

# PANDEMIC PLAN OF ACTION – WHAT'S A BUSINESS TO DO?

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When you think seasonal flu, or H1N1, you may link that to people and community. Businesses don't always come to mind.

In the November issue of the Risk Management magazine, there was an article giving the spotlight on Pandemic Preparedness, as **businesses** are confronted with the first pandemic in more than 40 years.

The author shared valuable lessons to be learned from H1N1's first wave last spring, and today I would like to touch on 3 key facts.

# What's a Business to Do?

- Preparedness and Response
  - When having a plan is not enough
- Communication
  - When employees look to their employers for assurance
- Unique challenges to some businesses
  - Hotels, casinos, restaurants, shopping malls, schools

# Preparedness and Response

We cannot predict when something bad might happen to our organization. We can however predict the extent to which our organization is affected by that event, by being prepared.

# Preparedness and Response

- Know your organization
- Review and update your business continuity plans
- Review and revise policies and procedures that encourage associates to stay home if ill

# Preparedness and Response

- Know your organization

Business interruptions can result from internal and external influences, causing loss or degradation of essential services and/or can negatively affect critical operations of your organization.

Know those essential services and critical operations in your organization.

Index key skills/relationships

Promote cross-functional team

Get to know local health officials

# Preparedness and Response

- Review and update your business continuity plans

Foreseeable disruption:

- Absenteeism
- Supply chain
- Key customers and vendors

Financial impact on your business:

- Ineffective crisis response could lower shareholder value
- Effective crisis response could potentially increase shareholder value

# Preparedness and Response

- Review and revise policies and procedures that encourage associates to stay home if ill
  - Liaise with your HR department to address the absenteeism issue and how your organization will respond
  - Work to develop “big picture” policy on employee time off
  - Offer remote system access capability, where applicable

# Preparedness and Response

- Educate employees on personal preparedness to ensure their well-being
- Provide hand sanitizer dispensers, alcohol-based cleaning solution, tissues
- Train janitorial staff to routinely clean surfaces

# Preparedness and Response

- Educate employees on personal preparedness to ensure their well-being

Through your HR department:

- Send monthly notifications of update via e-mail
- Post information material
- Distribute flyers to associates

# Preparedness and Response

- Provide hand sanitizer dispensers, alcohol-based cleaning solution, tissues

Take these steps to minimize the impact of a pandemic on your company, displaying a proactive approach with focus on prevention

# Preparedness and Response

- Train janitorial staff to routinely clean surfaces

Extra steps can be taken by wiping off non-common areas:

- Network scanners and printers
- Forklifts' steering wheel

# Communication

Empowers everyone to be part of the plan

- Across the organization, through HR
  - Frequent, timely, accurate
  - Flyers, e-mail, message board
- Access to Resources
  - Center for Disease Control (CDC) [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
  - Orange County Healthcare Association (OCHCA) [www.ochealthinfo.com](http://www.ochealthinfo.com)
  - [www.healthdisasteroc.com](http://www.healthdisasteroc.com)
  - Flu.gov; [who.int](http://who.int)

# Communication

- Regular and frequent monitoring of reports from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Telephone hotlines that associates can use to check status and receive important information
- Monitor communications from local authorities
- Institute specific measures as required or advised by local authorities

# Unique challenges to some businesses

- Organizations dealing with the public are groups facing greater risk
  - Strive to make the high-traffic area flu-unfriendly

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