

# Pandemic Flu & Infectious Illness Policy



## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy, which is Part of ABC Company's emergency-preparedness and business continuity plan, is to set the broad parameters of our corporate-wide response to pandemic influenza and other infectious illnesses and outline specific steps ABC Company takes to safeguard employees' health and well-being during a flu or other infectious illness pandemic while ensuring the Company's ability to maintain essential operations and continue providing essential services to our customers.

## 2. DEFINITION

As used in this Policy, "influenza pandemic" refers to an outbreak of influenza described in subparagraph 2 below. Because ABC Company cannot predict disease outbreaks that may occur in the future, the term "influenza pandemic," as used in this Policy, also refers to other infectious illnesses that can pose serious global threats to public health and our economy and potentially cost billions of dollars in productivity losses resulting from absenteeism, payouts of sick leave or workers' compensation, and lost sales; disrupt transportation and communication services on which we all depend; and impede delivery of necessary goods and services.

Influenza or flu is caused by a variety of influenza A viruses

that can cause at least three different diseases:

1. **Avian flu viruses** affect birds and chickens or other poultry. Although transmission of avian flu viruses to humans has been rare, the viruses are considered a major threat to public health because they can mutate, or change, unpredictably and become pandemic viruses.
2. **Pandemic influenza** can occur when mutating flu viruses become transmissible to humans, who generally lack any natural immunity to fight off the viruses' adverse health effects. Because infected humans are so contagious they become the primary vehicle for pandemic influenza's spread. The more humans who become contagious, the more widespread the disease becomes and the more rapid the spread is. Generally, pandemic influenza occurs in waves, with each new group of infected people in turn infecting others. Each such wave of infection can last as long as eight weeks, resulting in steadily increasing numbers of infections, and the disease itself can take 12 months to 18 months to run its course through the population.
3. **Seasonal flu.** Subsequently, the viruses sparking pandemic influenza "settle" and thereafter can cause a type of seasonal flu (also known as "human flu") that produces the symptoms and illness many of us experience during annual "flu season."

### **3. IDENTIFICATION OF ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL**

ABC Company has identified and designated as essential personnel certain employees whose jobs are vitally important to its continued operation in emergencies. ABC Company expects only designated essential personnel to be available for work during an influenza pandemic. ABC Company acknowledges, however, that even essential personnel might become ill and unavailable to work or not be able to reach our worksite because of conditions beyond their own or ABC Company's control. Consequently, ABC Company and its industry partners

have made back-up arrangements under which designated personnel in locations outside our respective areas are trained and equipped to fulfill the duties of unavailable essential employees.

In addition, ABC Company has equipped most essential personnel with all the resources, including computers, cell phones, and back-up generators, that essential employees need to work remotely during emergencies.

#### **4. REMOTE WORK LOCATIONS**

During an influenza pandemic, local, provincial, or federal authorities might prohibit or severely curtail individuals' access to and use of public services and public transportation; close or prevent access to buildings or public highways; isolate or quarantine buildings' occupants; and prevent inter- or intraprovince delivery of goods and services. ABC Company cannot predict and has no control over such authorities' actions and acknowledges its legal duty to comply with outside authorities' directives. ABC Company, is however, prepared to continue key "bare bones" operations from a number of remote work locations, including essential employees' home offices. ABC Company has installed at all remote work locations all the equipment necessary for off-site telecommuting operations. In addition, ABC Company has designated a secure web site through which essential personnel can communicate with each other and outside authorities.

#### **5. INFECTION-CONTROL**

ABC Company takes steps to minimize exposure to and spread of infection in the workplace and recommends measures that employees can take to protect themselves outside the workplace and encourages all workers to discuss their specific needs with a family physician or other appropriate health or wellness professional.

##### **5.1. Ill Employees**

ABC Company expects employees who contract the flu or have been exposed to infected family members or others with whom employees have been in contact to stay home and seek medical attention as necessary and appropriate. ABC Company expects such workers to notify ABC Company as soon as possible of exposure or illness. At ABC Company's discretion or the direction of outside authorities, ABC Company can require the isolation and quarantine of any infected employees who come to work despite exposure or need for medical attention.

## **5.2. Vaccinations**

ABC Company requires all essential personnel to maintain up-to-date vaccinations and to

obtain annual ABC Company -paid flu shots, if available and not medically contraindicated. ABC Company requires essential personnel to certify that they have obtained the necessary inoculations and to maintain a copy of that certification, which must be provided at ABC Company's request.

ABC Company is also entitled under our province's pandemic and emergency health preparedness laws to receive from health care providers medical information created as a result of employment-related health care services, such as inoculations, provided to employees at ABC Company's specific request and expense when such information is needed to process insurance claims. ABC Company maintains the confidentiality of all such employee medical information in accordance with applicable personal and medical privacy laws.

## **6. MANDATORY EMPLOYEE TRAINING**

All employees are at risk of exposure to flu viruses, both in and outside the workplace; therefore, ABC Company requires all employees to attend initial or refresher training annually in September to become informed about what to do when a flu outbreak occurs covering such issues as availability of flu shots, symptoms and health effects of influenza, treatment,

and sources to contact for appropriate medical care, steps to take if exposure is suspected; company representatives to whom to report known or suspected exposures, and procedures for reporting exposure to co-workers, family members, friends, or others who are ill with flu; proper use of ABC Company-provided personal-protection equipment; proper hygiene in the workplace and at home; and communications.

Training includes role-plays based on scenarios developed to test employees' understanding of our planned emergency response. Supervisors are responsible for recording and maintaining documentation on every employee's participation in required training.

## **7. PPE**

ABC Company maintains on site adequate supplies of recommended personal-protection equipment, such as face masks, eye protection, rubber gloves, and anti-bacterial hand gels and wipes, which ABC Company can require workers to use. ABC Company urges all employees to speak with their personal physician about types and proper use of personal-protection equipment in the home.

## **8. FACILITIES MAINTENANCE**

ABC Company's Plant and Facilities manager regularly inspects the workplace for signs of heating, air conditioning, or other equipment in need of replacement or repair and coordinates closely with our cleaning and waste-removal contractors to maintain our physical plant in top condition. ABC Company approves the installation or use wherever possible of improved equipment or cleaning methods to guard against the spread of infection in the workplace.

## **9. EMPLOYEE LEAVE & PAY**

In the event of pandemic influenza, ABC Company grants all nonessential personnel immediate administrative leave. ABC

Company pays workers on administrative leave a reduced salary, and continues such reduced salary for one-week periods up to a maximum of six weeks. ABC Company monitors emergency conditions daily to determine how long administrative leave must continue and, following consultation with outside authorities, advises employees when to expect to return to work.

## **10. FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE**

ABC Company places on family and medical leave any workers who fall ill with flu or must be absent from work to care for an infected family member in accordance with the applicable employment standards laws of the jurisdiction. Such employees must notify ABC Company as soon as possible of need for family and medical leave. Employees may use accrued paid annual and sick leave in lieu of unpaid family and medical leave. ABC Company requires all employees to certify that they have received, read, and fully understand our family and medical leave policy and its use in a flu outbreak.

## **11. BUSINESS TRAVEL**

ABC Company makes all reasonable efforts to eliminate the need for travel by taking advantage of technology. Generally, in the event of an influenza pandemic, travel on ABC Company's behalf is immediately suspended and limited to a select group of essential personnel who have obtained required travel authorizations from ABC Company and, if necessary, outside authorities. Essential personnel or other employees traveling anywhere on ABC Company's behalf and exposed to avian flu or pandemic influenza may be eligible for workers' compensation benefits.

## **12. EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Workers must notify their immediate supervisor and Human Resources of any change in emergency-contact information; they must do so within two weeks of a change. When providing such

information, employees, especially those who have children or care for elderly relatives, should identify individuals on whom they can depend if the employees themselves become sick at work and must be isolated and quarantined. HR is directed to verify electronically employees' emergency contact information twice a year, in January and July. Supervisors are required to maintain in the workplace and at home an up-to-date emergency-contact list for their unit or department.

### **13. SPECIAL NEEDS AND ACCOMMODATIONS**

ABC Company is required by law to notify first-responders about employees with medical conditions that could be compromised because of an influenza pandemic.

ABC Company urges such employees to confidentially self-identify to HR so that we are aware of and can prepare for you to receive any special medical expertise you might require if you become severely ill on the job. HR maintains the confidentiality of any information you provide, making it available solely on a need-to-know basis and only when needed by emergency responders.

### **14. COMMUNICATIONS**

**Outside Authorities:** ABC Company and its Emergency Operations Team partner with local, provincial, and federal emergency-response and health agencies to ensure legal compliance with emergency-response protocols to which ABC Company is subject and to coordinate efforts to maintain safety and security in and outside the workplace.

**Action Escalation:** The Emergency Operations Team, which is responsible for ensuring our ability to continue operating in emergencies, has devised a system under which essential personnel can be directed to take specific actions at a specific time based on a series of alerts

**Call Centre:** Our remote emergency-response call centre is

activated in the earliest stages of a serious flu outbreak. Employees are instructed to call this centre, using our secure hotline number, for pre-recorded messages and assistance from live operators.

**Dedicated Web Site:** ABC Company maintains a secure (password-protected) web site that is devoted to pandemic flu issues generally and to ABC Company's responses specifically.

**Other Media Channels:** In an emergency, ABC Company consults with outside authorities to coordinate dissemination of instructions or other important information as quickly as possible to all employees. ABC Company communicates with employees via its secure emergency-information hotline and dedicated web site, local radio and TV stations, and secure web sites of industry partners and affiliates.

## **15. PANDEMIC FLU RESOURCES LIST**

ABC Company maintains a list of the names, telephone numbers, and web addresses of key representatives and designated essential personnel who are available to answer your questions. The categorized list of key internal and external contacts and all appropriate media through which ABC Company communicates with employees also is available on our dedicated Web site. When updated, a new copy of the list is mailed to each employee's home.

## **16. EAP SERVICES**

ABC Company's employee assistance program (EAP) services remain available to you to the extent practicable and reasonable during an influenza outbreak, including assistance for yourself or ill family members, respite care, psychological and emotional support during a pandemic, including assistance and support following the death of an infected family member. Contact information for our EAP is maintained on our dedicated web site.



## **17. ACCESS TO BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN**

ABC Company regularly reviews and shares this plan (and any updates to the plan) with its affiliates and industry partners, insurers, designated first-responders, local health care facilities, and local, provincial, and federal government authorities, all of whom play a role in ensuring your safety and well-being in an emergency. In addition, we regularly test implementation of the plan. ABC Company makes available on written request printed copies of its complete Emergency Preparedness and Business-Continuity Plan.