

Pandemic Influenza Plan



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Pandemic Influenza Plan

Introduction

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) an influenza (flu) pandemic “is a global outbreak of disease that occurs when a new flu virus appears that can spread easily from person to person. Because people have not been exposed to this new virus before, they have little or no immunity to the virus; therefore serious illness or death is more likely to result than during seasonal flu.”

Influenza is a highly contagious viral disease that has the potential to reach epidemic proportions in the United States and other countries on an annual basis. When the disease spreads quickly beyond local areas into global proportions, it is considered a pandemic. During a flu pandemic, the level of illness and death increases dramatically worldwide. It can have severe negative effects on businesses and local economies.

The purpose of this plan is to provide a directive to help minimize the impact of a flu pandemic within the Bluegrass Community and Technical College. The primary goals of this plan are to:

- Reduce the spread of the virus within BCTC.
- Sustain educational functions of BCTC.
- Sustain operational functions of BCTC.

Endemic – The amount of a particular disease that is usually present in a community.

Epidemic – An increase, often sudden, in the number of cases of a disease above what is normally expected in that population in that area.

Pandemic – An epidemic that has spread over several countries or continents, usually affecting a large number of people.

Communication

If a flu pandemic should occur, BCTC may receive information or notification from KCTCS system office and/or state health agencies. The potential effect of the pandemic flu on BCTC will be evaluated by Operations staff and advice presented to BCTC leadership in relation to BCTC daily operations and a plan of action. The Operations staff will continue to monitor the situation to provide updates as required for BCTC leadership. Primary sources of information include:

- **Kentucky Department for Public Health**
<http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/epi/preparedness/panFlu/>
- **U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**
<https://www.cdc.gov>

BCTC has established procedures for communications to the public, students, and employees which are outlined in the Emergency Operations Plan. Business interruptions and closures will be communicated through local television and radio stations, the college website, social media, and SNAP alerts.

Preparation and Prevention

Upon receiving notification of a potential flu pandemic, Operations staff will:

- Post prominent notices at all entry points to instruct employees, students, and visitors not to enter the building if they are experiencing symptoms of influenza.
- Post informational posters throughout all campuses to educate employees, students, and visitors on steps to help prevent the spread of the disease: handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes, and social distancing.
- Ensure adequate supplies of disinfectant hand soaps, disinfectant cleaners, and tissues are available.
- Provide a pandemic influenza fact sheet to employees and students regarding proper procedures for controlling the spread of the disease.
- Instruct that all shared work areas and equipment be cleaned daily with disinfectant cleaners.
- Prepare to sustain BCTC campus operations with an approximate 30% reduction in staff due to illness.
- Prepare to implement procedures for containment – cancelling events and gatherings.
- Prepare to implement social distancing protocols to reduce the spread of the virus.
 - Space students ± 3 feet apart in classrooms.
 - Discourage prolonged congregation in open areas.
 - Close lounge areas.
 - Eliminate group activities.
 - Cancel school activities that encourage individuals to be close.
- Prepare to close campuses if the pandemic is significant.
- Consider alternative methods to ensure continuity of instruction such as distance learning and on-line classes.



Maintenance and Housekeeping

- Perform more frequent cleaning and disinfection of shared work areas, counters, railings, door knobs, and elevator buttons.
- Increase frequency of air filter changes in HVAC units.
- Clean and disinfect shared equipment like telephones, keyboards, and mice more frequently.
- If operationally possible, increase ventilation to the facilities (i.e. open interior doors and operate HVAC overnight).

Employee and Student Education

If a flu pandemic occurs, absenteeism and stressed staff are to be expected. It is important to make information readily available prior to such occurrence to help staff to understand the situation and what to do to be prepared. Once a flu pandemic has been established, regular and timely updates should be provided to encourage employees and students, and to provide the most current information available.

Managing Illness on Campus

When a flu pandemic occurs, Operations staff will provide information to employees on the signs and symptoms of the flu and what to do if someone becomes ill while at BCTC. If a person is observed to be ill or is exhibiting symptoms of influenza, the ill person will be instructed to leave the BCTC facilities as soon as possible. Ill persons will be encouraged to seek medical care and return to campus when it is indicated that they are no longer contagious.

Flu Symptoms

Fever or feeling feverish/chills	Cough
Sore throat	Runny or stuffy nose
Muscle or body aches	Headaches
Fatigue (tiredness)	Some may have vomiting and diarrhea

Treatment

The best prevention of flu is vaccination, but in the case of a flu pandemic, vaccine is often not available for several months into the throes of the illness. It is still best to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

Once a person has the flu, anti-viral medications may provide relief; but in the case of a pandemic strain, efficacy is unknown. The use of anti-viral medications should be thoroughly discussed with a physician.

Continuity of Operation

To be able to continue the operation of the college during a flu pandemic, it will be necessary to identify people and their related skills to ensure that core functions are maintained. BCTC will maintain operation of the business offices and will continue ongoing communications with employees and students.