

H1N1 Influenza Information for Faculty and Staff

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has recently issued guidance for responses to influenza for institutions of higher education during the 2009-2010 academic year. Idaho State University wants to ensure that University faculty and staff are aware of the updated guidance for handling influenza, including the novel H1N1 (swine) flu virus that has sickened people worldwide. We are encouraging faculty and staff to work with us in taking a range of steps to prevent the spread of flu at the University as much as possible.

In general, practice good hygiene by washing your hands with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners also are effective. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, if not available, cough into your arm/sleeve. You are encouraged to **get vaccinated** against the flu, both seasonal and H1N1, as soon as vaccines become available.

Know the symptoms of the flu. The symptoms of H1N1 flu and seasonal flu are similar and include fever with cough and/or sore throat. Some people with flu have also reported body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, diarrhea and vomiting.

Notify your supervisor as soon as possible and leave the workplace or stay at home if you develop flu-like symptoms in order to prevent the spread of illness to others. Because state health officials are not recommending lab tests to determine whether an ill person has H1N1 flu, all employees with flu-like symptoms will be expected to leave the workplace and follow the guidance to prevent the spread of flu.

Self-isolate (i.e. stay home from work and take care to avoid contact with others) until you are no longer contagious. The **estimated time of recovery for Flu is 3 – 5 days**, although ISU asks that you remain home until 24 hours after resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Your supervisor has been encouraged **not to require you to present a doctor's note** to confirm flu related illness or return to work unless returning from short-term disability.

Report sick leave for the time period you are not at work due to symptoms or illness. If you have exhausted all of your sick and vacation leave, you may be eligible for shared leave donation if you meet the eligibility requirements. Please contact Human Resources for more information.

If you are **caring for ill family members**, report sick leave. If you do not have any sick leave, your situation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis (contact Human Resources).

If you must **stay home to take care of a child in response to school or daycare facility closures** due to flu, coordinate any time off with your supervisor; all efforts should be made to cover critical work, when possible, including alternative work arrangements and working from home. If you must take time off from work, sick leave and/or vacation leave may be used. If you do not have any sick leave, your situation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis (contact Human Resources).

Inform close contacts of your illness. Someone with whom you've had close contact may be at serious risk for complications from flu, and it is your responsibility to inform others of your illness.

H1N1 Influenza Information for Supervisors and Managers

Develop and communicate your department's contingency plan for staffing, operations and employee time approval. All efforts should be made to cover critical work, when possible, including alternative work arrangements and working from home. Discuss telecommuting or other staffing issues with Human Resources as soon as possible.

Require ill faculty and/or staff member(s) to go home immediately and stay home until 24 hours after any fever has abated. Assist absent faculty and/or staff with time entry if necessary. If the employee does not leave the workplace, contact Human Resources or the Dean/Director as soon as possible.

As with any other medical condition and to ensure the privacy of personal health information, **you should not ask or require the employee to tell you whether or not they have been diagnosed with H1N1** or flu-like illness. Requiring your employee to disclose confidential medical information or medical conditions may violate applicable law. If the employee voluntarily tells you that they have been diagnosed with H1N1 or flu-like illness, you should not share this information with others in your department without first consulting with Human Resources.

In certain cases, you may wish to consult with Human Resources and before permitting an employee to return to the workplace. However, **supervisors are encouraged not to require faculty and staff to obtain a doctor's note to return** to work unless they are returning from short-term disability. They will then need to follow work procedures related to short-term disability.

You do not need to take special precautions once the employee has returned to work. **If another employee is concerned about exposure to H1N1 through contact with an infected employee, tell the employee to consult their personal physician, and/or HR.**