



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

# Pandemic Flu: Plan Now to Keep Your Business in Business

**A** pandemic flu will spread rapidly from person to person, affecting all age groups and causing illness in a high proportion of those infected.

Public health officials project cumulative **absentee rates of 40 percent** over three to four months. This includes not only those who are sick, but those who must care for sick family members and those who want to avoid the workplace for fear of exposure.

With so much of the workforce affected, a pandemic will likely disrupt your business — and may even force you to shut down operations for a time.

Planning for a pandemic now can protect your company's future. As you develop a business continuity plan, consider the following:

- Once pandemic influenza is confirmed anywhere in the world, it will likely spread to our community within six weeks.
- Health experts do not know how long a pandemic could last. Communities may be affected in six- to eight-week waves that may continue for up to 18 months.
- State and federal laws that will affect your business may be modified, suspended or enacted in response to a pandemic. This might include voluntary self-quarantine, suspension of public gatherings and closure of public buildings.

## Planning Checklist for Businesses

- Find out if your existing contingency plans address long-term absenteeism rates. Can your core business activities continue over several weeks with only a minimum workforce?
- Identify essential functions such as payroll and information technology, and identify the people needed to perform them. Cross train employees.
- Plan for interruptions of essential services — water, power, sanitation, transportation, etc. Do you have reserves to see you through any disruption?
- Determine what outside activities are critical to your operations, and develop alternatives. Find out if your suppliers have contingency plans.
- Update sick leave and family medical leave policies. Make sure employees understand the importance of staying home, if they become ill, to prevent the spread of disease.
- Determine whether some employees might be able to work from home. Establish or expand the necessary policies and tools to support working from home, such as secure network connections.
- Work with your company's medical advisor, insurer, health plan provider and major health care facilities to share your contingency plans and learn more about their capabilities and plans.
- Communicate with your employees about pandemic flu and involve them in developing your continuity plans.
- Establish an emergency communications plan that includes key contacts, backups and a chain of communications.
- Maintain a healthy work environment. Promote good hygiene and share tips on how to stop the spread of germs at work.

**For a more detailed checklist, visit [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov)**

# Protecting Employees' Health



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Like seasonal flu, pandemic flu is caused by a virus that infects the nose, throat and lungs. It is generally spread from person to person when the infected person coughs or sneezes.

You can help prevent the spread of disease by encouraging your employees to practice the following simple, common-sense precautions.

## ■ **Avoid close contact with people who are sick.**

If you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick, too.

## ■ **Stay home when you're sick or have flu symptoms.**

Get plenty of rest and check with a health care provider as needed.

## ■ **Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.**

Direct your cough or sneeze into your sleeve at the bend of your elbow, not into your hands. It may protect those around you from getting sick.

## ■ **Clean your hands.**

Washing your hands often will help protect you against germs. When soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers.

## ■ **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.**

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs, then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.

## ■ **Practice other good health habits.**

Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage stress, drink plenty of fluids, eat nutritious foods and avoid smoking, which may increase the risk of serious consequences if you do get the flu.

## ■ **Keep all immunizations up to date, including seasonal influenza vaccinations (flu shots).**

### **Local Public Health Agencies in Greater Kansas City**

#### **Cass County**

300 S. Main St., Harrisonville, MO 64701  
Phone: 816-380-8425 • Fax: 816-380-8450

#### **Clay County**

800 Haines Dr., Liberty, MO 64068  
Phone: 816-595-4200 • Fax: 816-595-4201  
[www.clayhealth.com](http://www.clayhealth.com)

#### **Independence**

515 S. Liberty St., Independence, MO 64050  
Phone: 816-325-7185 • Fax: 816-325-7098  
[www.indepmo.org/health](http://www.indepmo.org/health)

#### **Jackson County**

313 S. Liberty St., Independence, MO 64050  
Phone: 816-404-6415 • Fax: 816-404-6429  
[www.jacohd.org](http://www.jacohd.org)

#### **Johnson County**

11875 S. Sunset Dr., Suite 300, Olathe, KS 66061  
Phone: 913-894-2525 • Fax: 913-477-8048  
6000 Lamar, Mission, KS 66202  
Phone: 913-826-1200 • Fax: 913-826-1210  
[health.jocogov.org](http://health.jocogov.org)

#### **Kansas City, Mo.**

2400 Troost Ave., Kansas City, MO 64108  
Phone: 816-513-6252 • Fax: 816-513-6293  
[www.kcmo.org/health](http://www.kcmo.org/health)

#### **Leavenworth County**

500 Eisenhower Rd., Suite 101  
Leavenworth, KS 66048  
Phone: 913-250-2000 • Fax: 913-250-2039  
[www.leavenworthcounty.org/hd](http://www.leavenworthcounty.org/hd)

#### **Platte County**

212 Marshall Rd., Platte City, MO 64079  
Phone: 816-858-2412 • Fax: 816-858-2087  
[www.plattecountyhealthdept.com](http://www.plattecountyhealthdept.com)

#### **Ray County**

820 E. Lexington St., Richmond, MO 64085  
Phone: 816-776-5413 • Fax: 816-776-2441

#### **Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kan.**

619 Ann Ave., Kansas City, KS 66101  
Phone: 913-573-6704 • Fax: 913-321-7932  
<http://www.wycokck.org>

**For more information about what you can  
do to prepare for pandemic flu, contact your  
local public health department.**