



NORTH AMERICAN ELECTRIC RELIABILITY COUNCIL

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DRAFT

Critical Infrastructure Protection Committee Electric Sector Avian Flu Pandemic Preparedness and Response Reference Guide

The avian flu pandemic threat in 2005 requires the electric sector to review its business continuity plans to ensure it is adequately prepared to respond to infectious agents.

Develop Plans

1. Develop appropriate level response plan and procedures, include the following as a minimum;
 - Initiating conditions for the recognition of an incident or threat, and appropriate response levels
 - Roles and responsibilities of staff, supervisor, staff medical personnel.
 - Local medical contact(s) and phone numbers
 - Internal contacts for notification
 - List(s) of staff critical to basic functionality of the organization
 - Put in place plans to have a number of staff work from their home.
 - Plan and procedures should include support and assistance if necessary from human resources staff to employee's family.
2. Consider the need for a plan to separate the work forces to establish independent locations or preserve a "clean" site.
3. Consider the need to send home non-critical staff.
4. Consider the need and conditions for more extreme measures such as sequestering staff.

Develop Policies

1. Develop or update staff travel policy.
2. Develop or update meetings policy.
3. Develop a visitors policy including a "sign-in" process to be implemented in the event of an employee health incident or threat.

4. Post personal protection techniques such as hand washing posters in all washrooms and common areas (kitchens, etc.).
5. Develop or update confidentiality policies involving human resources staff covering permission to release names of staff that potentially have been exposed, to allow effective exposure tracking to be completed.

Testing

Periodically test and verify your preparedness plans and procedures via a simulation exercise, table top exercise or process walk through.

Equipment and Facilities

1. Contract with a company that will clean/disinfect computer equipment, common areas etc.
2. If appropriate, provide each workstation with a disinfecting agent in a spray bottle, a package of paper towels, and a package of latex/vinyl gloves.
3. Purchase and store sufficient quantity of personal protective equipment (masks, gloves and gowns). Some masks deliver better speech clarity than others. Some masks are designed to protect the person wearing the mask; other masks protect exposure of others from the person wearing the mask.
4. If on-site cafeteria, stock up on water, beverages, and food, especially items that require heating to eliminate bacteria such as pizza.
5. If appropriate, isolate the building, post signs stating temporary quarantine at all exits, and suspend electronic card access.
6. Close non-critical common areas, such as exercise room, or the cafeteria.

Response Actions

The following is a list of roles, responsibilities and actions to respond to a case where an employee is infected or suspected of being infected.

Response Actions by the Affected Employee—When an employee has contracted or suspects that they have contracted an infectious agent, the employee is to seek medical attention and advise his/her Supervisor or Line Manager accordingly.

Response Actions by the Company (Employee's Supervisor/Line Manager)

1. Advise the employee to contact their doctor and the company medical.
2. Line Manager or Supervisor contacts the company medical or Occupational Health Nurse to follow up on the employee.
3. Implement a process such that all employees/visitors to critical facilities are subject to an appropriate screening tool to aid in identifying whether or not they are a potential risk, (ie; have you visited a high risk location in the past day?). Post screening tool(s) at all entrances.

4. If appropriate, contract a cleaning service/agency and request the disinfection of the affected employees workstation and shared work areas as well as all shared equipment and facilities (including washrooms, kitchen areas and meeting rooms). Assess the need for separation of staff.
5. Close non-critical common areas, such as exercise room, or perhaps the cafeteria.
6. Assess the need to direct staff to maintain a distance from each other.
7. Assess the need for complete separation of staff including the activation of any backup facilities.
8. Assess the need to vacate non-critical staff from the site.
9. If appropriate, provide each workstation with a disinfecting agent in a spray bottle, a package of paper towels, and a package of latex/vinyl gloves. Have each crew member wipe down all equipment and surfaces before and after each shift. Provide each workstation with sanitizing lotion with instructions on use.
10. Provide regular communication to all staff of the latest medical advisories and recommend adherence to all actions suggested.
11. Provide on-site critical operations with personal protective equipment, if staff are able to continue working.
12. If appropriate, isolate the building, post signs stating temporary quarantine at all exits, and suspend electronic card access.
13. Notify all staff on site to leave their full name, employee ID, and after-hours contact number(s), including numbers where they may be potentially relocated, such as parents, family etc. Instruct all employees when they are to be allowed to return to work, such as the following business day unless advised otherwise.
14. Have visitors provide their home and site/company as well as an after-hours contact number(s) for follow-up.

Maintain Awareness and Communicate

1. Company medical or occupational health nurses should monitor for health threats via official bulletins or web sites: World Health Organization, and U.S. Center for Disease Control, as necessary.
2. Initiate a meeting to establish points of contact with phone numbers, and identify the criticality of operations including mutual interdependencies, the loss of which would have a direct and serious detrimental impact on the public.
3. Collaborate with Local Public Health unit on the enumeration of antiviral shot recipients for staff performing critical functions in the event of a pandemic flu outbreak.

4. Identify those functions in your company you consider to be critical to your continued operations, and identify the people needed to fill those positions. Pre-screen critical staff to ensure their willingness to receive an antiviral vaccine given the side effects that may occur. Involve your human resources staff as well as established mechanisms such as joint health and safety committees early.
5. Communicate early and regularly to staff, and include recommendations such as maintaining of separation during discussions to minimize potential transfer of infectious agents, so these measures can be practiced and internalized.
6. Provide staff and decision-makers with the most up-to-date information available by documenting (Q&A) specific characteristics of the contagion, such as the following:
 - mechanism(s), speed and ease of transmission by which the contagion is spread, and mode(s) of transmission, such as touch, airborne, etc.
 - time the contagion remains active on surfaces, such as door handles
 - incubation period, time to exhibit symptoms, and maximum contagious period.

Response Actions by Medical or Occupational Health Nurse

1. Liaise with company senior management.
2. Advise the exposed employee to contact their doctor and to adhere to the advice given.
3. Advise the exposed employee to contact their direct supervisor if they have not already done so.
4. Request that the exposed employee keep you informed of their condition.
5. Advise the exposed employee not to return to work until directed to do so by their doctor and the company doctor/nurse.
6. Support and provide input into employee communications.
7. Advise that antibacterial waterless hand cleaner, and antibacterial cleansers and/or wipes should be placed at key communal areas (washrooms, kitchens, workstations).
8. Provide regular communication to all staff on the latest health advisories and recommend adherence to all actions suggested.
9. Provide regular communication to all staff on any additional specific requirements or information.