

Kansas State University

Goals for Responses to Influenza for 2009-2010 Academic Year

(CDC Guidance for Institutions of Higher Education [IHEs] 8-20-09)

<http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu/institutions/guidance/index.htm>
<http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu/institutions/guidance/technical.htm>

Decisions about which strategies to implement should balance the goal of reducing the number of people who become seriously ill or die from influenza with the goal of minimizing educational and social disruption.

I. Recommended responses to influenza for the 2009-2010 academic year

A. Essential Responses:

1. Encourage and facilitate use of hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette measures by students, faculty and staff
2. Encourage influenza vaccination for those recommended for vaccination
3. Separate ill and well people as soon as possible. Although isolating ill people is not typically recommended for seasonal flu, it is a critical strategy for addressing 2009 H1N1 for three reasons:
 - a. While a vaccine for seasonal flu will be available early in the flu season, a vaccine for 2009 H1N1 is not yet available
 - b. 2009 H1N1 may result in more serious complications for people in high-risk groups and these measures help protect high-risk people
 - c. A widespread pandemic may result in many more hospitalizations and medical care visits than usually associated with seasonal flu

B. Other important considerations:

1. IHEs should review, and revise, if necessary, their sick leave policies to remove barriers to faculty and staff staying home while ill or to care for an ill family member

2. For students, IHEs may consider altering policies on missed classes and examinations and late assignments so that students' academic concerns do not prevent them from staying home when ill or prompt them to return to class or take examinations while still symptomatic and potentially infectious.
3. Do not require a doctor's note for students, faculty, or staff to validate their illness or to return to work, as doctor's offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and may not be able to provide such documentation in a timely way. Distance learning or web-based learning may also help students maintain self-isolation.
4. IHEs should take opportunities at the beginning of events to remind attendees about the importance of self-isolation when ill; early evaluation by a health care provider for those who become ill, especially for people at higher risk for influenza complications; hand hygiene; and respiratory etiquette. Orientation activities can provide one such opportunity as the academic year begins. Educational materials such as posters and flyers to enhance compliance with recommendations should be visible throughout the campus.

II. Recommended strategies under current flu conditions (similar severity as in Spring/Summer 2009)

- A. Facilitate self-isolation of residential students with flu-like illness
 1. CDC recommends that individuals with influenza-like illness remain at home and away from other people until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F [37.8° C] or greater), or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications
 2. For those who cannot leave campus, and who do not have a private room, IHEs may consider providing temporary, alternate housing where those who are ill can stay until 24 hours after they are free of fever
 3. IHEs should establish a method for maintaining contact with students who are in self-isolation

4. Students should be instructed to promptly seek medical attention if they have a medical condition that places them at increased risk of influenza-related complications, are concerned about their illness, or develop severe symptoms
- B. Promote self-isolation at home by non-resident students, faculty, and staff (Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/exclusion.htm>)
- C. Considerations for high-risk students and staff
1. Students, faculty, and staff should be encouraged to talk with their health care provider to determine if they are at higher risk for influenza complications (Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-flu.pdf>)
 2. CDC recommends that IHEs encourage ill students, faculty, and staff at higher risk for influenza complications to seek early treatment (Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/recommendations.htm>)
 3. One of the best ways to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each year against seasonal influenza (Visit <http://cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm>)
 4. IHEs should contact their local health officials to determine where vaccine will be administered and to discuss the possibility of a vaccination clinic at the IHE. *Lafene Health Center is working on a plan for H1N1 mass vaccination.* Priority groups are:
 - a. Pregnant women
 - b. People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age
 - c. Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
 - d. People age 6 months through 24 years
 - e. People age 25 through 64 years who have underlying medical conditions that put them at higher risk of complications from influenza
- D. Discourage the public and visitors with influenza-like illness from attending IHE events until they have been free of fever for at least 24 hours
- E. Hand hygiene (Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/cleanhands>)

- F. Respiratory etiquette
(Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm>)
- G. Routine cleaning
1. Promote frequent cleaning of bathrooms and other frequently used areas, and ensure adequate supplies of soap and paper towels. Provide no-touch wastebaskets and empty them frequently. Establish regular schedules for frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces:
 - a. Doorknobs, handrails, elevator buttons
 - b. Desks, tables, chairs
 - c. Counters and surfaces in cafeterias, meeting rooms, and offices
 2. Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down by students before each use. High-use surfaces include:
 - a. Chairs, desks, study carrels
 - b. Remote controls
 - c. Keyboards shared by students
 - d. Headphones shared in language laboratories
 - e. Telephone receivers and touch-tone pads in common areas
 3. Encourage students to frequently clean their living quarters. Students living together should regularly clean frequently used surfaces such as doorknobs, refrigerator handles, remote controls, computer keyboards, countertops, faucet handles, and bathroom areas.
- H. Considerations for specific student populations
1. Students studying abroad
 2. Early/Middle College students – high school students taking college classes for credit; students and families touring the IHE; and other K-12 students who regularly come to campus
 3. Students with disabilities
 4. Health-care profession students
(Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/clinicians> for guidance for health care settings)

III. Additional recommended strategies under conditions with increased severity compared to spring/summer 2009

- A. If influenza severity increases, students, faculty, and staff at high risk for influenza complications may consider staying home while influenza transmission is high in their community
- B. If influenza severity increases, IHEs should explore innovative methods for increasing social distances while continuing to meet their educational mission
- C. If influenza severity increases, individuals with influenza-like illness should self-isolate at home for at least 7 days after symptom onset, even if symptoms resolve sooner. Individuals who are still sick 7 days after they become ill should continue to self-isolate until at least 24 hours after symptoms have resolved.
- D. Consider suspending classes after consultation with KDHE and RCHD
 - 1. Reactive class suspension
 - 2. Preemptive class suspension
 - 3. Large gatherings
 - 4. Nonresidential students
 - 5. Residential students
 - 6. Resuming classes

For additional information see: Questions and Answers about the CDC's *Guidance for Responses to Influenza for Institutions of Higher Education during the 2009–2010 Academic Year*

<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/institutions/toolkit/pdf/questions.pdf>

SOURCES

CDC Guidance for Responses to Influenza for Institutions of Higher Education during the 2009-2010 Academic Year (August 20, 2009)

<http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu/institutions/guidance/index.htm>

Technical Report on CDC Guidance for Responses to Influenza for Institutions of Higher Education during the 2009-2010 Academic Year (August 20, 2009)

<http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu/institutions/guidance/technical.htm>