Flu Policy 2009-2010
Supervisory Guidelines

These HR guidelines will be implemented effective October 1, 2009 and will remain in effect until subsequent notice is issued.

When Employees Indicate Sickness

When an employee indicates he/she is sick (calls in or e-mails), the supervisor or designate should state that if the employee has flu-like symptoms (fever > 100° and either sore throat or cough), he/she needs to stay home until he/she is fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. If the employee does indicate they have flu-like symptoms, the supervisor should follow the reporting/notification guidelines outlined below. The employee should also be reminded to review the Flu Policy 2009-2010 - Leave Guidelines for Employees for information about leave and other related policies.

When Employees Exhibit Flu-Like Symptoms at Work

Employees at work who have flu-like symptoms (fever > 100° and either sore throat or cough) must be told, not just be given permission, to go home. Supervisors are not to assess the severity of an employee’s illness, take their temperature or evaluate their symptoms. However, outward signs of an illness (coughing and sore throat) and the employee confirming he/she has a fever when asked will provide the supervisor with enough information to send the employee home. If an employee is sent home due to flu-like symptoms, a copy of the Flu Policy 2009-2010 - Leave Guidelines for Employees should be provided to the employee.

Duration for Staying Home

If the supervisor is told or knows the employee has flu-like symptoms, the employee must be instructed to stay away from the work place until he/she is fever free for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medicine. This is critical to prevent passing the flu on to others since people remain contagious even if they are feeling better. Departments can require an employee to call their supervisor before returning to work so a status update of their condition can be provided.

Attendance Policies and Doctor’s Notes for Flu-like Symptoms

During the duration of a designated flu pandemic, employees who are absent due to having flu-like illness or caring for an immediate family member (or equivalent) with a flu-like illness will not have the absence counted as an incident under any campus attendance policy – although the employee must use paid leave or compensatory leave (hourly employees only) to remain in pay status. This will reduce incidents of employees coming to the workplace with a flu-like illness.

Normal University requirements to provide doctor’s notes to justify employee absences will be temporarily suspended for flu-like symptoms during a designated flu pandemic. Temporarily relaxing this requirement will prevent unnecessary visits to clinics at a time when they might already be overwhelmed, and reduce exposure of others to patients ill with flu.
Notification of Employer and Co-workers/Students

Supervisors or chairs should notify co-workers and students that they came in close contact with someone with flu-like symptoms (employee/student name not provided). It needs to be made clear that notification is provided to help control the spread of the flu, and to alert members of the campus community concerning their possible exposure. However, those contacted should also be reminded that conduct which harasses, discriminates, or retaliates against employees who may have contracted a flu-like illness will not be tolerated.

When an Employee is Exposed to Someone with Flu-Like Symptoms and/or Confirmed or Suspected H1N1 Influenza

Employees who have come in close contact with an individual with flu-like symptoms and/or confirmed or suspected H1N1 influenza do not need to take any special precautions UNLESS they have a chronic illness such as asthma or diabetes, a weakened immune system or are pregnant; these individuals should consult with their primary care physician. All employees are able to come to work normally without restrictions unless they have flu-like symptoms.

Identifying “Essential Personnel” in Case of an Emergency

Each department should identify their essential employees in case of emergencies. These are the employees who need to work (e.g., police, power plant operators, those providing care to patients or animals, etc.) during an emergency. Non-essential employees are those whose services are not critical during an emergency. Essential employees should be notified of their status and back-ups should be identified in case they are unable to come to work.

Provide Advice on Work-From-Home Issues

In the event of a pandemic, the University may institute “social distancing” policies. In other words, employees who are not identified as essential may be directed to stay away from work. Those employees should be directed to work from home when possible. In these emergency circumstances, a Telecommuting Agreement form does not need to be completed. Supervisors should assess, in advance, the possibility of employees working at home. This may include surveying staff about home internet access and doing a test (trial day working at home) to see if telecommuting is feasible.

Paid and Unpaid Leave during a Pandemic

When Employees are Absent Due to Flu-like Symptoms

Absences due to flu-like symptoms will be handled under existing University leave policies. 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

Non-Essential Employees Directed to Stay Away from Work

Some services, while critical to the long-term success of the University, are not essential during a short-term crisis. If the University determines that social-distancing measures are necessary, employees performing nonessential services may be directed to work from home, if possible. If the nature of the work does not allow for work to be performed at home, they may be directed to stay away from the worksite and remain prepared to return at any time.

Essential employees also may be directed to work from home, if possible, to accomplish the goals of social distancing. If directed to work from home, employees will continue to be paid because they are fulfilling their responsibilities.