



Bowling Green State University

Infectious Disease Operations Plan

Bowling Green and Firelands Campuses

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Infectious Disease Operations Plan - Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Objectives	
Relation to Current Plans	
Testing and Revision	
Governance, Command and Control	3
Authority	
Wood County Health Department	
Declaration of Emergency	
Delegation of Authority	
Activation	
Notification to the Public	
Notification within the University	
Coordination	
Roles and Responsibilities	
Preparedness and Planning	6
Planning Assumptions	
Campus Planning Process	
Social Distancing	
University Operations Status	
Essential Functions/Critical Employees	
Special Considerations – Campus Wide Issues	10
Academic Instruction	
Critical Research	
Animal Care	
Human Resource Issues	
Leaves	
Emergency Furlough	
Special Hiring Provisions	
Information Technology Infrastructure	
Travel	
Public Health/Hygiene Etiquette	
Frequently Asked Questions	
Communication	12
Response	13
Activation of the Emergency Operations Plans	
Phases – Action Table	
Recovery	13
Business Resumption	
Support for Students, Faculty and Staff	

Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) have warned there is a high risk of an Influenza virus becoming the next human pandemic. Michael Leavitt, U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary, stated at the March 2006 California Pandemic Planning Summit: “Pandemic happen. Let me acknowledge this is a hard thing to talk about. Anything we say in advance of a pandemic happening is alarmist; anything we say afterwards is inadequate.”

Because most natural and man-made disasters tend to be a site-specific, traditional Emergency/Disaster Response and Recovery plans focus on damage to property, equipment and machinery with limited loss of personnel. The greatest issue in a pandemic-type event will be minimizing the spread of infection and impact on students, faculty and staff. The focus of this Infectious Disease Operations Plan is to prepare the Bowling Green State University campus to respond to the threat of a pandemic or other infectious disease and return to normal operations as quickly as possible.

Pandemics are about people and the interruptions in their everyday lives. By definition, pandemics have global impacts. Pandemics typically have unpredictable beginnings, feature multiple events or waves and spread quickly from one urban area to another. Major disruptions are likely for health care, transportation, infrastructure, education, suppliers and other public services. Higher education will be among the industries most severely impacted because of exposure risks resulting from international travel by students, faculty and staff, and because our campus is open and accessible to members of the local community.

Once a pandemic virus emerges, it is too late to begin planning or to begin collaboration. Although no organization will be immune from the effects of a global infectious disease outbreak, the threat of a pandemic offers uncommon opportunities. We can plan ahead and develop our responses in a caring, compassionate and prudent manner, and continue the delivery of essential services that will allow BGSU to continue its important and vital mission of education and research.

This Infectious Disease Operations Plan was developed by an ad hoc committee collaborating with a variety of offices and university committees. In addition, several external resources were utilized to develop this plan. Those external resources include the Wood County Health Department, the Wood County Pandemic Influenza Committee, Wood County Emergency Management Agency, State of Ohio Department of Health, State of Ohio Emergency Management Agency, WHO, and the CDC. Additional resources were provided by the University of California – Davis, The Ohio State University and the University of Minnesota.

Objectives

This plan is guided by the following principles:

- Minimize the loss of life
- House, feed and provide medical care to students who are unable to obtain alternative housing or leave the campus
- Protect irreplaceable live university research animals
- Protect and support the health, safety and welfare of our faculty, staff and students, as well as the assets and property of the university
- Maintain our commitment to fulfilling the university mission to provide teaching, research and service, in a safe environment

- Preserve the University’s academic standing
- Recover as quickly and efficiently as possible if any of our operations must be suspended, interrupted or affected in any other way
- Establish a multi-modal method to communicate with members of the campus and the community
- Establish benchmarks or “triggers”, in advance of an infectious disease, or influenza pandemic, to initiate university responses or alternative actions
- Extend the services or expertise of the members of the campus to our community neighbors, to the extent feasible, in ways that provide mutual aid, recovery, service and benefit to the area

Relationship to Current Plans

This Operations Plan forms one appendix to the Bowling Green State University Emergency Management Plan. It is intended to guide the response and recovery actions of the entire campus. Concurrently with the development of this plan, each division is being asked to develop specific unit plans to address specific response issues within that unit related to the threat of an infectious disease or pandemic. Information regarding individual unit plans can be obtained directly from the office of their divisional leader or the Office of Environmental Health and Safety.

Testing and Revision

Once emergency operation plans are approved, training and exercises should be held to ensure that all faculty, staff and students are aware of the plan, how it is to be activated and how it will be managed.

Training and exercise coordination will be accessible (or are available to all units of the university) through the Office of Environmental Health and Safety.

This Infectious Disease Operations Plan is a dynamic document and will be revised as dictated by circumstances or necessity. In the absence of an outbreak, this plan will be reviewed annually by the university Emergency Management Operations group.

Governance, Command and Control

The manner in which BGSU conducts emergency operations on campus is governed by state and federal legislation. The ability to declare a campus state of emergency is governed by the BGSU Emergency Management Plan. The President, Provost and each Vice President maintain a delegation of authority for decision making within the campus and individual schools, colleges and units.

Authority

The authority of BGSU to respond to emergencies and disasters is governed by:

- Federal Civil Defense Act, as amended (50 USC 2251 et seq.), 1950
- Disaster Relief Act, PL 93-288, as amended (42 USC 5121 et seq.), 1974
- Defense Authority Act 1977 (PL 94-361)
- Superfund Amendment and Reauthorization Act also known as the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act), PL 99-499, 1986

- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, PL 100-707, as amended (42 USC 5131 et seq.), 1988
- Disaster Mitigation Act, PL 106-390, 2000
- United States Code, Title 42, Public Health and Welfare
 - Chapter 68, Disaster Relief
 - Chapter 116, Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know (EPCRA)
- State of Ohio Constitution Article II, Section 42 (Power of the Governor to act for the citizens in the event of attack or other disaster)
- The National Incident Management System (NIMS), as prescribed by Homeland Security Presidential Directive -5- Management of Domestic Incident.

Wood County Health Department

Should an infectious disease outbreak or pandemic occur, it is the responsibility of the Public Health departments at the local, county and state levels to issue quarantine orders, direct closure of facilities, and provide critical information designating key healthcare facilities as well as distribution of appropriate medications to treat the disease. This authority encompasses all private citizens, businesses and university operations. The BGSU main campus is located in Wood County, within the City of Bowling Green and the BGSU Firelands campus is located in Erie County. The University will participate in the Emergency Operation Centers (EOC) to be activated by the relevant County Public Health Departments to help coordinate responses at the county, city and University levels.

Declaration of Emergency

The University President or his/her designee has the authority to declare a state of emergency of campus when:

- Emergent conditions exist on or within the vicinity of the campus as a result of a natural or man-made disaster, a civil disorder which poses the threat of serious injury to persons or damage to property, or based on other seriously disruptive events; including an infectious disease outbreak.
- Extraordinary measures are required immediately to avert, alleviate, or repair damage to University property or to maintain the orderly operation of the campus.

Delegation of Authority

Each vice president, the provost and the deans should maintain copies of the authorities that have been delegated to them by the President or Provost and the authorities they have re-delegated to another university official. The list should delineate accountability and responsibility and include all authorities that have been delegated to them, the individuals who hold the authority, and the assigned back-up in the event of absence. While it may not be necessary to have the actual written authority in hand during a crisis, it is essential that units know who holds the authority to make the decisions or sign the paperwork in question. Units should also prepare written delegations that assign the authority to another individual in the event of the prolonged absence of the individual who normally holds the authority.

Activation

Activation of this Infectious Disease Operations Plan follows the guidelines within the BGSU Emergency Management Plan, which also describes the authority for activating the Emergency Operations Center. While advice and recommendations will be made to the Vice Presidents, Provost, and Deans, activation of the individual unit infectious disease plans will be

implemented according to individual unit Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). However, a declaration of emergency would transfer authority for activation of all plans to the President. It is anticipated that the BGSU emergency management plan Operations Group will be placed on alert and/or activated upon a declaration of emergency.

Notification of the public

While the nature of a pandemic suggest that advance notice of its arrival in our community will be made by the media, official public health notices are made through the local and county public health agencies. The BGSU Office of Environmental Health and Safety, Center for Student Health and Marketing and Communications have assigned liaisons to the Wood County Health Department.

Notification within the University

Responsibility for communicating responses or recovery actions and intentions begins with the Operations Group and continues into each division, college, school and unit as described in the Marketing and Communications Emergency Response Procedure.

Coordination

Every effort will be made to coordinate the actions and functions as described within this plan with Wood and Erie Counties, the President of the University or any other affected jurisdictions or entities.

Operational Roles and Responsibilities

Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

The BGSU Emergency Operations Center is activated when any event, emergency or disaster overwhelms the day-to-day ability of the campus to manage its response and subsequent recovery. EOC members are assigned their roles and responsibilities by the Policy Group found within the BGSU Emergency Management Plan. Depending upon the extent and nature of the emergency, the EOC may be partially or completely staffed.

Office of the President

The President will provide executive level direction and authority for all emergencies.

Provost and Vice Presidents

The Provost and Vice Presidents will assist the President with the executive level direction, as needed. They are responsible for ensuring that Infectious Disease Operations Plans are kept current and activating them as necessary; defining the decision making hierarchy and assuring communication and information is maintained with students, faculty and staff.

Deans, Directors and Assistant Vice President

The Deans, Directors and Assistant Vice Presidents, Associate Deans for each BGSU College, School and units are responsible for maintaining the individual unit Emergency Management Plans, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and activating them when necessary.

Faculty and Staff

It is important for our faculty and staff to keep themselves informed of the progress of appropriate response to any emergency situation. The Office of Marketing and

Communications will coordinate the sharing of information with students, faculty and staff via appropriate communications media. Personal planning and being prepared at home is also important to being able to provide assistance and support to the University as it copes with an emergency such as an infectious disease outbreak or pandemic. General emergency preparedness information for families and individuals is available on the CDC web site at <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/pdf/individuals.pdf> . During a declared emergency, a specific BGSU web site will be activated and may be accessed by a link from the university main home page.

Students

Providing safety and security for students is a primary concern for BGSU. Students also have a responsibility to participate in their own safety and security by staying informed of current events and taking necessary precautions. As a potential infectious disease develops, students are expected to follow all requests issued by various departments within Student Affairs, including the Center for Student Health and Residence Life.

Preparedness and Planning

Planning Assumptions

- A pandemic is a public health emergency that has significant political, social and economic dimensions, and is generally governed by factors that cannot be known in advance.
- A pandemic could last for an extended period of time. It is likely to have at least two peak waves of attack. In an affected community, a pandemic wave may last for several weeks.
- Vaccinations and medical treatments are anticipated to provide the most effective medical responses, but they may not exist or be available in limited supply.
- Non-medical containment measures (i.e. social distancing) will be the principal means of disease control until vaccinations or other medical treatments are available. Based on previous pandemics, the clinical attack rate (the number of persons becoming ill) may affect thirty to forty percent of the overall population.
- If the pandemic is severe, the economic impact is likely to be significant, though predictions are subject to a high degree of uncertainty.
- Once the pandemic has run its course; economic activity should recover relatively quickly, although a severe pandemic will have more disruptive effects.

Campus Planning Process

BGSU adopted the following overall strategy in developing this plan. Under the direction of the Office of the President, an ad hoc Infectious Disease Planning group was formed. This ad hoc committee recommended to the President's Cabinet that each Vice Presidential division complete a template of initial planning activities. This includes asking each division to complete their Emergency Management Plans and SOPs including the identification of critical functions and personnel, chain of command and internal communication modes. In addition, under the direction of the Provost the ad hoc committee is working with the Faculty Senate to frame necessary policies and procedures regarding student grading and instruction. As this information is gathered the Infectious Disease Operations Plan will be updated to reflect the additional information.

Social Distancing

Social Distancing is a public health strategy designed to limit exposure to a highly communicable disease(s) by restricting person-to-person contact. Social Distancing may include:

- Avoiding unnecessary travel;
- Canceling meetings, workshops, training sessions and scheduled events;
- Maintaining a personal distance between oneself and any other person showing symptoms of illness;
- Limiting public gatherings by restricting or prohibiting public events;
- Scheduling employees to work in shifts;
- Reinforcing the importance of hand washing and requiring the use of personal protective equipment (PPEs) such as hand sanitizers and masks when appropriate or warranted by environmental conditions;
- Controlling access to buildings; and
- Requiring asymptomatic individuals traveling to affected countries/areas not to return to work until one incubation period has passed after returning home.

In the case of a severe outbreak, social distancing could be implemented for a period of 10-12 weeks. Determining at what point and what level of social distancing measures to employ is a difficult decision. Social Distancing will likely come as a result of mandates from the Ohio Department of Health (OHD) and federal, state and local government authorities. These authorities are likely to follow CDC and WHO recommendations.

University Operations Status

Tier One – Classes are being held, offices are open for business. Accept personal responsibility to avoid contact with others if symptomatic. Create Social Distancing groups with other individuals with whom you have close contact and limit contacts with outside groups, within reason. Avoid crowds or mass gatherings. Implement good infection control hygiene measures.

Tier Two – Classes are suspended, offices are open for business. Restrict public gatherings on campus to only essential academic and business functions as the number of local cases rise or evidence suggests sustained growth inside a 500-mile radius. Restrict meetings whenever possible. Conduct business and academic programs via telephone, email, Blackboard or any other available means.

Tier Three – Classes are suspended, offices are closed. Close ancillary functions, including residence halls and dining locations as the number of local cases rise or evidence suggests sustained growth inside a 250-mile radius. Implement the use of PPEs when in contact with others. Only critical employees report to work as directed. Provide support for live animal research.

Tier Four – Classes are suspended, offices are closed. Provide accommodations for those students who remain on campus due to travel restrictions, illness, etc., require the use of PPEs for all contacts. Ill students will be segregated from well students. Only critical employees report to work as directed.

In the extreme event a complete campus closure is necessary, most campus academic, administrative and support operations will cease. Minimal utilities will be supplied to buildings and all routine, normal daily housekeeping and maintenance activities will cease until such time the campus is reopened. Buildings will be secured in a way to prevent re-entry by all but approved critical employees. Most research activities that depend on campus facilities will be closed and only minimal or basic communications systems will be maintained.

Essential Functions and Critical Employees

While it is impractical to consider a complete “closure” of the University, the nature of an infectious disease emergency indicates the very real potential of ceasing social activities (i.e. classes, public activities) for some period of time. This plan and each unit plan is based on how to maintain essential functions during a period of excessive absenteeism, while giving consideration to what other functions could be delayed or postponed.

Essential Function	Description of Activities/Tasks	Critical Employees/Backups
Finance & Administration		
Public Safety		
Police	Secure and monitor buildings, control ingress/egress to campus	
Parking	Control traffic	
Business Operations		
Payroll	Determine which employees to be paid	
Accounts Payable	Pay bills as needed for University bills, etc.	
Bursar	Work with student for discounts/payment of bills, etc.	
Facilities/Utility Delivery/Materials & Supplies		
Building Maintenance	Remotely monitor building systems, respond to building emergencies;	
Grounds	Limited trash pick-up; campus roads, sidewalks cleared as needed	
	Provide protective equipment to critical employees	

Essential Function	Description of Activities/Tasks	Critical Employees/Backups
Risk Management/Health and Safety	Provide technical assistance and support for emergency operations; Monitor status of state and local environmental public health programs; Reinforce delivery of messages regarding risk-reduction behaviors	
Student Affairs		
Residence Life	Provide housing for students who must remain on campus; assist with building problems, discipline, etc.	
Student Health Services (and Counseling Center)	Provides health and counseling services for those student/employees that remain on campus	
Dining Services	Provide meals for students who must remain on campus	
President		
General Counsel	Provide comprehensive legal counsel to the Board of Trustees, President, and senior management of the University and advise the University regarding suspension of classes and necessary services. Keep abreast of governmental regulatory developments and compliance procedures and strategies as they relate to pandemic flu	
Human Resources		
Employee Relations	Manage deployment of back-up employees	
Benefits	Answer employee questions via telephone or email	
Information Technology		
	Manage/maintain system	
	Respond via telephone or email to employee questions	
Marketing and Communications	Manage University messages, both internal and external to the institution regarding shutdown, operations, related issues, updates, messages to employees, etc.	

Essential Function	Description of Activities/Tasks	Critical Employees/Backups
Provost		
Grad College	Preserve critical research Prepare to accommodate any graduate students returning from abroad.	
College Offices	Advise Students of class status via telephone or email	
Student Services- Admissions, Registration and Records, Financial Aid; Student Immigration Services; etc.	Communicate to students on plan to offer services remotely; assure services will continue. Send special communications to prospective students about maintaining admissions functions. Notify students, faculty, staff of continuation of essential registrar functions and identify these functions.	

Staffing essential functions during an infectious disease outbreak may require additions to the Operations Group (see Appendix B of the BGSU Emergency Management Plan)

Special Considerations – Campus Wide Issues

The Infectious Disease ad hoc planning committee has identified issues that are campus-wide in scope and cannot be planned at individual unit levels.

Academic Instruction

Faculty members have the authority to design courses, develop methods of assessment and assign grades. There are, however, rare instances when the interests of the University are such that a University-wide approach to completing a term may be essential or the only feasible option. In the event of an infectious disease outbreak or other disaster declared by the President, some academic policies may be suspended, waived or revised. The Provost, after consultation with the College offices, will make decisions regarding which policies may be waived or modified.

Critical Research

While work in many research laboratories or studies may be postponed or delayed, there are some critical areas where research must be maintained. The SPAR Office will work with the Office of the Provost to develop directives and guidance for all critical research and facilities that must be maintained. During an event that requires activation of the campus EOC, the SPAR Office will assist the EOC management in prioritizing response to those research areas and facilities. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety has resources available to assist with “laboratory hibernation”.

Animal Care

Animals that depend on BGSU faculty, staff and students for their care and shelter must be considered in any emergency plan. There are a number of facilities housing animals. The

SPAR Office will work with the faculty and staff in these laboratories to develop a plan that will ensure the safety and security of all animals on campus.

Human Resources Issues

The primary effects of an infectious disease outbreak are on staffing and student levels. Unlike natural disasters, infectious disease outbreaks do not damage property or equipment; the effects are mainly human resource oriented. Absenteeism may occur for a variety of reasons; illness or incapacity; caring for other family members, or class suspension.

Each work unit has an internal system for tracking and recording employees' absences. During an infectious disease outbreak, those systems will be used to help determine individual and campus absenteeism rates and provide the basis for decisions made within the campus EOC for implementing Social Distancing

The Office of Human Resources will make recommendations for maintaining critical functions with reduced staff.

Leave – Employees may use accrued paid leave (vacation, personal) if the University is closed and arrangements for working at home are not possible. If an employee has symptoms associated with an infectious disease, University or public health officials may require the employee not to report to work and use available paid time off (vacation, personal, sick).

Emergency Furlough – The University President, in consultation with the Board of Trustees may declare an emergency furlough if the University remains totally or partially closed for an extended period of time.

Special Hiring Provisions – During an infectious disease emergency, if new hires are needed to cover emergency operations, the President may authorize the immediate hiring of individuals determined to be qualified to perform the necessary work. Employees hired under these conditions will be given a temporary, time limited appointment.

Information Technology Infrastructure

Our business and personal lives depend to a great deal on the availability of an information technology infrastructure for voice and data communications. During an infectious disease outbreak, it is likely that those systems will become less reliable as they become overloaded with increased volume. If public health plans call for social distancing – i.e. directing the suspension of classes and public events and encouraging the public to stay home – more students, faculty and staff will resort to electronic communication, resulting in an increase over the normal volume of network traffic.

The Office of the Chief Information Officer and Information Technology Services has developed a comprehensive plan to maintain all essential functions and inform the campus colleges, schools and units about these issues.

Travel

A global pandemic will severely limit both domestic and international travel. The Federal Pandemic Response Plan anticipates that the public will voluntarily limit personal travel and that significant portions of business travel will also be curtailed. While it is unlikely that travel

restrictions will be imposed on local, state or federal levels, they will certainly be advised and strongly encouraged. It is expected that each college, school or work unit will be aware of students, faculty and staff traveling on University business. The Center for International Programs' Education Abroad office has created a protocol to track all travel overseas by faculty, staff and students as well as a re-entry procedure to be implemented upon their return. It is expected that the WHO, CDC and Wood County Health Department will make recommendations to the President regarding all overseas travel. These recommendations should include recalling from travel, restricting or limiting current travel and canceling future travel.

Public Health/Hygiene Etiquette

As access to vaccines and medications during a pandemic are likely to be extremely limited, non-medical interventions may be the only way to slow the spread of the disease. Non-medical interventions may include social distancing (i.e. cancellation of mass gatherings), and infection control measures to avoid spreading the disease.

The following information condenses the best current guidance available. In the event of a pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) websites may offer more updated information. The following are guidelines provided by the CDC in the event of any infectious disease outbreak.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home and away from work or errands when you are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, handkerchief or the sleeve of your clothing when coughing or sneezing.
- Clean your hands-colleges/units should consider providing waterless antibacterial hand cleansing solutions to individuals.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth.
- Persons with respiratory infection symptoms can use a face mask to help prevent exposing others.

This information is available on the CDC web site at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/preventing.htm>

Frequently Asked Questions

It is not expected that this plan will answer all questions from students, faculty and staff about the campus response to an infectious disease outbreak. During a declared emergency, a frequently asked question section with regular updates on the Marketing and Communications web site is recommended.

Communication

Communication strategies are important components in managing any infectious disease outbreak and are essential in the event of a pandemic. Accurate, timely and consistent information at all levels is critical in order to minimize unwanted and unforeseen social disruption and economic consequences and to maximize the effective outcome of any response.

The Office of Marketing and Communications has developed a communications plan to outline the triggers and actions for communicating notices, information and actions to the campus. That plan

defines the methods of distributing information through the normal campus modes of web sites, publications, voice mail, e-mail, text message, and regular mail.

Response

Activation of Emergency Operations Plans - A campus state of emergency can be declared by the President and or his/her designee in accordance with the BGSU Emergency Management Plan.

BGSU Emergency Management Plan Levels of emergency and Infectious Disease Plan tiers - It is strongly recommended individual schools, colleges and units review their Emergency Management Plans to ensure that necessary action steps are covered for a pandemic event.

Recovery

Recovery will begin immediately and continue throughout the response phase of any emergency. With a infectious disease (pandemic), recovery efforts may be thwarted by an unknown duration of the actual event and the unknown number of faculty, staff and students affected. Planning for recovery before an event occurs will assist available faculty, staff and students to make the transition as seamless as possible.

Business Resumption - Based on information as developed by the EOC and ongoing reviews of the international/national/local situation and discussions with the Wood County Health Department, the EOC will recommend to the President a partial, incremental or total return to normal operations. Any such decisions would be communicated to and coordinated with each college, school, and unit.

Issues that will have to be considered include:

- Adjustments necessary to the academic calendar.
- Resumption or rescheduling of research activities,
- Rescheduling special events that were cancelled or postponed.
- Resumption at significant (20 to 40%) reductions in students, faculty and staff
- Obtaining necessary supplies to resume functions
- Identify means to screen, students, faculty and staff who are returning to campus so as to not re-infect the campus community

Support for Staff, Faculty, Students

After an infectious disease outbreak is over, it can be expected that many people will be affected in a variety of ways. They may have lost friends and relatives, suffer from fatigue, or have financial losses as a result of the interruption of work. Services available to the staff, faculty and students through campus resources will be communicated through available means. Monitor plan for effectiveness once the business resumption is underway, debriefings will discuss the response and recovery, and any changes necessary to the current plans. A formal post action report will be developed and distributed.