**Biological Problem or Pandemic Response Plan**

Biological problem, specifically pandemic response procedures, are designed to ensure the health and safety of staff and define the specific roles, processes, and systems necessary to support ongoing operations. Response to a pandemic is different from a natural or human induced disaster as it impacts the human infrastructure. A pandemic creates high absenteeism rates resulting in decreased productivity.

A pandemic is a worldwide outbreak of a specific disease which affects a large proportion of the population. During emergencies, the World Health Organization’s (WHO) operational role includes leading and coordinating the health response in support of countries, undertaking risk assessments, identifying priorities and setting strategies, providing critical technical guidance, supplies and financial resources as well as monitoring the health situation. WHO also helps countries to strengthen their national core capacities for emergency risk management to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies due to any hazard that pose a threat to human health security. More information can be found at: <http://www.who.int/en/>

The federal, provincial and territorial governments in Canada work together on pandemic preparedness, although each jurisdiction is responsible for their own plans. The Government of Alberta has released a **Best Practice Guideline for Workplace Health and Safety during Pandemic Influenza.** This document can be found at [https://open.alberta.ca/publications/9750778568193](https://open.alberta.ca/publications/9750778568193%20)

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| **Pandemic Emergency Response Procedure** |

| **Step #** | **Action** | **Responsibility** |
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| **Preventative Measures** | | |
| 1. | Promote hand and respiratory hygiene:   * Provide tissues, no-touch waste containers, hand soap and sanitizer. * Provide training for handwashing and covering a cough. | All Employees |
| 2. | Social distancing – practice keeping a distance of at least 2 meters from those demonstrating flu-like symptoms:   * Avoid meeting people face-to-face – use the telephone, video conferencing, or online meeting tools to conduct business as much as possible. * Avoid public transportation. * Bring lunch and eat at desk or away from others. * Introduce staggered lunch and coffee breaks to reduce lunchroom traffic. * Encourage staff to avoid recreational or other leisure classes. * Do not attend facilities or client workplaces within crisis area. |
| 3. | Promote workplace cleaning and environmental decontamination:   * Cleaning surfaces that are frequently touched by hands daily. * Discourage employees from sharing phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment if possible. * Regularly clean shared workstations and equipment after use. * Thoroughly wash cups, glasses, dishes and cutlery with hot water and soap (preferably in dishwasher) after use. |
| 4. | Restrict workplace attendance from employees with pandemic influenza symptoms:   * Employee is to report symptoms to supervisor and stay home. * Employee should call Health Link Alberta at 811. * Employee is to stay at home until symptoms resolve or quarantine is lifted. * Employee may choose to work from home until they are considered completely recovered. |
| **Pandemic Alert is Received** | | |
| 5. | Notification of alert is received via media, Alberta Health Services (AHS) as to the nature and extent of the crisis area. | President |
| 6. | Discuss situation with management team and determine when staff should refrain from attending client sites and work from home, notify HR of decision, and document decision in the Incident Log (Appendix A). |
| 7. | Discuss work priorities with management team and identify options for re-prioritizing and/or reallocating resources. |
| 8. | Notify staff via text, email and/or the broadcast voice mail message of management’s decision. | HR |
| 10. | For healthy staff that must attend the workplace, ensure preventative steps are enforced and monitor situation. |
| **Pandemic Emergency is Monitored** | | |
| 11. | Monitor situation via WHO until pandemic crisis has been cleared. | President |
| 12. | Discuss situation with management team, determine whether it is safe for staff to return to work, notify HR of decision, and document decision in the Incident Log. |
| **Pandemic Emergency is Ended** | | |
| 13. | Notify staff via text, email and/or the broadcast voice mail message. | HR |
| 14. | Conduct a debrief session and fill out the Emergency Response Debrief Template (Appendix B). | Management Team |
| 15. | Write up a report documenting lessons learned and opportunities for improvement and distribute to the President. |
| 16. | Update Plan to reflect improvements. |

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| **Pandemic Emergency Response Process** |



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| **Appendix A - Pandemic Emergency Response Decision Log** |

INSTRUCTIONS: Use this form to record all emergency response related decisions and resulting actions. Provide as much detail as possible.

Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| **Item** | **Date** | **Decision/Action** | **Action Assigned To** | **Status** | **Authorized By** |
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| **Appendix B - Pandemic Emergency Response Debrief Template** |

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| **EMERGENCY RESPONSE DEBRIEF** |
| **Introduction** |
| After an incident, a debrief should be carried out within two weeks. The process is a structured approach to undertaking a debrief and constructive way of identifying lessons learned from the incident for the sole purpose of improving. The debrief should ensure:   * An open discussion is held * Everyone in the room participates * Learning points are documented |
| **Ground Rules** |
| There are several ground rules that all participants should be aware of and agree to, prior to the start:   * Leave hierarchy at the door * Everyone should contribute and everyone’s contribution should be respected * The purpose of the debrief is to learn * No blame, discussing any potential mistakes made should not lead to blame * Everyone will have a different truth to share of the same event * Contributions should be through what people know, feel and believe * Respect time pressures but all must be fully present - no use of mobile phones * Make no assumptions, be open and honest |
| **The Discussion** |
| What was expected to happen?   * Was there a planned response? * What was the planned response? * What was your personal expectation to happen in this type of incident? * What was the expected timeline?   What actually occurred?   * Each participant should describe what they did, saw or experienced, during the incident   Was there a difference?   * Was there a difference between what was expected and what actually happened? * What worked well and what didn't work so well?   What can be learned or improved?   * With the benefit of hindsight - what could have been done differently/better? * Does anything need to be changed to improve future responses? |
| **Closing the Debrief** |
| The key learning points should be summarized from the discussion held, focusing on what lessons have been identified. Inform participants of next steps (i.e. report writing). If actions have arisen, it is the responsibility of the participants to take the actions forward and ensure they are completed (i.e. updating plans). Once the report has been completed share it with participants to ensure they agree with the contents before forwarding to the President. |
| **Emergency Response Debrief Report Template** |
| Name of Facilitator:  Attendees:  Apologies:  Date: |
| **Overview of the Event** |
| *Describe the date and time of the event, the type of event that occurred, the response strategy selected, etc.* |
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| **Summary of the Discussion** |
| *Record the responses to the questions and general discussion.* |
| **Lessons Learned** |
| Lesson #1:  Assigned to (if required):  Completion Date:  Lesson #2:  Assigned to (if required):  Completion Date:  Lesson #3:  Assigned to (if required):  Completion Date: |