

EMPLOYER RECOMMENDED ACTION STEPS FOR RESPONDING TO, AND THE PREVENTION OF, THE SPREAD OF FLU

Advise workers to be alert to any signs of fever and other symptoms of flu-like illness before reporting to work each day.

Symptoms for Flu Include:

- Fever
- Chills
- Cough
- Sore Throat
- Body Aches
- Headache

Additional Symptoms of COVID-19 Include:

- Loss of Smell
- Loss of Taste
- Shortness of Breath
- Labored Breathing

CDC recommends that workers who appear to have an influenza-like illness upon arrival or become ill during the day be promptly separated from other workers and be advised to go home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F [37.8° C] or greater), or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications. ****If feasible, consider a policy for taking employee temperature upon arrival at work. Non-touch, forehead scanners are recommended.***

RESPONDING TO ILLNESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Those who become ill with symptoms of an influenza-like illness during the work day should be:

1. Separated from other workers and asked to go home promptly. Please provide essential PPE to any employees assisting the ill worker.
2. Workers with influenza-like illness should be given a surgical mask immediately and quarantined in another room if possible.
3. With the ill employee's assistance, make a list of who the employee interacted with, what areas he occupied, any restrooms used and any common equipment used (printers, copiers, phones, forklifts, kiosks, and other machinery).
4. ***Promptly inform fellow employees of their possible exposure in the workplace to influenza-like illness, but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).**
5. Don't forget to disinfect equipment and common areas where the ill employee frequented. Close off the area if necessary.

**For more information on privacy issues, please refer to: http://www.flu.gov/faq/workplace_questions/equal_employment/index.html#PrivacyIssues.*

Employees exposed to a sick co-worker should monitor themselves for symptoms of influenza-like illness and stay home if they are sick.

- Expect, and plan for, a sick employee to be out for about 3 to 5 days in most cases, even if anti-viral medication is used.
- Ensure that your sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are well aware of these policies.
- Talk with companies that provide your company with contract or temporary workers about the importance of sick workers staying home.
- Do not require a doctor's note from workers to validate influenza-like illness because documentation may not be available from busy doctor's offices and clinics. Employees may be unable to see a doctor while ill with influenza.
- Be aware that employees may have to stay home to care for sick family members and general policies for sick time should be flexible. Employees who remain home to care for family members must not be sick with influenza upon return to work.

PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF INFLUENZA

- Strongly encourage proper and frequent hand washing. Provide alcohol based hand sanitizer when hand washing is not possible. Posting directions for handwashing & sanitizing is helpful.
- Review personal preventative procedures with employees, such as use of tissues for coughing and sneezing, proper disposal of used tissues, cover nose and mouth when coughing sneezing and sneeze into the bend of elbow when tissue is not available.
- Increasing physical distance between people in the workplace.
- Encourage employees to get vaccinated for seasonal flu when the vaccine becomes available.
**Offering flu shots at work is a very convenient way to get compliance.*

If influenza increases in severity in your company or community, refer to the CDC website for their recommendations to implement additional preventative measures.

Such recommendations may include:

- Canceling face-to-face business meetings
- Work from home (telecommuting)
- Reducing frequencies of delivery services
- Canceling non-essential travel
- Wearing masks or other PPE

Additional Resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/index.htm>

OSHA's Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for and Influenza Pandemic

https://www.osha.gov/Publications/influenza_pandemic.html