



Influenza and Safety & Occupational Health



During an influenza pandemic, transmission of the pandemic virus can be anticipated in the workplace, not only in healthcare settings, but also between co-workers in general work settings. This guidance highlights the important occupational safety and health support that can be provided by safety managers and all other occupational health professionals. It also provides recommended training that should be provided to all employees and supervisors. Every individual can make a positive difference and reduce potential exposures to influenza in the workplace.

Safety and Occupational Health Professionals

- Become familiar with the “Department of Defense Implementation Plan for Pandemic Influenza” with an emphasis on personnel health and safety. Please refer to: http://fhp.osd.mil/aiWatchboard/pdf/DoD_PI_Implementation_Plan_August_2006_Public_Release.pdf. Also, become familiar with local plans.
- Become familiar with OPNAVINST 3500.41, “Pandemic Influenza Planning” (<http://doni.daps.dla.mil/Directives/03000%20Naval%20Operations%20and%20Readiness/03-500%20Training%20and%20Readiness%20Services/3500.41.pdf>), upper Echelon guidance and the appropriate geographic combatant commander’s instructions.
- Categorize workplaces into very high, high, medium and lower risk with assistance from industrial hygiene and other occupational health professionals as needed. Refer to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for an Influenza Pandemic at: http://www.osha.gov/Publications/influenza_pandemic.html#lower_exposure_risk
- In concert with line management, apply the hierarchy of control measures. Refer to <http://www.osha.gov/Publications/employers-protect-workers-flu-factsheet.html> or OSHA Fact Sheet, (2009, May). [47 KB PDF]; and the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers, “Airborne Infectious Diseases” available at: <http://www.ashrae.org/aboutus/page/335>

Worker Safety Training (All Navy Military and Civilians):

ACTION: Please read the one page OSHA Quick Card “How to Protect Yourself in the Workplace during a Pandemic.”

WHEN: As soon as possible, preferably before a pandemic starts, but it is never too late to learn prevention tips.

WHERE: Go to: <http://www.osha.gov/Publications/protect-yourself-pandemic.html> or OSHA Quick Card, 3365-05N-09. [27 KB PDF]

References

Federal Government Websites:

Primary Government Website:

<http://www.flu.gov/> and <http://www.flu.gov/professional/federal/index.html>

OSHA (Workplace Guidance):

<http://www.osha.gov/dsg/topics/pandemicflu/index.html>

OPM (Civilian Human Resource Guidance):

http://www.opm.gov/pandemic/OPM-Pandemic_Allissuances.pdf

Homeland Security (National Strategy for Pandemic Flu):

http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/editorial_0760.shtm

- Network and provide assistance to other players (e.g., human resources and emergency management).
- Ensure all workers are trained.
- Refer to the worker training information from OSHA from the weblinks below.
- Ensure all supervisors at all levels are trained. Refer to the Supervisor/Management training information below.
- Provide consultation regarding ventilation or other engineering controls, administrative controls, work practices and personal protective equipment, including respirators.
- Assist with risk assessments and risk communication for the influenza virus to ensure that risks from influenza are not grossly over or underestimated and that workers are provided accurate information to reduce the risk.
- Network and provide safety and occupational health assistance to other major players (e.g., other medical professionals, human resources, emergency management personnel).

Supervisors/Management Safety Training (All Navy Military and Civilian Supervisors from Top Leadership to Deck Plate):

ACTION: Please read the one page OSHA Fact Sheet “What Employers Can Do to Protect Workers from Pandemic Flu.”

WHEN: As soon as possible, preferably before a pandemic starts, but it is never too late to learn workplace prevention tips.

WHERE: Go to: <http://www.osha.gov/Publications/employers-protect-workers-flu-factsheet.html> or OSHA Fact Sheet, (2009, May). [47 KB [PDF](#)]

CDC Pandemic Influenza Information for Health Professionals: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic/healthprofessional.htm>

CDC Recommendations for Respiratory Protection: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/masks.htm>

Military Websites:

Department of Defense Implementation Plan for Pandemic Influenza: http://fhp.osd.mil/aiWatchboard/pdf/DoD_PI_Implementation_Plan_August_2006_Public_Release.pdf

Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center: H1N1 Influenza: http://www-nmcphe.med.navy.mil/Diseases_Conditions/swine_flu.aspx

Pandemic Influenza: http://www-nehc.med.navy.mil/diseases_conditions/influenza.aspx

IH Field Operations Manual, Respiratory Protection: http://www.nmcphe.med.navy.mil/downloads/ih/ihfom/IHFOM_CH9.pdf

Navy Pocket Guide for Health Care Providers – Pandemic Influenza Protection Procedures: <http://www-nehc.med.navy.mil/downloads/IH/NMCPHC%20PANDEMIC%20INFLUENZA%20Pocket%20Guide%2022May07.pdf>

Naval Safety Center: <http://www.safetycenter.navy.mil/osh/index.asp>

Further Information: The safety roles and responsibilities listed in OPNAVINST 5100.23G, Chapter 26 can also apply to Pandemic Flu. <http://safetycenter.navy.mil/instructions/osh/510023/index.asp>

Thank you for improving your workplace safety and health!