

Pandemic Influenza: What Businesses Can Do

Pandemic flu is a worldwide outbreak of a new strain of flu virus. During a flu pandemic, millions of people could get sick, forcing many businesses to cut back on production or the delivery of services. In some cases, businesses may even be forced to close. Having plans in place to address employee illness and shortages will help your business stay productive.

✓ Here are some things that your business can do to Be Prepared for Pandemic Flu:

- Distribute the "Pandemic Influenza: What You Can Do" flyer to your employees so they can avoid getting sick and be prepared at home.
- Develop a continuity of operations plan (COOP) to be prepared to continue business in the event of severe staffing shortages. Practice your plan to identify any gaps.
- Assess how your company functions, both internally and externally, to determine which staff, materials, procedures and equipment are absolutely necessary to keep the business operating. Plan for continuity of payroll. Identify your suppliers, shippers, resources and other businesses you must interact with on a daily basis.
- Plan what you will do if your building, plant or store is not accessible. Define crisis management procedures and individual responsibilities in advance.
- Coordinate with neighboring businesses, first responders, suppliers, shippers, and others within your community to prepare and help with emergency response.
- Attend chamber of commerce events on pandemic flu preparedness.
- Contact your local health department about your community's preparedness plans.
- Adopt policies and practices that encourage sick employees to stay home.
- Make sure employees know company rules about sick leave, absences, time off and working from home.
- Ask your employees to stay home from work when they are sick.
- Ensure that employees are prepared to perform duties that are not usually part of their jobs.
- Explore with your employees other ways to get work done in case of personnel shortages. Plan to have employees work from home if necessary.
- Plan for getting essential work done with fewer people.
- Discuss deadlines and deliverables with customers and clients to identify essential products and services during an emergency.
- Cancel business conventions, conferences, meetings and socials.
- Close your business if requested by public health officials.

**For more information on pandemic flu and what you can do to prepare,
visit www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch**