

## Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Pandemic Flu University of Louisiana at Lafayette

### **Will we get paid if the University closes? Do we use sick leave, if not sick? Will we use compensatory, annual leave or leave without pay?**

This is addressed in the University's Pandemic Plan, which states:

“...In the event of a school closure, Classified employees under Civil Service Rule 1.23 (d) & (g) serving with job appointment, probationary or permanent status shall be given time off without loss of pay, annual leave or sick leave. Classified employees that remain at work during this closure will receive compensation pay over and above their regular pay...”

The University is researching the appropriate response for Unclassified employees and will update this document at a later time.

### **How long are you contagious?**

Until the actual strain of the flu causing the pandemic is identified, we will not know for sure the length of contagiousness. This information will be available and announced by Center of Disease Control (CDC) once the virus has been identified and monitored. Generally an individual becomes contagious, and has the ability to transmit the virus after exposure, before symptoms appear, and for a period of time after becoming ill.

### **If a family member is ill, should we quarantine ourselves even if the University hasn't closed yet?**

- First, let's review the difference between isolation and quarantine:
  - **Isolation** is used to physically separate individuals that are confirmed sick from the general population until they are no longer contagious.
  - **Quarantine** is to separate individuals who may have been exposed but are not yet ill from the general population; the duration of quarantine would depend on the length of the incubation period and the period of contagion which usually begins prior to the onset of symptoms and extends for a period of time after the illness.
- Remember, a person is contagious for a period of time before symptoms appear (this time is different for every illness). So restricting an exposed person will prevent the unknowing spread of the illness, with seasonal influenza.
  - Adults can be infectious from one (1) day before symptoms occur through approximately five (5) days after illness onset.
  - Young children can shed virus several days before illness onset and can be infectious for 10 or more days after onset of symptoms.
  - Severely immuno-compromised persons can shed virus for weeks or months.
- This data is not yet known for the 'pandemic virus'.
- Remember that you can greatly reduce your exposure by using proper precautions when caring for a sick family member, such as keeping a distance of at least 3 feet from the sick person, washing your hands, isolating or quarantining the family

member, encouraging the family member to wear a face mask when they must be in the same room as others, to cover their mouth when coughing, etc.

- If these measures are strictly enforced, then quarantining yourself should not be necessary. If not, then quarantine yourself for the declared time and if you do not develop flu symptoms, remove yourself from quarantine and continue to use the proper precautions while in your house.

### **Who will enforce quarantine?**

There are several things worth mentioning here. The CDC is predicting that during the next pandemic, absenteeism throughout the work force could be at least 40%. Mortality rates (percentage of sick persons who die) could be as high as 25%. These statistics are not limited to any particular occupation. They will apply to law enforcement, fire protection, doctors and medical fields, electrical and utility operations, agricultural and food supply industries, oil and petroleum service industries, etc.

Even if quarantine becomes a lawful issue, it is really about self-preservation. Quarantining yourself ensures that if you have been exposed, you will not continue the spread of the illness if you are contagious. This is most beneficial to members of your family, the people who live closest to you. If pandemic flu becomes a reality in our region, everyone will be advised to take quarantine, isolation, and social distancing very seriously.

### **What cleaning solutions should we use?**

- The easiest universal disinfectant, *if used properly*, is bleach.
  - Most people mix this too strongly, and this is a very dangerous practice.
  - Bleach gives off Chlorine gas, which is deadly if inhaled. The stronger the bleach solution, the more Chlorine gas is emitted.
  - Bleach solutions should be mixed and used only in well-ventilated areas. For disinfecting surfaces, use the following mixing table.
- Bleach can be stored in store-bought concentration for years without any ill effects.
- However, most experts agree that you should only mix enough bleach solution that can be used in one or two days. After that, discard the rest down the toilet and mix a fresh solution.
- Dilution will depend on the task at hand:
  - Disinfectant properties at 1:15 dilution:

Amount of Bleach	Dilute with water
1 cup; 8 oz	1 gallon
½ cup; 4 oz	½ gallon
¼ cup; 2 oz	1 quart
1/8 cup; 1 oz	1 pint
½ oz; 1 Tbsp	1 cup

- Food contact surfaces:
  - Prewash
  - Rinse with one (1) Tbsp of bleach / gallon of water.
- Non- food contact surfaces:

- Prewash
- Rinse with 1:15 solution, allow to stand 10 min., air dry.

**Who will be caring for the ill students on campus?**

The Student Health Services clinic is NOT a 24/7 medical facility and therefore, will close with the rest of the campus. The University has learned that the Acadiana Red Cross is formulating a community-wide pandemic response plan that will be used to support persons who are ill, including University students. The University will support the Red Cross with volunteer assistance wherever possible.

**Will food service operations close?**

Beginning at Phase III of the University's Pandemic Plan, Food Services will cease operation.

**What are the plans to distribute medications, should they become available?**

This decision to distribute medications will be made by CDC and OPH. The distribution will be under the guidance of OPH.