

Questions and Answers about BGSU's Infectious Disease Operations Plan

Note that many questions may be answered by reviewing BGSU's Infectious Disease Operations Plan, found at <http://www.bgsu.edu/downloads/finance/file70598.pdf>

- Q 1 What happens if my co-worker starts sneezing and not feeling well? Do I have to sit next to him/her?
- A If you are concerned about catching the flu from a co-worker who appears to be infected, talk with your supervisor. Also, you may want to share the prevention tips with your co-worker.
- Q 2 Do I have to use sick time if I don't feel well, or my child is not feeling well?
- A If you or an immediate family member believes you may have the flu, stay home. Yes, you may use accrued sick leave for this purpose. Remember to inform you supervisor that you will not be in to work according to your work unit's reporting requirements.
- Q 3 Do I need a doctor's slip to return to work?
- A In most other cases, a doctor's slip is not required. If your absence keeps you out for more than three (3) consecutive days you may be required to provide a slip.
- Q 4 Do I need a doctor's excuse to be off (For employee or immediate family member)?
- A No, if you believe you or an immediate family member with whom you live are infected with the flu, stay home.
- Q 5 Will I be paid if the University closes for a H1N1 outbreak?
- A If the University closes (see Infectious Disease Operations Plan page 7) at a tier 3 or tier 4 level, employees may use accrued vacation, personal or if an hourly employee, comp time in order to be paid.
- Q 6 If classes are suspended, but offices are open, do I have to report to work?
- A Yes. Unless you are ill.
- Q 7 Does our health insurance pay for H1N1 testing or vaccines?
- A H1N1 vaccine is not currently available; however, health insurance could pay for seasonal flu vaccinations depending if you have expended all of your wellness dollars or not.
- Q 8 If I am Infectious Disease Critical employee and I don't feel well, can I go home?
- A Yes, if you believe you may have the flu, go home, after notifying your supervisor.
- Q 9 Who designates critical employees?
- A The University, with input for a working group, identified functions necessary to keep the campus running at a minimal level during and infectious disease outbreak. Please review BGSU's Infectious Disease Operations Plan for a listing of Infectious Disease Essential functions and accompanying designation of Critical Employees to carry out the associated duties. Each department was then charged to identify their critical employees.

- Q10 Can my supervisor prevent me from leaving if I am not feeling well?
A If you do not feel well and believe you may have the flu, notify your supervisor and go home.
- Q 11 Can my supervisor send me home if they think I appear to have symptoms?
A Your supervisor may require you to go home if he/she believes that you are exhibiting signs of the flu. We ask that you comply; this disease will be contained and not spread if everyone is mindful of their health and how it affects the health of others.
- Q12 If I am an Infectious Disease Critical employee and I am required to work during a University closure, am I entitled to premium pay?
A No, not at this point in time.
- Q 13 How long must I remain off work if I have flu symptoms?
A You should remain away from work for 24 hours after your fever has subsided and/or flu symptoms have gone away.
- Q14 Does the county health department mandate a University closure?
A The University President in conjunction with the Wood and/or Huron County Health Departments will make a determination to suspend classes or close the University (see BGSU's Infectious Disease Operations Plan page 7).
- Q15 At what point will the University suspend classes or close offices?
Please refer to BGSU's Infectious Disease Operations Plan, under Governance, Command and Control, beginning on page 3.
- Q 16 Can I get a H1N1 or season flu shot on campus, and how much are they?
As mentioned earlier, an H1N1 vaccine is not currently available. Seasonal flu shots will be available on campus beginning on September 15, 2009. Please check the Student Health Center web site for times and locations of flu clinics. The flu shot costs \$23.00.
- Q17 Can my supervisor require me to get a flu shot?
A No
- Q 18 If I am a Chartwells employee, will the University's infectious disease regulations apply to me?
A Yes, please consult the UDS employee guide book, or talk with your supervisor regarding specific questions.
- Q 19 Can custodial workers be forced to clean an area that was contaminated with the flu?
A Our custodial staff is trained in the prevention of the spread of communicable diseases and takes reasonable precautions to protect themselves. That said, personal protective equipment and job modification may be necessary in the event of a wide spread outbreak.
- Q 20 Is the University providing special equipment to protect its employees?
A Yes, the Department of Environmental Safety and Health is prepared to issue and fit Personal Protective Equipment (PPE's) for Infectious Disease Critical Employees as directed by National and Local Health Officials.

- Q 21 If it is found that I do have H1N1 am I required to share this information with my supervisor?
- A No, your health situation is covered under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. All you are required to do is inform your supervisor you will be out sick. We would request you contact Barb Hoffman at the Student Medical Center at 419-372-2120 as we are trying to track the number of cases for a variety of county and state agencies. Your assistance with this effort will be greatly appreciated.
- Q 22 What if the University closes for an extended period of time, and I run out of paid leave?
- A You may be granted leave without pay by your supervisor; however, it is important for you to maintain contact with your supervisor. Always make sure your supervisor has a current phone number of other reliable means of contacting you.
- Q 23 If the University closes and I am not being paid, am I entitled to unemployment compensation?
- A You may wish to check with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. You may file an unemployment claim. Each case is judged on its own merits by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.
- Q 24 If the University closes for an extended period of time, and I am not being paid, will it affect my OPERS contribution, or my health insurance benefits?
- A If you do not make \$250 in a month, you will not obtain that month's credit through OPERS. Health insurance benefits (and costs) will remain in effect for:
- Classified employees receive two months plus the current month that the employee goes into an unpaid status. After this time, health insurance benefits may remain in effect, however, the employee may be required to purchase the employer and employee costs of the plan.
 - Administrative and faculty members- after one month of unpaid leave health insurance benefits; they may remain in effect, however, the employee may be required to purchase the employer and employee costs of the plan.
- Q 25 Can I be required to work outside my area to take the place of an Infectious Disease Critical Employee?
- A Yes, the University may need to call upon employees to fill the place of Critical Employees within the skill range of the employee in an emergency situation.
- Q 26 Should employees report flu like symptoms to the SHS, as students are being encouraged to do?
- A Yes, first you employees should contact your own personal physician or health care provider to receive treatment. As mentioned earlier we are required to report cases of H1N1 to a variety of agencies. We have not require you to notify SHS you have H1N1 but it would be appreciated.
- Q 27 What are the symptoms that I should be looking for?
- A Typical symptoms are: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. You may wish to visit <http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu/qa.htm> for more information.

- Q 28 Am I allowed to work from home and still get paid?
A Some jobs may lend themselves to work at home and some may not. Speak to your supervisor about the possibility of work at home. However, please note that generally we do not allow folks to work from home....especially under FMLA)
- Q 29 If I am off, or caring for an immediate family member, am I able to apply for FMLA?
A Generally, FMLA does not cover seasonal flu; however, you may file for FMLA recognizing each case is judged individually according to the seriousness of the illness.
- Q 30 Can an Infectious Disease Critical Employee decline to report to work in order to care for an immediate family member who is sick or has flu symptoms?
A Yes, but please notify your supervisor as soon as possible.
- Q 31 What is the time period that symptoms will show up, after contact with the virus?
A Infected people may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 7 or more days after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick. You may wish to visit <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/faq/swineflu/010.html> for more information.
- Q 32 If I am not sick, but afraid of contacting the flu on campus, may I call in sick?
A No. You may request vacation and if applicable compensatory time. We understand your fear please take precautions and come to work. Your co-workers may be out and your presence will be even more important.
- Q 33 If I am an Infectious Disease Critical Employee and work during an infectious disease outbreak and contract the flu while at work, am I eligible for workers compensation?
A If an employee believes an illness resulted from a work related incident, they may file a workers' compensation claim. Each case is judged on its own merits by the Ohio Department of Workers Compensation.
- Q 34 How long can influenza virus remain viable on objects (such as books and doorknobs)?
A Studies have shown that influenza virus can survive on environmental surfaces and can infect a person for up to 2-8 hours after being deposited on the surface.