

# for pandemic influenza



No one knows how widespread or severe the impact of the next pandemic will be. Estimates suggest that 25 to 40 percent of your workforce will be affected and unable to work due to illness, taking care of sick loved ones or fear of becoming ill. Your business may also be affected by customers, suppliers and distributors experiencing similar feelings and situations.

With these possibilities in mind, all businesses must engage in pandemic planning. Start by asking these four questions:

1. How will we maintain business operations and continuity operations when 25 to 40 percent of our workforce is absent?
2. How will we adjust when both our suppliers and customers experience the same absentee rate?
3. How can existing return-to-work policies be adapted to control the spread of germs and illness?
4. How will we limit the economic impact of a flu pandemic on our business?

## Ten steps to help your business prepare for pandemic flu

- 1. Identify core business activities or essential services.**
  - identify employees and other critical elements required to maintain operations
  - cross train now to ensure uninterrupted service
  - clearly pre-establish delegation of authority and order succession
- 2. Plan for possible interruptions of government services such as water, power or transportation.**
  - the private sector owns and maintains approximately 85 percents of the U.S. critical infrastructure
- 3. Determine which outside activities are critical to maintaining operations and develop alternatives in case they cannot function normally.**
  - example: just in time delivery
- 4. Allocate resources to protect your staff and your customers.**
  - supply products for respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette
  - implement financial contingency reserves
  - establish ways to limit face-to-face contact among employees and customers



**5. Establish or expand policies and tools that enable employees to work from home, if possible.**

- determine if you have the capability to transfer authority and responsibility for essential functions to another facility, regional or national

**6. Maintain a healthy environment.**

- post tips on how to stop the spread of germs at work
- encourage good hand hygiene and coughing and sneezing etiquette
- ensure wide and easy availability of alcohol based hand sanitizer
- communicate with employees about the importance of staying home if they are sick
- develop procedures for cleaning facilities during an outbreak and for employees to follow

**7. Tell your employees about the possibility of a pandemic flu and the steps the company is taking to prepare for it.**

- provide updated, accurate materials covering basic pandemic flu facts and personal protection and response strategies
- provide information on at-home care of ill employees and family members
- educate employees about your pandemic flu plan
- develop ways to communicate status and actions to employees, vendors, suppliers and customers during a pandemic

**8. Establish an emergency communications plan and revise it periodically. Include:**

- key contacts and back-ups
- chain of communication, including suppliers and customers
- process to resume normal operations as quickly as possible

**9. Set up pandemic policies as part of your emergency communication plan.**

- non-penalized and mandatory leave
- flex-time and working from home
- compensation
- insurance coverage
- modify practices that might spread viruses and germs
- screen facility entrants
- plan for long-term absenteeism rates

**10. Develop a pandemic flu planning team to help you accomplish steps one through nine. Utilize the “Business Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist”, available on [pandemicflu.gov](http://pandemicflu.gov), under the business planning tab.**

