

Pandemic Influenza Community Mitigation Interim Planning Guide for Individuals and Families*

Recommendations for Planning

1. Plan for ill individuals to remain at home

- Be prepared to stay at home if you are ill with pandemic influenza. Information on taking care of ill people at home will be posted on www.pandemicflu.gov.
- It will be important to have extra supplies on hand during a pandemic, as you may not be able to get to a store or stores may be out of supplies. You should have a reserve of at least a two-week supply of water and food; however, if the pandemic is severe, community disruption may last for a longer period. If community water supplies are not suitable for consumption during a pandemic, your local water utility or public health authorities will notify the community.
- Periodically check your regular prescription drugs to ensure a continuous supply in your home.
- Have any nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including a thermometer, pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, and other over-the-counter medicines that you and your family use on a regular basis.
- Designate one person in the household who could be the caregiver if anyone in the household becomes ill with pandemic influenza. Develop an alternate plan for someone to be the caregiver if that person becomes sick.
- Talk with neighbors, friends, and family about your plans for staying at home if you or someone in your household is ill. Share ideas.
- Ensure that each household has a current list of emergency contacts in your community, including mental health and counseling resources.

2. Plan for all household members of a person who is ill to voluntarily remain at home

- Be prepared to stay at home if someone in your household is ill. Information on taking care of ill people at home will be posted on www.pandemicflu.gov.
- Have any nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including a thermometer, pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, and other over-the-counter medicines that you and your family use on a regular basis.
- Talk with family members and members of your household about how they would be cared for if they become ill and about what will be needed to care for them in your or their home.
- Designate one person in the household who could be the caregiver if anyone in the household becomes ill with pandemic flu. Make plans for a backup if that person gets ill.
- Consider how to care for people in your household with special needs in case the services they rely on are not available.
- Talk with neighbors, friends, and family about your plans for staying at home if someone in your household is ill. Share ideas.
- Ensure that each household has a current list of emergency contacts in your community, including mental health and counseling resources.

3. Plan for dismissal of students and childcare closure

- If you have children in your household, make plans for their care if officials recommend dismissal of students from schools and closure of childcare programs.
- Plan and arrange now for who will care for children if schools and childcare programs dismiss students and children during a pandemic. Plan for an extended period (up to 12 weeks) in case the pandemic is severe.
- Do not plan to bring children to the workplace if childcare cannot be arranged.
- If you have children in a college or university, have a plan for the student to relocate or return home, if desired, or if the college/university dismisses students, at the onset of a Category 4-5 pandemic.

- Plan home-learning activities and exercises. Have materials, such as books, on hand.
- Public health officials will likely recommend that children and teenagers do not gather in groups in the community during a pandemic. Plan recreational activities that your children can do at home.
- Find out now about the plans at your child's school or childcare facility during a pandemic.
- In a severe pandemic, parents will be advised to protect their children by reducing out-of-school social contacts and mixing with other children. Although limiting all outside contact may not be feasible, parents may be able to develop support systems with co-workers, friends, families, or neighbors, if they continue to need childcare. For example, they could prepare a plan in which two to three families work together to supervise and provide care for a small group of infants and young children while their parents are at work (studies suggest that childcare group size of less than six children may be associated with fewer respiratory infections).²

4. Plan for workplace and community social distancing measures

- Become familiar with social distancing actions that may be used during a pandemic to modify frequency and type of person-to-person contact (e.g., reducing hand-shaking, limiting face-to-face meetings, promoting teleworking, liberal/unscheduled leave policies, and staggered shifts).
- Talk to your employer:
 - Talk to your employer about the pandemic influenza plan for your workplace to include issues about benefits, leave, telework, and other possible policies to go into effect during a pandemic.
 - Ask your employer about how your employer will continue during a pandemic if key staff cannot come to work.
 - Plan for the possible reduction or loss of income if you are unable to work or your place of employment is closed. Consider maintaining a cash reserve.
 - Check with your employer or union about leave policies for workers who are ill, live in a household with someone ill with pandemic influenza, or have to take off work to take care of children.
 - Find out if you can work from home.
 - Discuss alternative ways of holding meetings at work, including, for example, teleconferences, during a pandemic.
 - Find out how you will receive information from your employer during a pandemic.
- Prepare backup plans in case public gatherings, such as community events and meetings and worship services, are cancelled.
- Talk with others in your community about other ways of communicating during a pandemic if public gatherings are cancelled
- Plan for recreational activities that you and your household members can do at home if community gatherings are cancelled during a pandemic.
- Discuss with your faith-based organization or place of worship their plans for communicating with members during a pandemic.

5. Help others

- Prepare backup plans for taking care of loved ones who are far away.
- Find volunteers who want to help people in need, such as elderly neighbors, single parents of small children, or people without the resources to get the medical help they will need.
- Think of ways you can reach out to others in your neighborhood or community to help them plan for and respond to a pandemic.