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Southern State  
Community College

Emergency Response  
Plan

Section XVI

# Pandemic Influenza

## **Pandemic Influenza Emergency Response Plan**

Experts believe a worldwide outbreak, or pandemic, of influenza will happen someday. The exact timing is not known, but it is certain our everyday lives will drastically change during a pandemic. These changes may include temporary closing of schools or cancellation of events, disruption of normal services such as utilities and county-imposed travel restrictions and/or quarantine measures.

Pandemic flu occurs when a new influenza virus appears or emerges in the human population and causes a global outbreak of the disease, resulting in serious illness as it spreads from person to person. Pandemic flu has occurred naturally throughout history (1918 Spanish Flu, 1957 Asian Flu, 1968 Hong Kong Flu).

Pandemics are unpredictable and it is difficult to know when one will occur, what type of flu it will be, and how severe it will be. A flu pandemic could cause many deaths and severe illnesses, disrupt some parts of daily life, and limit the amount of health and other services available. Additionally, hospitals could be overloaded if doctors and nurses are sick. There also may be more people with the flu than the hospitals can take. In this case, some people would need to be cared for in their homes or other places.

This Pandemic Flu Plan was prepared to facilitate development of an emergency response and recovery plan utilizing a business continuity planning model. In addition to providing guidance, this Plan describes the actions that will be taken to coordinate and synchronize available college resources during a pandemic outbreak. The following procedures apply to all facilities owned, leased and operated by Southern State Community College (SSCC).

## I. PURPOSE AND STRATEGIES OF PLAN

### II. BACKGROUND

- Predicted Spread and Virulence
- Potential effects

### III. COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

- Between SSCC's Emergency Resource Team (ERT) and Emergency Directors from municipal and/or county health professionals regarding pandemic alert phases
- To the college community regarding pandemic alert phases and actions taken at SSCC
- To the college community regarding proper hygiene, social distancing measures and office/work area disinfecting

### IV. CONTAINMENT INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

- Ways to reduce the risk of infected persons entering college facilities
- Disseminate Infection Control Guidelines for social distancing and personal hygiene
- Clean and sanitize facilities, work areas, individual offices
- Managing fear
- Mutual Aid Agreements

### V. CONTINUITY OF ESSENTIAL OPERATIONS

- Identification of essential personnel, operations and core skills
- Planning operations for absence/quarantine
- Knowledge Management/cross training
- Student Learning Venues

### IV. RECOVERY

- Resumption
- Evaluation

## **I. PURPOSE AND STRATEGIES OF PLAN**

The purpose of this plan is to prepare Southern State Community College for the possibility of a Pandemic Influenza outbreak directly affecting campuses and other affiliated entities.

The two main strategies of this plan aim to manage the impact of an influenza pandemic on any SSCC campus or facility.

1. Containment of the virus by reducing spread within college facilities via proper hygiene and social distancing measures; and
2. Maintenance of essential services if containment is not possible and/or quarantine is implemented

## **II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Influenza pandemics with novel viruses are recurring events, are unpredictable and result in serious health effects to large proportions of the population, with significant disruption to social, economic and security concerns of the community. The recent appearance of the highly pathogenic H1N1 virus has raised concerns that this virus may mutate to create a novel virus capable of causing a significant global influenza pandemic.

**There are three distinct forms of influenza, and they are not referred to interchangeably:**

- **Seasonal (or common) flu** is a respiratory illness that can be transmitted person to person. Most people have some immunity, and a vaccine is available.
- **Avian (or bird) flu** is caused by influenza viruses that occur naturally among wild birds. The virus is deadly to domestic fowl and can be transmitted from birds to humans. There is no human immunity and no vaccine is available.
- **Pandemic flu** is virulent human flu that causes a global outbreak, or pandemic, of serious illness. Because there is little natural immunity, the disease can spread easily from person to person.

### **A. PREDICTED SPREAD AND VIRULENCE**

- Illness rates in population: 20-50%
- Global spread in: 3 months
- Vaccine availability: 6 months after initial outbreak
- Anti-viral treatment: Likely to be in short supply and may not be effective

### **B. POTENTIAL EFFECTS**

- Widespread disruption to campus operations: 20-60% of employees may be unable to work (sickness, city/county-issued quarantine) for 2-4 weeks at the height of a severe pandemic wave. Each wave may last about 8 weeks.
- Significant death rate - loss of key people and expertise
- Loss of county-wide emergency and essential services - fire, police, health services

- Loss of other essential services - transport, government departments, key suppliers

**C. EFFECT FOR SSCC**

- Loss of essential personnel (either temporary or permanent)
- Loss of services from suppliers
- Operations (e.g. organizational units) and technical support (e.g. IT) may be affected
- College-related travel will be affected or temporarily ceased

**III. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES**

To Southern State Community College from municipal, county or state health professionals regarding the World Health Organizations (WHO) Influenza Pandemic phases, which are detailed below

**A. PANDEMIC PHASES:**

Inter-pandemic phase New virus in animals, no human cases	Low risk of human cases	1
	Higher risk of human cases	2
Pandemic alert New virus causes human cases	No or very limited human-to-human transmission	3
	Evidence of increased human-to-human transmission	4
	Evidence of significant human-to-human transmission	5
Pandemic	Efficient and sustained human-to-human transmission	6

**Inter-pandemic period:**

**Phase 1:** No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in humans. An influenza virus subtype that has caused human infection may be present in animals. If present in animals, the risk of human infection or disease is considered to be low.

**Phase 2:** No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in humans. However, a circulating animal influenza virus subtype poses a substantial risk of human disease.

**Pandemic Alert Period:**

**Phase 3:** Human infection(s) with a new subtype but no human-to-human spread, or at most rare instances of spread to a close contact.

**Phase 4:** Small cluster(s) with limited human-to-human transmission but spread is highly localized, suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans.

**Phase 5:** Larger cluster(s) but human-to-human spread still localized, suggesting that the virus is becoming increasingly better adapted to humans but may not yet be fully transmissible (substantial pandemic risk).

**Pandemic Period:**

**Phase 6:** Pandemic: increased and sustained transmission in general population. This phase includes periods when virus activity has subsided and a second wave has commenced.

**B. PANDEMIC RESPONSE LEVELS FOR SSCC**

**Level 1:** Confirmed cases of human-to-human transmission of flu in Ohio

**Level 2:** Suspected/confirmed cases in any county in service district

**Level 3:** Confirmed on any campus

**Level 1 Response:**

**Confirmed cases of human-to-human transmission of avian flu in Ohio**

- During a level one alert phase, the President, or designee, will instruct the Emergency Directors to contact local health departments for directives on reporting absenteeism rates.
- Reporting will be accomplished by faxing a completed Influenza Report Form to local health department or in Highland County by logging into website <http://www.highlandcountyhealthdepartment.com> to input data on to a spreadsheet.
- Personal surveillance of campus community for influenza-like illnesses (ILI) (e.g. fever, chills, shivering, muscle soreness, etc.) shall commence.
- Emergency Directors will keep President and Vice President's (VP's) abreast of latest information from local health districts.
- Campus-wide dissemination of pandemic flu information and status of pandemic threat will be issued (see Appendix M)

**Level 2 Response:**

**Suspected/confirmed cases in any SSCC service county**

- Continue personal surveillance of campus community and reporting to local Health Dept.
- Emergency Directors shall post pandemic Influenza notifications at all entryways encouraging those that experience ILI symptoms not to enter campus facilities.

- Implement containment activities--Post General Infection Control notices (hand hygiene, cough etiquette, social distancing) across campus and send via email.
- Emergency Directors will monitor latest information obtained from local Health Department Alerts and report to President and Vice President's.

### **Level Three Response:**

#### **Confirmed on campus**

- Emergency Directors will notify President and VP's of current alert status gleaned from local Health Department Alerts.
- President shall order the mobilization of the Emergency Center and convene a meeting with the Emergency Resource Team. Information will be disseminated to Emergency Directors and the campus community concerning status of daily operations.
- Social distancing measures will be practiced campus-wide
- Offices and work areas will be disinfected daily
- Emergency Directors and Emergency Resource Team shall work to ensure adequate supplies of tissues, medical supplies, hand hygiene products, and cleaning supplies, are available at each facility and disposed of properly.

## **C. COMMUNICATIONS TO CAMPUS COMMUNITY**

### **STATUS OF OUTBREAK**

- Communications to the campus community and external community will be frequent and on-going regarding the current phase of a pandemic outbreak and the College's response. The campus Communications Director, or designated college spokesperson, will work in conjunction with The President and Emergency Resource Team, Emergency Directors to ensure accurate information dissemination. General intents of these notifications are to educate the campus community (hand hygiene, cough etiquette, social distancing, office disinfecting) and aid in subsiding fears (see Appendix L of Emergency Management and Restoration Plan).

### **INFORMATION DISSEMINATION METHODS**

- Employees and students will be advised on where to find up-to-date, reliable information via the following dissemination methods: e-mail, internet and intranet websites, voicemail, local TV access channels, web casts or postal services through implementation of the Emergency Notification System (See Appendix E of Emergency Management and Restoration Plan).

- Internet links to relevant sources of information will be posted on the College's web page <http://www.sccc.edu> and will link to the following sites:
  - <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/>
  - <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/>
  - <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>

## **IV. CONTAINMENT INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

### **A. REDUCING RISKS**

Upon notification from municipal, county or state health officials of a suspected case of H1N1 influenza reported in any service county, the Emergency Resource Team will convene. Emergency Directors will implement the following measures to reduce the risk of infected persons entering or remaining within SSCC facilities:

- Display prominent notices at all entrances advising staff, visitors and students not to enter if they are experiencing influenza-like symptoms (see Appendix M).
- Conspicuously post General Infection Control (i.e. cough etiquette and hand hygiene, social distancing measures) notices around campus including entrances, bulletin boards, cafeteria and rest room facilities (see Appendix M).
- Work in conjunction with Safety Director and Maintenance personnel to ensure there are adequate supplies of tissues, medical supplies, hand hygiene products, cleaning supplies, masks for employees, and specific receptacles for disposal of infected products at each facility. The Safety Director in coordination with Emergency Directors will distribute and post information on what to do if people get sick at work.
- The President or their designee will access the latest advice from the county general health alert web site regarding managing staff that become ill then provide this information to both the Emergency and Safety Director. The Emergency Resource Team will send out emails to all staff regarding what to do if employees fall ill while at work.
- If a person feels ill, or if someone observes that another person is exhibiting symptoms of influenza at work, they are to contact their Emergency Director or immediate supervisor by telephone if at all possible.
- The Emergency Resource Team will ensure that the college community will receive pandemic influenza fact sheet, General Infection Control Notices and information on Social Distancing through Emergency Notification System (see page 27).
- The Emergency Director, or designee, shall take all necessary measures to prevent the spread of the virus and limit its transmission. In the event, of a pandemic some of these measures may include:

- Monitor employees that are suspected to be ill
- Maintain a daily influenza report form and transmit to local health department
- Communicate with external health agencies
- Schedule Safety Director or outside health care personnel to present general awareness and informational session on infection control measures and emergency preparedness
- Direct instructors to report suspected illness of students
- Implement established protocol for employees and students suspected to be ill
- Facilitate the return of staff to work once they recuperate or quarantine has been lifted.

## **B. SOCIAL DISTANCING/PERSONAL HYGIENE**

Social distancing refers to strategies to reduce the frequency of contact between people. Social distancing strategies implemented by SSCC during a pandemic period include:

- Information on social distancing will be sent via email and posted conspicuously in each facility (see Appendix M).
- Emergency Directors, or designee, will post notices on bulletin boards, in the cafeteria, near student lounges, in restroom facilities and in food prep areas.
- Avoid meeting people face to face - use the telephone, ITV conferencing, WIMBA, and email to conduct conversations as much as possible - even when employees are in the same building.
- Avoid any unnecessary travel and cancel or postpone non-essential meetings, gatherings, workshops, or training sessions. Travel recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/> will be adopted and posted.
- When possible, arrange for some key personnel to work from home or work flex hours to avoid crowding in facilities and to reduce transmission.
- Avoid public transportation or wear a face mask to reduce your risk of becoming infected.
- Bring a healthy lunch and eat at desk or away from others (avoid cafeteria type setting).
- Do not congregate in areas where people socialize. Do what needs to be done and then leave the area.
- If a face-to-face meeting with people is unavoidable, minimize the meeting time, choose a large meeting room and sit at least one or two chairs away from each other when possible.
- Encourage the college community to avoid recreational or other leisure activities where they might come into contact with infectious people; however, do encourage exercise.

Basic personal hygiene will be stressed to the college community to minimize potential influenza transmission. Hand and personal hygiene information will be communicated to the college community (see Appendix M).

- Cover nose and mouth when sneezing and coughing (preferably with a disposable single use tissue).

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze or use the restroom and before eating. If you are not near soap and water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Immediately dispose of used tissues in specific receptacles.
- Keep hands away from the eyes, mouth, and nose.

### **C. CAMPUS CLEANING**

During a pandemic, the College will implement additional measures to minimize the transmission of the virus through environmental sources, particularly hard surfaces (e.g. sinks, door handles, drinking fountains, railings and counters). Transmission from contaminated hard surfaces is unlikely but influenza viruses may live up to two days on such surfaces. Influenza viruses are inactivated by alcohol and by chlorine. The following campus cleaning will be implemented.

- Office disinfecting will be implemented during the pandemic period. Each employee shall take responsibility for disinfecting his/her own work area daily.
- Maintenance will clean and apply disinfecting solution to air conditioning/ventilation filters where possible.
- Employees will disinfect telephones and commonly used office items daily.
- Janitorial Service will apply disinfecting solutions to all common areas, door handles, file cabinets, desks, counters, railings, washbasins, toilet bowls, urinals and septic tanks daily.
- Where applicable, when one person leaves a work station, there will be a brief sanitization interval before the next person begins so that the work station can be thoroughly disinfected with cleaning solutions.
- Classrooms will be equipped with disinfecting solutions to be preformed between courses.

Details of suitable cleaning solutions can be found in table below:

<b>Disinfectants</b>	<b>Recommended use</b>	<b>Precautions</b>
<b>Sodium hypochlorite:</b> 1000 parts per million of available chlorine, usually achieved by a 1 in 5 dilution of hospital grade bleach	Disinfection of material contaminated with blood and body fluids.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should be used in well-ventilated areas</li> <li>• Protective clothing required while handling and using undiluted bleach</li> <li>• Do not mix with strong acids to avoid release of chlorine gas</li> </ul> <p>Corrosive to metals</p>
<b>Granular chlorine:</b> e.g. Det-Sol 5000 or Diversol, to be diluted as per manufacturer's instructions	May be used in place of liquid bleach, if it is unavailable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as above</li> </ul>
<b>Alcohol:</b> e.g. Isopropyl 70%, ethyl alcohol 60%	Smooth metal surfaces, tabletops and other surfaces on which bleach cannot be used.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flammable and toxic</li> <li>• To be used in well-ventilated areas</li> <li>• Avoid inhalation</li> <li>• Keep away from heat sources, electrical equipment, flames, and hot surfaces</li> <li>• Allow it to dry completely, particularly when using diathermy, as this can cause diathermy burns</li> </ul>

**D. MANAGING FEAR**

Expect anxiety regarding the pandemic situation which will contribute to absenteeism and/or increased distress to the college community. Some suggested ways to manage this anxiety are as follows:

- Communicate the possibility of a pandemic very early to staff and the College's preparedness to manage it
- Clearly communicate to staff the College's Influenza Response Plan
- Provide clear, timely and proactive communications to staff when things are changing
- Provide clear communications on how the College will handle the situation if the pandemic does occur
- Provide mental health services for college community

**E. MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS**

Campus facilities may be used by public health officials to provide health care to local communities. (See Appendix F)

## V. CONTINUITY OF ESSENTIAL OPERATIONS

Measures will be implemented to continue essential services and operations on each campus. Plans for maintaining infrastructure, business services, and continuation of course instruction have been made. The following methods for continuity of essential operations have been considered:

### A. ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL

In the event of a pandemic outbreak, it is critical that essential personnel and core skills are adequate to keep the campus operating; this will be accomplished through succession planning, cross training, etc.

- Critical functions and staffing have been identified to meet needs to maintain daily functions.
- Key employees and core functions within each department (e.g. payroll, IT, Accounts Payable, webmaster, etc.) have been identified and redundant teams created who can perform those functions.
- Essential information is stored in known, accessible, and shared locations so that those unfamiliar with procedures can easily adapt.
- Employees' cross training and sharing of knowledge allows for continuous operations in the event of a critical situation.
- A succession plan for key personnel including Board members, the President, VP's, and other critical personnel has been developed.
- Expanded use of videoconferencing and teleconferencing among key personnel (i.e. President, VP's, and key personnel) and external stakeholders with consideration to security and bandwidth issues.
- Financial implications for part-time employees and the institution if a city or county-wide quarantine is issued for several weeks have been considered.

### B. ABSENCE/QUARANTINE

The primary effects of a pandemic are on staffing and student levels. Unlike natural disasters, pandemics do not damage property or equipment; the effects are mainly human resource oriented. Absenteeism may be for a variety of reasons: illness/incapacity; caring for other family members, or school closures. Therefore, SSCC's Leave policy and professors' attendance policies will be revised to accommodate city or county-issued quarantine and/or Presidential declaration of a campus emergency shut-down.

Protocol for employees and students with suspected pandemic influenza.

- Employees or students with known or suspected pandemic influenza should not remain on campus and should return only after they are symptom free.

Sick Leave policy that is unique to employees with pandemic influenza.

- Employees will use accrued sick leave if available.

Absenteeism policy that is unique to students with pandemic influenza. The virtual classroom is a viable alternative that should be considered to continue instruction.

- Students with absenteeism caused by a pandemic can be given a grade of “I” (incomplete) at the discretion of the faculty.

The standard college policy for students receiving an “I” grade is as follows: If course work is not completed within the following quarter, the “I” will be recorded as a failure on the student’s transcript.

The college policy during a pandemic will be changed as follows: Students receiving an “I” grade during a pandemic will be given an extension of 1 quarter beyond the standard policy before their grade will be recorded as a failure on the student’s transcript.

### **C. STUDENT LEARNING**

- Alternative delivery methods for land-based student course instruction (i.e. web-based, streaming video, etc.).
- Instructors will be reimbursed for expenses incurred for attempts made to continue instruction for students during a pandemic influenza. Examples may include: postage, paper, envelopes etc. Dated receipts must be presented for reimbursement.
- Student tuition reimbursement, forfeiture of remaining quarter, how grades will be determined and when the following quarter will commence have been considered.

The decision to close the campus or substantially curtail most major activities of the campus would be a difficult decision and the decision to do so would require careful thought and consideration, by the President, the Emergency Resource Team and local health professionals. ***Should any service area Health Department order a city or county-wide quarantine, all operations at Southern State Community College will cease until further notice.***

## **VI. CAMPUS RECOVERY**

Recovery begins immediately and continues throughout the duration of a pandemic or other critical incident. With a pandemic, recovery efforts may be frustrating because of the unknown duration of the actual event and the unknown number of faculty, staff and students effected. Through pre-planning it is the college’s hope that recovery will be quicker, more efficient, effective and easier for members of the college community.

### **A. RESUMPTION**

- Based on information as gleaned by the President, ERT, and local health professionals and ongoing reviews of the international/national/local situation the President and ERT will designate a partial, incremental or total return to normal campus operations. Any such decisions would be communicated to the campus community via all available methods.

- Notices will be widely disseminated to all faculty/staff and students of a full or partial reopening as quickly as possible.
- Loss of students or employees will be addressed as outlined in the Death section of the Emergency Management and Restoration Plan.

## **B. EVALUATION**

- After a complete return to operations is accomplished the Emergency Resource Team will convene to analysis and evaluate response efforts, financial implications, student learning status, recovery methods and determine necessary changes to this plan.