Bowling Green State University
Infectious Disease Operations Plan

Bowling Green and Firelands Campuses
Revised
October 2014
# Infectious Disease Operations Plan - Table of Contents

## Introduction
- Objectives
- Relationship to Current Plans
- Revision

## Governance, Command and Control
- Authority
- Wood/Erie County Health
- District/Department
- Activation
- Notification to the Public
- Notification within the University
- Coordination

## Preparedness and Planning
- Social Distancing
- University Operations Status
- Essential Functions and Critical Employees

## Special Considerations – Campus Wide Issues
- 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

## Response

## Recovery
- 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 a current and/or unidentified future virus becoming the next human pandemic. Michael Leavitt, U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary, stated at the March 2006 California Pandemic Planning Summit: “Pandemics 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 industry’s 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 and revised 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 District, the Wood County Emergency Planning 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

The following are the objectives of this plan:

• 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 Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. It is intended to guide the response and recovery actions of the entire campus.

Revision
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 periodically by the Emergency Management Coordinator in collaboration with key members of the Emergency Operations Group and local public health experts.

Governance, Command and Control

Authority
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 Comprehensive 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.

Wood/Erie County Health District/Department
Should an infectious disease outbreak or pandemic occur, it is the responsibility of the Public Health District/Department 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 Districts/Departments to help coordinate responses at the county, city and University levels.
Activation

Activation of this Infectious Disease Operations Plan follows the guidelines within the BGSU Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, which also describes the authority for activating the Campus Emergency Operations Center.

Notification to 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 Department of Public Safety, the Falcon Health Center and Marketing and Communications have assigned liaisons to the Wood County Health District. For BGSU Firelands, staff in Budget and Operations has established liaisons with the Erie County Health Department and the Erie County Sheriff’s Office.

Notification within the University

Responsibility for communicating responses or recovery actions and intentions begins with the Executive Management Group and continues into each division, college, school and unit as described in Annex B and Annex C of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

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.

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. 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.

Preparedness and Planning

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.

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 website.
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, masks and gloves 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 time depending on the circumstances. The appropriate public health agency will be consulted for determination of the need and length of time. 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

Based on consultation with the Wood County Health District, the University President or designee has the authority to declare that the University is operating according to one of the following tiers.

**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, Canvas 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 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Function</th>
<th>Description of Activities/Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police Department</td>
<td>Secure and monitor buildings, control ingress/egress to campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Management</td>
<td>Liaison to WC Health District and WC EMA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Services</td>
<td>Assist with traffic flow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shuttle Services</td>
<td>Provide transportation as necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining Services</td>
<td>Provide meals to students who must remain on campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payroll</td>
<td>Determine which employees to be paid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts Payable</td>
<td>Pay bills as needed for University bills, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bursar</td>
<td>Work with student for discounts/payment of bills, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Maintenance</td>
<td>Remotely monitor building systems, respond to building emergencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essential Function</td>
<td>Description of Activities / Tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounds</td>
<td>Limited trash pick-up; campus roads, sidewalks cleared as needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Health and Safety</td>
<td>Provide protective equipment to critical employees and training on protection measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Management</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence Life</td>
<td>Provide housing for students who must remain on campus; assist with building problems, discipline, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falcon Health Center and Counseling Center</td>
<td>Provides health and counseling services for those student/employees that remain on campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Counsel</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>Manage deployment of back-up employees and answer employee questions via telephone or email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>Manage or maintain critical enterprise systems know as Tier 0, 1, 2 and 3 applications on the disaster recovery plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and Communications</td>
<td>Manage University messages, both internal and external to the institution regarding shutdown, operations, related issues, updates, messages to employees, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services – Admissions, Registration and Records, Financial Aid, International Student Services, etc.</td>
<td>Communicate to students on plan to offer services remotely and assure services will continue; send special communications to prospective students about maintaining admission functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essential Function</td>
<td>Description of Activities/Tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Student Services</td>
<td>Preserve critical research, prepare to accommodate any grad students returning from abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Offices</td>
<td>Advise students of class status via telephone or email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGSU Firelands staff</td>
<td>Provide direction and support for the Dean of the College</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Special Considerations – Campus Wide Issues**

The following issues 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 Office of Sponsored Research and Programs 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 Office of Sponsored Research and Programs 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 Office of Sponsored Research and Programs 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 – 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) per University policy and collective bargaining agreements.

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.

Information Technology Services (ITS) will make available up to 1000 Virtual Private Networks and common web services for the faculty, staff and students to continue their duties and functions remotely. The essential functions are the Tier 0, 1, 2 and 3 applications on the ITS disaster recovery plan.
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 District 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: cdc.gov

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.

Annex C of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan addresses the procedures the Office of Marketing and Communications will use to keep the campus community informed and 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 the Infectious Disease Operations Plan - a campus state of emergency can be declared by the President and or his/her designee in accordance with the BGSU Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

Recovery

Recovery will begin immediately and continue throughout the response phase of any emergency. With an 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 DOC and ongoing reviews of the international/national/local situation and discussions with the Wood County Health District, the DOC 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. Support 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.