



**Policy 6.17**  
**Disaster Preparedness and University State of Emergency**  
**Work Life Guidance to Prepare for**  
**Pandemic Flu or Other Catastrophic Disaster**

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## **At Work**

### **Employees**

- Find out if you can work from home in the event of a pandemic flu or natural catastrophe and identify connection needs, if any, required for home access.
- Prepare your home with resources that will enable to you effectively work from home if this is an option (designated work space, additional telephone lines, internet connections, modems, fax machine, etc.).
- Plan for the possible reduction or loss of income if you are unable to work or your place of employment is closed.
- Understand Ohio State’s leave policies, know your current leave balances, and plan to maintain or increase your leave balances if possible.

### **Managers**

- Think about what information the people in your workplace will need if you are a manager. This may include information about insurance, leave policies, working from home, possible loss of income, and when not to come to work if sick. Business planning information for seasonal and pandemic flu is available online at [www.cdc.gov/flu/business/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/business/index.htm)
- Meet with your colleagues and make lists of things that you will need to know and what actions can be taken.
- Identify other information resources in your community, such as mental health hotlines, public health hotlines, or electronic bulletin boards.
- Find support systems - people who are thinking about the same issues you are thinking about. Share ideas.

## **Outside of Work**

### **Social Disruption May Be Widespread**

- Usual services (hospitals and health care facilities, banks, stores, restaurants, government offices) may be disrupted.
- Consider how to care for people with special needs in case the services they rely on are not available (options may include preparing your home or the home of a relative for some level of home care by equipping with medical devices, maintaining a supply of current medications and having, on file, prescriptions for medications/equipment in the event of care in the home).
- Other services such as utilities, mail, and trash may also be disrupted, as much of the workforce may not be available.

### **Schools May Be Closed for an Extended Period of Time**

- Plan home learning activities and exercises. Have materials, such as books, on hand. Also plan recreational activities that your children can do at home.
- Consider childcare needs (options may include working from home, coordinating with other families for rotating in-home childcare, tapping in to other family or community resources to provide in-home childcare).

### **Supplies**

During a pandemic access to supplies or availability of supplies may be limited. Public waterworks services may also be interrupted. When considering what foods to store, consider foods that:

- Are nonperishable (will keep for a long time) and don't require refrigeration.
- Are easy to prepare in case you are unable to cook.
- Require little or no water, so you can conserve water for drinking.

To plan for a pandemic:

- Store a two week supply of water and food.
- Periodically check your regular prescription drugs to ensure a continuous supply in your home.



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- Have any nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins.
- Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home.

Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home:

Table with 2 columns: Food and Non-perishables, Medical, Health, and Emergency Supplies. Lists various items like canned meats, medical supplies, and hygiene products.

Stay Healthy

- Get a flu shot - it won't protect against pandemic influenza, but will help you stay healthy generally.
- Get a pneumonia shot to prevent secondary infection if you are over the age of 65 or have a chronic illness such as diabetes or asthma.
- Make sure that you family's immunizations are up-to-date.
- Practice good health habits, generally:
o Eat a balanced diet. Be sure to eat a variety of foods, including plenty of vegetables, fruits, and whole grain products.
o Exercise on a regular basis and get plenty of rest.
o To limit the spread of germs and prevent infection:
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Clean your hands after coughing or sneezing using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Stay at home from work or school if you are sick.

Additional Resources:

- U.S. Government Flu Website, www.flu.gov
• Ohio Flu Website, www.flu.ohio.gov
• Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Infoline 800-232-4636 and website, www.cdc.gov