wear respirators. 2. PPE Training with masks and gloves for housekeepers and engineers. 3. Increased emphasis on cleaning and disinfecting public areas. 4. Provide supplies for hygiene campaign. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Personnel in key positions with higher likelihood of exposure than general college population receive fit test and training on respiratory protection from Safety Coordinator. 2. Review closure and recovery plans for equipment and personnel. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personnel in key positions with higher likelihood of exposure than general college population receive N95 respirators. 2. Confirm closure plans with housekeepers and engineers. 3. Assume role on Emergency Response Team as directed. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activate closure plans as directed by Emergency Response Team. 2. Be prepared to perform thorough disinfection and cleaning in buildings as may be appropriate. (may include filter changes) 3. Anti virals administered as recommended by Centers for Disease Control and county Health Department.

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Safety Coordinator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess respiratory protection plan and resources. Determine inventory of supplies needed for each level. 2. Communicate and benchmark other colleges. 3. Communicate with State and Howard County Health Departments regarding preliminary planning and surveillance. 4. Establish communication with appropriate departments across campus regarding status of preparedness. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Train and fit essential personnel for respirators 2. Procure more N95 respirators, antibacterial / antiviral wipes, gloves and other personal protective equipment to stock up for levels 3 & 4. 3. Ongoing communications with college community regarding signs and symptoms, and protocols. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribute N95 to personnel in key positions with higher likelihood of exposure than general college population (carry only) 2. Continue to communicate with college community 3. Assume Safety position on Emergency Response Team. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to monitor situation. 2. Ensure proper PPE procedures followed.

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Public Relations	1. Receive information from Safety Coordinator 2. Issue communication(s) to college community regarding status of disease spread, self protection and college response. (e-mail, website, town meetings) in coordination with EOP Team. 3. Initiate poster, e-mail campaign on self-protection in coordination with Safety Coordinator	1. Draft internal and external bulletins and announcements, with the advisement of the Emergency Operation Plan committee. 2. Develop informational intranet and/or internet site with input from Safety Coordinator. 3. Reinforce #4 from level 1	1. Develop Official Communications. 2. Update college's web site as appropriate 3. Assume Communications position on Emergency Response Team. 4. Communicate return to work procedure in conjunction with HR.	1. Write and record bulletins and updates on a college emergency information hotline.
President's Office	1. Evaluate information on institutional effects of the incident and set response priorities as appropriate.	1. Receive updates and information from Emergency Operations Plan Committee	1. Activate Emergency Response Team. 2. Assume Incident Command position on Emergency Response Team	1. President or Incident Commander determines further steps from ERT.

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Human Resources Department	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop contingency policies for telecommuting, relaxed sick flex use, emergency leave, and working outside of normal job description. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement policies for leave and telecommuting. 2. Encourage employees to leave work in the event they or other household members exhibit flu like symptoms. 3. Determine return to work requirements for employees 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request to campus that faculty and staff and their families to report all flu cases to Human Resources and the Emergency Response Team. 2. Communicate return to work procedure in conjunction with PR office 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinate employee return to work procedures in coordination with PR

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Academic Departments: Credit, Non Credit and Childcare.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review actions of Emergency Operation Plan Committee at monthly Division Meetings. 2. Develop a Pandemic Response Plan department plan that responds to the unique needs of the department; secure Emergency Operations Plan committee approval of plan. 3. Encourage all faculty to obtain current email addresses for credit and continuing education students. 4. Consider establishing alternative learning strategies for all courses. Plan/train accordingly. 5. Review/revise if necessary academic policies including withdrawal and incomplete grades. 6. Encourage hand washing and cleaning of work surfaces. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement departmental communication with all faculty. 2. Communicate with key external stakeholders on a need to know basis. 3. Plan for class resumption in the event of closure. 4. Mail out academic materials. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement Pandemic Response departmental plan. 2. Assume role on Emergency Response Team as directed. 	
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Non-Academic Departments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review actions of Emergency Operation Plan committee at monthly division/unit meetings. 2. Develop a department Pandemic Response Plan that responds to the unique needs of the department. Forward plan to EOP committee. 3. Identify key internal positions needed for core business continuity. 4. Identify key external stakeholders needed for core business continuity. 5. Develop/review department/unit emergency communication plan. 6. Conduct a gap analysis of services available at a distance. Make recommendations. 7. Examine policies and procedures that may need to be revised in light of a pandemic outbreak. Make recommendations. 8. Encourage hand washing and cleaning of work surfaces. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive updates and information from Emergency Response Team. 2. Implement department pandemic plan. 3. Communicate actions to department/unit staff. 4. Work with the Communications Department and EOP Committee to communicate actions to customers and the college community. 5. Implement college policies for voluntary leave and voluntary telecommuting. 6. Encourage employees to leave work in the event they or other household members exhibit flu like symptoms. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinate return to work and resumption of services notifications with staff. 2. Assume role on Emergency Response Team as directed. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive updates and information from Emergency Response Team. 2. Communicate actions to department/unit staff. 3. Work with the Community Relations Department and Emergency Response Team to communicate actions to customers and the college community. 4. Implement college policies for mandatory leave and mandatory telecommuting. 5. Coordinate closures and suspension of activities with Emergency Response Team. 6. Coordinate return to work and resumption of services notifications with staff and Human Resources.
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