



## Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

SEP 16 2009

### MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

FROM: DR. ROBERT GOLDSMITH  
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS OVERSIGHT  
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. Goldsmith", written over the printed name.

SUBJECT: Pandemic Influenza Guidance

I am writing to you as the Environmental Management (EM) representative on the Department of Energy (DOE) Biological Event Monitoring Team (BEMT) Executive Steering Group, (which is the Department's focal point for pandemic influenza information and policy development). We are already seeing signs of the reemergence of the novel H1N1 flu virus, particularly as the school year begins, and we can expect an increase in illness and absenteeism among our Federal and contractor workers as we enter the influenza season. The Department continues to populate its pandemic influenza website with current information and guidance. (You can find a link to it on the EM Portal or use <http://hss.doe.gov/healthsafety/pandemic.htm>.) I urge you to let your staffs and workers know that this is a good place for answers about preventive measures, teleworking, traveling, etc.

Clearly, the best indicator of the impact of the flu is absentee rate. Please monitor this closely, so that the Department can consider whether appropriate actions are necessary. Additional guidance will be forthcoming from Headquarters (HQ).

The attached matrix of recommended actions (also available on the DOE pandemic website) is provided for guidance on how to respond to the local conditions of a viral outbreak. Each Field site should consult with State and local health officials, and work with your site occupational medical providers to decide on appropriate actions. Proposed site-wide actions should be discussed with appropriate HQ senior management, and when implemented, reported to the DOE/HQ Watch Office. In his August 24, 2009, memo, Daniel Poneman requested each site to designate points-of-contact for pandemic-related communications. Please ensure that this has been done, and send the names and contact information to me, as well.

If you have any questions, please call me at (301) 903-4954.

Attachment



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## Department of Energy

### ***Recommended Action Matrix for Pandemic Influenza***

**August 2009**

#### *Introduction*

The following document provides guidance to Department of Energy (DOE) program offices and field elements to consider in preparation for a possible influenza pandemic. Included in this matrix is information for employees, supervisors, building facility management, occupational medicine providers, child care facilities, and security to consider in their pandemic planning. The recommended actions are based on information available from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of Homeland Security, the Office of Personnel Management, and DOE's Biologic Event Monitoring Team (BEMT).

This *Recommended Action Matrix for Pandemic Influenza* replaces an earlier guidance document, entitled *MEDCON Alert Matrix* that had been developed in preparation for a potential Avian Influenza (H5N1) pandemic. With the recent 2009 H1N1 influenza outbreak, the BEMT reviewed its earlier documents, updated information and created additional guidance. The Recommended Action Matrix differs from the MEDCON levels in that the recommended actions are more specific, provides guidance to employees and supervisors, and is collapsed into three categories depending on the pandemic geographic distribution and disease severity.

The *Recommended Action Matrix for Pandemic Influenza* may be utilized to support pandemic planning decisions in conjunction with the recommendations of site or facility occupational medical providers, and state and local health departments. The Matrix should be tailored to a specific site's needs and the geographic distribution and severity of disease. It is important to note that all pandemic plans remain flexible to accommodate new epidemiologic and medical information as it is revealed.

The *Recommended Action Matrix for Pandemic Influenza* is just one part of the Department's pandemic plan. Additional guidance and educational materials can be found on DOE's pandemic web page at <http://www.hss.energy.gov/HealthSafety/pandemic.html>. The Department encourages every employee to become familiar with this site and to practice the recommended actions to protect their own health and well being.

#### *Implementation*

The goals of the Federal Government's response to pandemic influenza are to limit the spread of a pandemic; mitigate disease, suffering, and death; and sustain infrastructure and lessen the impact on the economy and the functioning of society. The *Recommended Action Matrix* was designed to make DOE employees mindful of actions that should be considered in the pandemic preparation process and actions that should be implemented during an influenza outbreak. Collectively, CDC and HHS refer to the implementation of these guidelines (e.g. staying home when sick, hand washing, social distancing, and cough etiquette) as nonpharmaceutical interventions (NPIs).

According to HHS, the timing of initiation of various NPIs will influence their effectiveness. Implementing these measures prior to the pandemic may result in economic and social hardship

without public health benefit and over time, may result in “intervention fatigue” and erosion of public adherence. Conversely, implementing these interventions after extensive spread of pandemic influenza illness in a community may limit the public health benefits of employing these measures. **HHS guidance suggests that the primary activation trigger for initiating interventions be the arrival and transmission of pandemic virus.** It is recommended for planning purposes that these NPIs are maintained for up to 12 weeks in a pandemic.

The suggested guidelines for DOE have been categorized into three levels, 1 through 3, as the severity and geographic distribution of H1N1 influenza increases. Each higher level is built on implementing the actions in the previous, lower level. The “trigger” for implementing each level is based on disease incidence (the number of cases in the community surrounding the site) and/or the rate of absenteeism at work. In addition, the severity of the disease may be used to modulate the implementation of these recommended activities.

Implementation of Level 1 activities (in black print) are recommended at the beginning of an influenza outbreak, when clusters of disease in a community are relatively small. These conditions may be similar to what is experienced during the rise of seasonal flu, where about 10 percent of the population is infected (or 10 percent of the workforce is absent). As the size of these disease outbreaks become larger (absenteeism around 20-25 percent), or symptoms associated with the disease becomes more severe, it is recommended that the additional guidance in Level 2 be implemented (guidance in Level 1 faded to gray, new guidance in black). As the outbreak approaches pandemic levels, where 35 to 40 percent of the population is infected (absenteeism 35-40 percent), the guidance in Level 3 (guidance in Levels 1 and 2 faded to gray, new guidance in black print) may be implemented. DOE sites or facilities that elect to implement these guidelines must consider local community situations or the rate of absenteeism at the site.

The recommendation to activate a Contingency of Operations (COOP) plan occurs at level 3. Each site or facility should evaluate their particular situation, and ensure that pandemic planning is part of their COOP.

### *High Risk Individuals*

The recommended actions are generally designed for application to most employees. Supervisors and pandemic planners should be aware that there are certain groups of individuals who are at higher risk for adverse health outcomes associated with the flu. These groups include pregnant women, individuals under the age of 24, and those with underlying medical conditions. Some of the recommended actions in the matrix may be applied earlier to these high risk individuals (e.g. they would be encouraged to telework earlier than other employees). These individuals would be expected to self-identify to their supervisors, although they need not disclose the specific medical condition.

**Level 1  
Viral Outbreak**  
**Small clusters of human to human transmission**  
**Low virulence (symptoms similar to seasonal influenza)**  
**Community incidence or site absenteeism about 10 percent**

| Responsibility                     | Recommended Actions  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Employees</b>                   |  |
| <b>General Employee Population</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on personal preparedness and disease prevention for yourself and others.</li> <li>• Exercise, eat a healthy diet, and get plenty of sleep.</li> <li>• Follow CDC guidelines on hand-washing (at least 20-30 seconds with soap or use an alcohol based hand gel). Wash your hands frequently.</li> <li>• Cover your cough or sneezes appropriately, then wash your hands or use hand gel.</li> <li>• Use a tissue or paper towel to open restroom door handles and to turn on/off faucets.</li> <li>• If you or anyone who lives with you has flu-like symptoms call your doctor or other medical provider.</li> <li>• Do not come to work sick!</li> <li>• If possible, telework; discuss telework options with your supervisor.</li> <li>• Review sick leave and family leave options.</li> <li>• Use sick leave as needed, plan to remain at home after symptoms clear.</li> <li>• If your doctor or other health care provider confirms or suspects influenza, inform your supervisor.</li> <li>• Plan an annual season influenza immunization.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Shared Equipment</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viruses do not typically last a long time on solid surfaces; however, it is always good practice to wipe surfaces of shared equipment periodically with a sanitizing wipe or solution.</li> <li>• For shared phones, consider individual headsets.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Office Water Coolers</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is always good practice to sanitize stand-alone, office-type water coolers between water bottle replacements. Companies have instructions on their websites.</li> <li>• Do not touch drinking cups, mouths, or water bottles to water fountain spigots.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Team Sports FOHO/GOHO</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid close contact with others.</li> <li>• Do not share towels, water bottles, etc.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Supervisors</b>                 |  |
| <b>Supervisors</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure employees are informed about pandemic planning and preparedness.</li> <li>• Ensure that notification lists are up to date.</li> <li>• Review your local pandemic plan.</li> <li>• Verify appropriate telework agreements are in place for employees.</li> </ul>  |

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| <b>Supervisors (cont.)</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the advisability of subordinates teleworking if they become sick or anyone who lives with them becomes sick.</li> <li>• Keep aware of anyone who is confirmed or suspected to have influenza.</li> <li>• Consider IT access issues such as RSA tokens, if applicable, for employees who are eligible to work from home.</li> <li>• Understand Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA)/Privacy rules.</li> <li>• Contact your human resource staff for guidelines regarding sick leave and family leave policies.</li> <li>• Keep your management chain and human resources staff (at Headquarters, administrative staff) aware of anyone who is suspected or confirmed with influenza.</li> <li>• In the event of a CDC travel advisory, Federal employees who were on official travel may be authorized to use up to 3 days of excused absence/administrative leave. Employees who were on personal travel should take sick or annual leave until able to return to work.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Program Offices/Field Elements</b> |   |
| <b>Travel</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DOE follows State Department and CDC travel recommendations.</li> <li>• Advise employees who return from a location for which a travel advisory exists to stay home, and if possible, telework.</li> <li>• In the event of a CDC travel advisory, Federal employees who were on official travel may be authorized to use up to 3 days of excused absence/administrative leave. Employees who were on personal travel should take sick or annual leave until able to return to work.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Meetings Conferences</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is currently no restriction on conducting or attending meetings and/or conferences.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>COOP</b>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update COOP plan, including section on pandemic planning, if applicable.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Facility Management</b>            |   |
| <b>Facilities</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that procedures are in place to sanitize offices.</li> <li>• Make arrangements to allow for increased frequency or depth of cleaning.</li> <li>• Ensure that custodial personnel are familiar with universal precautions and procedures to avoid cross contamination.</li> <li>• Ensure that restrooms remain well stocked with supplies.</li> <li>• Be prepared to have hand sanitation mechanisms/supplies at entrances and cafeterias/snack bars.</li> <li>• Post signage to encourage personal preparedness and disease prevention.</li> <li>• No change to the operation of ventilation systems is recommended.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Offices in General</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No changes are recommended to office operations and/or cleaning schedules.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Offices of sick individuals</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wipe desks, phones, and keyboards with a sanitizing solution or wipe.</li> </ul>   |

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| <b>Custodial Crews</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that universal precautions against blood-borne pathogens are in place for cleaning restrooms or offices in which an individual has been sick.</li> <li>• Ensure that Material Safety Data Sheets are available for cleaning/sanitizing solutions.</li> <li>• Ensure that employees are following procedures for proper handling and use of chemicals.</li> <li>• Prevent tendency to use more than necessary or to mix chemicals.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Food Service</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that food sanitation procedures are in place.</li> <li>• Explore hand sanitizing at entrances for patrons.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Child Care Centers</b>     |  |
| <b>Child Care Centers</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure Centers are following their pandemic plans.</li> <li>• Encourage parents to develop back up plans for the care of their sick children or in the event that their childcare center is closed.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Health Care Facilities</b> |  |
| <b>Health Care Facilities</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure health care providers are working in compliance with their pandemic plan and CDC guidance.</li> <li>• Provide educational materials regarding influenza.</li> <li>• Keep aware of the number of cases within your State or local area.</li> <li>• Review information and guidance on HHS website: <a href="http://www.hss.energy.gov/HealthSafety/pandemic.html">http://www.hss.energy.gov/HealthSafety/pandemic.html</a> or CDC or WHO websites.</li> <li>• Consider the purchase and stockpiling of antiviral medication.</li> <li>• Initiate dialogue with State Health Department regarding procurement of vaccines for employees with mission essential functions.</li> <li>• Brief senior management of potential threat.</li> <li>• Maintain stock of universal protective materials (gloves, masks, disinfectants, etc)</li> </ul> |
| <b>Security Forces</b>        |  |
| <b>Security Forces</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow recommended actions listed in "Employees" section above.</li> <li>• Ensure hand-gel is placed at a visible and accessible location at reception areas.</li> </ul>  |

**Level 2  
Viral Outbreak**  
Larger clusters, but human to human transmission is localized  
Moderate virulence  
Community incidence or site absenteeism 20to 25 percent

| Responsibility                        | Recommended Actions   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Employees</b>                      |   |
| <b>General Employee Population</b>    | <p>All Level 1 Actions plus the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign a telework agreement and get an RSA token if you are eligible to work from home.</li> <li>• Develop a family response plan, including communicating or providing care for elderly or distant relatives. See Department of Homeland Security, Red Cross, or community websites.</li> <li>• Avoid mass transportation during peak hours due to increased risk of exposure to ill or contagious commuters.</li> <li>• If you experience anxiety, contact your local Employee Assistance Program (EAP) office.</li> <li>• Prepare your home with extra food, water, medicine, toiletries, pet supplies to cover at least two weeks as for any emergency situation.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Team Sports GOHO/FOHO</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May cancel team sports.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Supervisors</b>                    |   |
| <b>Supervisors</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have signed telework agreements in place for employees.</li> <li>• Encourage employees to apply for RSA tokens.</li> <li>• Consider social distancing:</li> <li>• Implement staggered work schedules;</li> <li>• Limit the number of people in meetings dependent on the size and layout of the room (try to keep people 3 – 6 feet apart);</li> <li>• Encourage conference calls and televideo meetings.</li> <li>• Plan to have essential workers backed up “3-deep” by cross-training and establish delegation of authority.</li> <li>• Review policies related to restricting travel (domestic or foreign) for employees going to or leaving affected areas.</li> <li>• Communicate need to prepare for widespread outbreak and to prepare accordingly.</li> <li>• Consider providing additional protection to individuals who identify themselves as high risk (pregnant women, persons with compromised immune systems due to other medical conditions, persons age 65 or greater) by reducing their social contact or increasing the flexibility of worksite or hours.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Program Offices/Field Elements</b> |   |
| <b>Travel</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit non-essential travel.</li> </ul>   |

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|                                   |  |
| <b>Meetings<br/>Conferences</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit face-to-face meetings; keep individuals 6 feet apart</li> <li>• Encourage teleconferencing.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Health Care Facilities</b>     |  |
| <b>Health Care<br/>Facilities</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees reporting to the health care facility with flu-like symptoms should be advised to go home and seek medical care. A facemask may be issued and recommended to be worn until symptoms subside.</li> <li>• Replenish stocks of protective materials as needed.</li> <li>• Consider purchase of specialized supplies for first responders and staff with close patient contact.</li> <li>• Initiate surveillance in accordance with CDC, Department of Homeland Security or DOE recommendations.</li> <li>• Initiate vaccine programs if vaccine is available.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Security Forces</b>            |  |
| <b>Security Forces</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wipe down equipment with sanitizer wipe or spray that is frequently shared, such as hand-held detector wands, computer keyboards.</li> <li>• Facemask use is <b>not</b> recommended for protective forces in contact with the general employee population.</li> </ul>   |

**Level 3  
Pandemic Situation  
Increased and sustained transmission in general population  
Community incidence or site absenteeism 35-40 percent**

| <b>Responsibility</b>                  | <b>Recommended Actions</b>  |
|--|---|
| <b>Employees</b>                       |   |
| <b>General Employee Population</b>     | <p>All Level 1 and 2 Actions plus the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare your home with extra food, water, medicine, toiletries, pet supplies to cover at least two weeks as for any emergency situation.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Team Sports GOHO/FOHO</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cancelled</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Supervisors</b>                     |   |
| <b>Supervisors</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expect large number of employees to be absent due to illness or care of family members.</li> <li>• Plan on 6-8 week contingency operations.</li> <li>• Ensure essential functions are maintained.</li> <li>• Consider relocation and re-distribution of staff.</li> <li>• Consider issuing a site-wide evacuation order whereby the site executes its COOP.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Program Offices/ Field Elements</b> |   |
| <b>Meetings Conferences</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspend non-essential meetings.</li> <li>• Use teleconferencing.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>COOP</b>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare to activate COOP, if warranted.</li> </ul>   |

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| <b>Facilities</b>             |  |
| <b>Facilities</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no evidence to support the efficacy of widespread disinfection of the environment or air.</li> </ul>                       |
| <b>Child Care Centers</b>     |  |
| <b>Child Care Centers</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider closure of child care centers following guidance from State Health Departments/Board of Education for your area</li> </ul> |
| <b>Health Care Facilities</b> |  |
| <b>Security Forces</b>        |  |
| <b>Security Forces</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restrict the number of visitor entrances to ensure adequate number of security personnel.</li> </ul>                                |