



PANDEMIC FLU GUIDELINES MADISON, CONNECTICUT

Prepared by the Madison Health Department

PANDEMIC FLU:

- Is a worldwide outbreak of a **new** flu virus
- Is more serious than seasonal flu
- Occurs several times a century
- Is not predictable
- Will put you and your family at risk

PANDEMIC FLU MAY:

- Be life threatening to normally healthy people
- Bring the health care system to gridlock
- Result in rationing of vaccine & anti-viral medicine
- Seriously disrupt normal daily life
- Occur at any time in any year
- Close schools & most businesses
- Restrict travel
- Restrict public gatherings
- Require significant quarantine and isolation orders
- Disrupt the food supply
- Come and go for months at a time
- Slow government services to a crawl
- Kill millions of people in the United States
- Overwhelm funeral homes

IF A PANDEMIC BEGINS YOU ARE AT RISK BUT YOU ARE NOT HELPLESS PREPARE FOR SURVIVAL

The following is a very brief introduction to the subject of pandemic flu and ways to reduce your risk. A more extensive introduction in an easy to read Q&A format has been prepared by the American Red Cross and is available at http://www.redcrossdelmarva.org/pandemic_flu_faq.pdf

EMERGENCY FAMILY PLANNING

Pandemic flu could seriously disrupt daily life, making the most basic services hard to come by. Those who are prepared will have an advantage over those who are not. To take just one of many possible examples: Grocery stores may have to limit their hours of operation, resulting in large crowds during the times they are open. But limiting exposure to large numbers of people is one of the keys to avoiding the virus. Families with an emergency food supply will be able to reduce their exposure. Templates for Family Emergency Plans are available on this website ([link](#)) and families are strongly encouraged to prepare one now and to review and update the plan at least annually.

VACCINES AND MEDICATIONS

Flu is a viral infection, so antibiotics are not useful in treating flu. Since the strain of any flu virus that becomes active cannot be predicted in advance and vaccine production has a long lead-time, assume there will not be sufficient vaccine in the early stages of the pandemic. Routine annual flu vaccination may provide limited protection from symptoms so eligible residents are encouraged to get their annual vaccination. Clinics for routine vaccination are common annually in late fall.

Anti-viral medication can reduce the symptoms of the flu and the Federal Government is stockpiling them, but during a long flu season they would need to be taken frequently. It is unlikely there could be enough available to treat the entire population, so supplies may have to be set-aside for people providing essential services such as health care providers or first responders.

ESSENTIAL BUSINESSES:

Many businesses may close for a limited period of time or cut back on services or hours of operation. Each business should have its own plan for how to react to such a disruption. Certain businesses are considered essential and the town will work with those businesses to insure they

have a working plan and in a pandemic event will stay in touch with management to monitor their ability to provide services. To the extent possible this information will be made available to the public on the town website at www.madisonct.org

Grocery Stores:

Stop & Shop is the largest food supplier in town and is a national chain with significant planning resources. Madison's Emergency Management Director is in contact with Stop & Shop about their preparations. In the event of a disruptive outbreak relevant information will be available on this website and will be included in an emergency slide show presentation on local cable access television stations.

Roberts Food Center is the primary grocer for residents of North Madison and is part of the national Independent Grocers Association. In the event of a Pandemic Flu outbreak they will be in touch with this office regarding their ongoing situation. Information will be available on this website and on their website <http://www.roberts-iga.com/>

ESSENTIAL TOWN AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Town is preparing a plan to maintain essential services during a pandemic by moving personnel from less to more critical functions and by cross training for that possibility. Hours of operation may be changed and work hours spread out, with some employees working from home, to avoid face-to-face contact where possible.

Police, fire and ambulance services could be reduced and providers may have priority access to available vaccine or anti-viral medication.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

In a pandemic, news specific to Madison will be available on this website and on Public Access Television stations. The town will soon install a new telephone system, which may improve messaging capabilities. A Reverse 911 phone system will also be operational in the near future for delivering critical messages when needed. More information will be posted here as these services come online.

QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION

To prevent the spread of flu from those who have been exposed to the virus to the public at large, it may be necessary to order quarantine or isolation of ill or exposed individuals for a period of time. Quarantine and Isolation orders are enforceable by the police and the town will be responsible to provide limited services to those affected.



TOWN OF MADISON CONNECTICUT

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PANDEMIC FLU PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS FOR BUSINESSES

The Madison Health Department reflects the interest of the entire community in keeping local businesses running, to the extent possible, in the event of a Pandemic Flu outbreak. We encourage all business owners and managers to consider the potential disruptions an outbreak could cause and to make reasonable plans to minimize their effects.

Pandemic Flu is like the annual flu except that it is a new strain. As a result, we will not have any natural immunity to it. Pandemic outbreaks have occurred three times in the last century and will come again. No one can say when. Each outbreak varies in severity but they are usually more widespread than the annual variety and in some cases are very severe. Estimates are that up to 40% of the workforce could be unavailable for work as the disease moves through a community. There will be no effective vaccine until it has had time to move through the population for several months. Anti-viral drugs can decrease the symptoms but will not be available in sufficient quantity to help most people.

Pandemic flu could disrupt normal life in very profound ways with schools closed, public gatherings cancelled, routine services unavailable as well as disruption to food supplies and health care systems. The question for business operators is how to minimize the personal and financial risk while still providing products and services to the extent possible.

Businesses are as diverse as people and so there can be no one-size-fits-all preparation plan. Some businesses would benefit from formal written contingency plans while others need only a list of items to consider in the event the flu strikes. What follows is a list of things business operators may need to consider in order to minimize risk. In any case we recommend each business have at least a rudimentary plan, that it be written and that several people have access to it.

THINGS TO CONSIDER – THINGS TO DO:

1. List the resources you have now that you could not do without
 - Employees
 - Suppliers
 - Outside contractors
 - Municipal services
 - Emergency cash flow source



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2. Contacts: make a list of ALL contacts you might need with as many backup means of contact as possible.
 - Employees
 - Potential temporary employees
 - Suppliers
 - Clients
3. In a severe emergency are there other similar businesses, even competitors, with whom you could have mutual aid understandings.
4. Communications: could you carry out key communications from a remote location? Could someone do it for you if you were incapacitated?
5. How far could you scale back and still provide products or services
 - Fewer services
 - Shorter days
 - Fewer days per week
6. How would you get word of changes out to the public?
7. What critical building and equipment maintenance must be performed during limited operation or temporary closure?
8. Can you protect your inventory during closure?
9. Are there special security issues with your type of business or business location?
10. If you were closed for a time, would critical equipment maintenance be missed?
11. What special considerations would be important for re-opening after a closure?
12. Would required scheduled payments be made on time if you or your office staff were unable to make them?
13. Do you have a Sick Policy for employees that would prohibit them from working when ill?
 - Should that policy be in effect now?
14. Could you set your workplace up to minimize face-to-face contact?
 - Would staggered work hours or days be possible?
 - Do you have employees who could work from home?
 - Could you reduce office hours or open fewer days?
 - How would that information get out to staff – customers – suppliers?
15. Who else needs to know about the plan – Do they have a copy?
16. Do you encourage employees to follow good hygiene, especially hand washing?
17. Promote cough etiquette: Cover your cough. Don't cough into your hands (tissue or sleeve).
18. Have employees watch the following short video: <http://www.coughsafe.com/media.html>
19. Do you provide facial tissue and hand sanitizer? Why not start now?