

Administrative Procedure 166 – Appendix

Appendix - INFLUENZA PANDEMIC PLAN

The Division's Influenza Pandemic Plan is as follows:

Seasonal Influenza versus Pandemic Influenza

Seasonal influenza virus strains constantly change and continually circulate in every part of the world, normally appearing in fall and winter in Alberta. The viruses cause respiratory illness and are contagious. While all age groups may be affected and most people recover from influenza, young children, those with certain chronic diseases such as heart disease, and those older than 65 are at higher risk for complications and death.

Pandemic influenza occurs when a novel influenza to which most humans have little or no immunity, acquires the ability to cause sustained human-to-human transmission that leads to a rapid worldwide spread. The novel virus may arise through genetic re-assortment (animal and human influenza genes mix together) or genetic mutation (when genes in an animal virus change, allowing the virus to easily infect humans). When exposed to the new virus, most people become ill, as they have no immunity.

Respiratory-Like Illness (RLI) Assessment

An individual is considered compromised when they display the following symptoms:

- Acute onset of respiratory-like illness
- Fever (>38C), except with elderly people who may be ill without a fever
- Cough
- One or more of sore throat, joint pain, muscle pain, or extreme exhaustion

Preventative Measures

The Division's focus is on prevention and encouraging these six key actions:

1. If ill, stay home from work, school and avoid public places. Seek medical attention if symptoms progress. Call Health Link 811.
2. One of the best ways to prevent influenza is to get the influenza vaccine every year.
3. Hands should be cleaned before preparing food, eating, touching one's face and after coughing or sneezing, using the toilet and after handling soiled material.
4. Wash your hands with soap and water, or use Health Canada approved hand sanitizers.
5. Cough or sneeze into your sleeve rather than your hand.

6. Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth after shaking hands or touching hard surfaces like counters and door handles or other surfaces that may contain influenza and other viruses.
7. Other measures as recommended by Alberta Health Services, the Chief Medical Officer of Health or Alberta Education.

Procedures

Pre-Pandemic Phase

1. The Superintendent of Schools or designate will communicate with Principals/Division Leadership Team initiating the Pre-Pandemic Phase.
2. Continue with the six prevention key factors.
3. Promote 'elbow bumps' in place of handshakes as informal greetings.
4. Parents/guardians, staff, volunteers, and students should be provided with basic information on the recognition of Respiratory Like Illness (RLI). Parents/guardians, teachers and other staff should monitor the health of their children/students daily or more often for RLI. (Acute onset of respiratory illness, Fever (>38C), except with elderly people who may be ill without a fever, cough, one or more of a sore throat, joint pain, muscle pain or extreme exhaustion).
5. Under the direction of the Principals/Division Leadership Team, staff will peruse the three Hour Zero Pandemic Training Modules.
6. School staff should be prepared to quickly isolate students/staff who become ill with RLI at school in a room separated from others with adequate supervision until they can go home. Avoid transmission by practicing excellent hand and respiratory etiquette, and maintaining 2 meters distance from the ill individual as much as possible.
7. Prepare hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and 'do not visit if ill' posters.
8. Acquire and maintain a suitable inventory of soap and hand sanitizer.
9. Acquire and maintain a suitable inventory of low-level disinfectant cleaning supplies.
10. In-service custodial staff regarding the proper usage of low-level disinfectant cleaning supplies.
11. Keep common surfaces disinfected.
12. The Division will review both its Domestic and International Student Excursions.
13. The Division will review procedures for allowing visitors into the school.

Pandemic Phase

In the event of a pandemic, the response of school jurisdictions will be guided by information from Alberta Health Services, the Chief Medical Officer of Health and Alberta Education.

1. The Superintendent of Schools or designate will communicate with Principals/Division Leadership Team initiating the Pandemic Phase.
2. Continue with the six prevention key actions.

Post-Pandemic Phase

- Revert to preventative measures

Service Levels

As long as schools are open, they will continue with their primary purpose. Additional work force resources will be provided through our existing substitute services. Local reactive school closures may occur in consultation with Alberta Health Services.

Division Office services (Accounting, Payroll, Personnel, Maintenance) will be completed on a priority basis. School custodial services will focus on disinfection. Maintenance and Custodial personnel may be redirected from other areas to maintain disinfection standards as long as schools are open.

Resources

Black Gold's Hour-Zero School Emergency Program includes three Pandemic Training Modules: Pandemic Awareness, Pandemic for Admins, and Pandemic for Teachers. Log into Hour Zero, click on "Training" in the left column, in the course list drop down menu select "all".

The Pandemic Modules are listed in the middle of the list.

- Pandemic Awareness: Flu Facts, Dealing with Pandemics, Slow the Spread
- Pandemic for Admins: Pandemic Primer, What to Expect, What Schools Can Do, Strategies
- Pandemic for Teachers: Pandemic Primer, Classroom Tips, What to Expect from Students, Classroom Resources

Alberta Health Services has a variety of excellent information and quality posters available on its website suitable for printing and posting, in PDF format, for covering your cough, washing your hands and 'Alert to Visitors' poster in the section titled "Signs".