Flu Policy 2009-2010  
HUMAN RESOURCES – LEAVE GUIDELINES for Employees  
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING INFLUENZA (H1N1) & LEAVE POLICIES

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Where can I find the latest information about Influenza A (H1N1).
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/

What are the symptoms of Influenza A (H1N1)?

The most common symptoms of Influenza A (H1N1) include:

- Sore throat and a fever of 100 degrees or higher
- A cough and a fever of 100 degrees or higher

If you have a fever of 100 degrees or higher and either a sore throat or cough, you are strongly encouraged to contact your primary care physician. To protect yourself and to help prevent the spread of Influenza A (H1N1), you should practice good hygiene, including frequent hand washing with soap and water (if not available, hand sanitizer), covering your nose and mouth with your sleeve if you cough or sneeze, and avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth with your hands.

Additional information regarding Influenza A (H1N1) prevention and symptoms can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/qa.htm).

What should I do if I develop influenza symptoms?

To limit the potential for exposure to other people, if you have the Influenza A (H1N1) symptoms, do not come to work. Take the following actions:

- Notify your supervisor that you are ill and will not be able to work
- Avoid contact with others
- Seek medical advice from your primary care physician

If you begin to develop symptoms while at work, immediately notify your supervisor that you need to leave due to illness. If you are exhibiting Influenza A (H1N1) symptoms while at work, your supervisor may determine that it is in the University’s best interest to send you home from work due to illness.
When can I return to work if I have had Influenza A (H1N1)?

Generally, it is acceptable to return to work after all your symptoms have disappeared, and you have had no signs of a fever (100°F) for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Do I need a doctor’s note if I am out for more than three days with Influenza A (H1N1)?

Normal University requirements to provide doctor’s notes to justify absences have been suspended for flu-like symptoms. However, you do need to follow your normal work unit procedures when calling in sick.

Does FMLA apply if I contract Influenza A (H1N1)? Does FMLA apply if my spouse or child contracts Influenza A (H1N1), and I must stay home to care for him/her?

FMLA leave of absence may be taken by employees faced with a serious health condition and for care of a spouse, son or daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition. If all the following criteria are met and you meet the eligibility criteria for FMLA (you have worked 12 months for the University and have worked 1,250 hours in the preceding 12 months), FMLA will apply.

A period of incapacity lasting more than three consecutive, full calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition, that also includes:

- treatment two or more times by or under the supervision of a health care provider (i.e., in-person visits, the first within 7 days and both within 30 days of the first day of incapacity); or
- one treatment by a health care provider (i.e., an in-person visit within 7 days of the first day of incapacity) with a continuing regimen of treatment (e.g., prescription medication, physical therapy)

FMLA information and resources are available at: http://www.hr.ou.edu/benefits/FMLA.asp

If I must stay home because I have contracted Influenza A (H1N1) (or my child has contracted Influenza A (H1N1), and I must stay home to care for him/her), how will I be paid?

Promptly notify your supervisor of the reason for your absence and your anticipated return to work date. In this situation the following options are available, although not all options will be available in all situations depending upon the nature of your job responsibilities:

- Use accrued paid-time-off (PTO) hours (Staff Handbook 3.11)
- Additionally, hourly employees may use compensatory time if available or make up the work on an hour-for-hour basis during the same workweek with supervisory approval (does not apply to monthly employees) – hourly employees do not receive pay for time not worked
- Monthly employees may work a different schedule with supervisory approval or if absent for a full work day, may use accrued PTO
- Work from home with supervisory approval
If all paid leave time has been exhausted, the employee will be granted an excused unpaid leave.

My child’s school (day care) is closed due to an incident of Influenza A (H1N1), and my child is not sick. I have no other child care arrangements and must stay home with him. How will I be paid?

Promptly notify your supervisor of the reason for your absence and your anticipated return to work date. In this situation the following options are available, although not all options will be available in all situations depending upon the nature of your job responsibilities and the extent of the illness or care provided:

- Use accrued paid-time-off (PTO) hours (Staff Handbook 3.11)
- Additionally hourly employees may use compensatory time off if available or make up the work on an hour-for-hour basis during the same workweek with supervisory approval (does not apply to monthly employees) – hourly employees do not receive pay for time not worked
- Monthly employees may work a different schedule with supervisory approval or if absent for a full work day, may use accrued PTO
- Work from home with supervisory approval
- If all paid leave time has been exhausted, the employee will be granted an excused unpaid leave

I have an employee who is ill and has come into work. I’m concerned about the potential for exposure to other people. Can I send this employee home?

Yes. An employee exhibiting the Influenza A (H1N1) symptoms should be sent home by his or her supervisor and not allowed to return to work until fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. The employee should be placed in a non-public area if unable to immediately leave the workplace. The decision to send an employee home is to be made on a case-by-case basis.

If an employee is sent home from work due to illness, how will he/she be paid?

- Use accrued paid-time-off (PTO) hours (Staff Handbook 3.11)
- Additionally hourly employees may use compensatory time off if available or make up the work on an hour-for-hour basis during the same workweek with supervisory approval (does not apply to monthly employees) – hourly employees do not receive pay for time not worked
- Monthly employees may work a different schedule with supervisory approval or if absent for a full work day, may use accrued PTO
- Work from home with supervisory approval
- If all paid leave time has been exhausted, the employee will be granted an excused unpaid leave

Do I have to use my own paid time off if my supervisor sends me home even though I think I’m well enough to work?

Yes, you must use your own paid time off if available, or you will be placed on leave without pay if you have exhausted your paid leave. Depending upon the nature of your illness and your job responsibilities, alternative work schedules or other work arrangements may be an available option for you with supervisory approval.
May I choose to go home if I don’t want to be exposed to a coworker exhibiting Influenza A (H1N1) symptoms but has not been sent home?

Yes, with supervisory approval you may leave work if you have a reasonable belief that the coworker may have Influenza A (H1N1) as demonstrated by his/her symptoms. However, you must use your own paid time off. If all paid leave time has been exhausted, request an absence without pay. Alternative work schedules and/or arrangements may be an available option for you with supervisory approval.

I’m not sick, but I don’t want to come to work for fear of becoming ill. Is my supervisor required to approve my request for time off or approve my request to telecommute?

No. You may request to take PTO; however, your supervisor is not required to approve your time off request if departmental needs and the orderly and efficient operation of the University require otherwise. Likewise, supervisory approval is necessary to work from home, but not all requests to telecommute can be approved given that certain position job duties and departmental operating requirements are not suited for telecommuting arrangements.

Additional information regarding Influenza A (H1N1) transmission can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/qa.htm).

During the Influenza A (H1N1) outbreak, can my supervisor cancel my vacation time request that has already been approved?

Yes, your supervisor has the authority to cancel any pre-approved vacation request, especially in circumstances where departmental needs are seriously impacted by staff shortages due to illnesses.

Can my supervisor change my work schedule during the Influenza A (H1N1) outbreak?

Yes, your supervisor may change your work schedule to meet departmental needs and ensure the orderly and efficient operation of the University.

***The influenza pandemic plans and related materials from Indiana University, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and other universities were used during the planning and development of these Guidelines. Additional information regarding Influenza A (H1N1) prevention and symptoms can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/qa.htm).