



PANDEMIC FLU
TAKE THE LEAD
WORKING TOGETHER TO PREPARE NOW

Pandemic Flu – Take The Lead Working Together to Prepare Now

Community Leaders Toolkit



U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services

takethelead.pandemicflu.gov

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Table of Contents

- I. Introduction: Preparing for Pandemic Flu Is Everyone’s Responsibility**
- II. Encourage Personal Preparedness: Activities and Tools**
- III. Spread the Word to Other Community Leaders**
- IV. Fact Sheet: Pandemic Flu Basics**
- V. Fact Sheet: Community-Based Interventions**
- VI. Sample E-mail on Pandemic Flu Preparedness**
- VII. Pandemic Flu Preparedness Checklist**
- VIII. Sample E-mail and Checklist on Stocking Food and Supplies**
- IX. Sample E-mail on Good Health Habits**
- X. Sample Newsletter Article on Pandemic Flu Preparedness**
- XI. Sample Newsletter Article on Stocking Food and Supplies**
- XII. Sample Newsletter Article on Good Health Habits**
- XIII. Sample “Chain” E-mail**
- XIV. Links to Resources**
- XV. Cover Your Cough Poster**
- XVI. Talking Points on Pandemic Flu Preparedness**
- XVII. Food-Drive Poster Template**
- XVIII. Food and Supplies Drive Checklist**
- XIX. Incentive Ideas**
- XX. Sample E-mail Introducing Incentives**
- XXI. Talking Points – How to Get Your Peers Involved**
- XXII. Sample Newsletter Article – How to Get Involved**
- XXIII. Sample E-mail–How to Get Involved**

I. Introduction: Preparing for Pandemic Flu Is Everyone's Responsibility

Preparing for a pandemic influenza outbreak involves everybody. The threat of pandemic influenza is real, and America needs leadership from respected community members to prepare our towns and cities, reduce the impact of pandemic flu on individuals and families, and reduce or even prevent serious damage to the economy. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other public health experts agree that it is not a question of **IF** a pandemic will occur, but **WHEN** it will occur. If America is not adequately prepared, pandemic flu could seriously affect everyone economically.

Government alone can't prepare the nation for pandemic flu; this challenge requires your help. As a leader in your community, you can play a powerful role in encouraging those whom you can influence, whether they be employees, patients, or group members, to prepare by providing information and guidance and by preparing yourself.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is working with medical professionals, and business, community, and faith-based leaders across the nation to provide them with the simple tools they can use to educate Americans on ways to protect themselves and their families.

This toolkit provides the following:

- Information for you about pandemic flu
- Ready-to-use and ready-to-tailor resources prepared by HHS and CDC
- Ideas and materials to encourage your organization to prepare and to encourage other leaders to get involved

Pandemic preparedness efforts are an important part of community leadership. We thank you for joining community leaders across the Nation in taking steps to ensure America's health and prosperity in the 21st century.

Background

- What is a flu pandemic, and what is the threat?
 - A flu (influenza) pandemic is an outbreak of a new flu virus that spreads around the world. The virus will spread easily from person to person, mostly through coughing and sneezing. Because the virus is new to people, everyone will be at risk of getting it.
 - In the 20th century, three flu pandemics were responsible for more than 50 million deaths worldwide and almost a million deaths in the United States.
 - The 1918–1919 flu pandemic was the most severe; it caused the deaths of at least 675,000 Americans. If a pandemic of similar severity occurred today, 90 million Americans could become ill, and approximately 2 million Americans could die.
 - A flu pandemic could spread quickly. There may be little time to prepare once it begins.

- Why do people need to prepare?
 - CDC and other leading public health experts agree that the threat of a pandemic is real—it’s not a question of IF one will happen, but WHEN it will happen.
 - A flu pandemic could spread quickly. There may be little time to prepare once it begins.
 - A vaccine against the pandemic flu cannot be made before knowing exactly which virus will cause the pandemic. It could then take 4-6 months before a vaccine is available (with only limited amounts available at first).
 - Preparing now will reduce the negative impact a pandemic will have on individuals, society and our economy.
- What does “preparing” mean for individuals?
 - Stocking up on food, medicines, and supplies makes it easier to stay at home for extended periods of time.
 - Improving health habits now helps lower the risk of infection and slows the spread of disease during a pandemic.
 - Planning what you might do if school classes are dismissed, if you can’t go to work, or if you or a family member becomes sick and needs care makes dealing with the emergency easier.
- Why now?
 - This is the first generation with the opportunity to prepare in advance for a pandemic. The time for preparation is **now**.
 - Experts are concerned that the H5N1 virus (avian influenza A) is changing and could evolve into a pandemic flu virus.
 - Influenza pandemics are sporadic and their timing is difficult to predict. The last pandemic was in 1968.
 - Many community leaders want to make sure that their communities are ready for a pandemic or any type of emergency.
- What are we asking you, as a community leader, to do?
 - Share information about steps that people can take to prepare for a pandemic.
 - Ask your team, patients or members to prepare.
 - Use the tools developed by HHS and other sources to help educate those whom you can influence about the importance of pandemic planning and the steps they can take now to prepare.

Click on the links below to learn more about the pandemic threat.

- LATEST RESEARCH
 Research related to pandemic flu is ongoing. Access current information at <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/research/index.html>
- AVIAN FLU
 Avian influenza (AI)—the bird flu—is a virus that infects wild birds (such as ducks, gulls, and shorebirds) and domestic poultry (such as chickens, turkeys, ducks, and geese). AI strains also are divided into two groups based upon the ability of the virus to produce disease in poultry: low pathogenic avian influenza and highly pathogenic avian influenza. Low pathogenic avian influenza naturally occurs in wild birds and can spread to domestic birds. In most cases it causes no sign of infection or only minor symptoms in birds. These strains of the virus pose little threat to human health. Highly pathogenic avian influenza is often fatal in chickens and turkeys. High path AI spreads more rapidly than low path AI and has a higher death rate in birds.

Highly pathogenic H5N1 is the type that is rapidly spreading in some parts of the world. Although the highly pathogenic H5N1 virus does not usually infect people, more than 200 human cases have been reported since 2004. Most people who have become sick or died from this virus have had extensive, direct contact with infected poultry. However, there are broad concerns about the public's health because the virus has the potential to mutate, or change into a form that could easily spread from person to person, a characteristic that could result in a human influenza pandemic. To date, there is no evidence that this is occurring.

<http://www.usda.gov/documents/AvianFluBrochure.pdf>

- **COMMUNITY MITIGATION**

In a flu pandemic, government and health officials may ask you and your community to take steps to help limit contact between people. This may help slow the spread of the disease and is called "community mitigation." When several steps are taken together, they will slow the spread of illness even more. The steps you and your community take will depend on how bad the illness is and how many people might be sick. Public health officials will provide guidance on types of social distancing that may be necessary during a pandemic.

http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/community/community_mitigation.pdf

- **VACCINE AND ANTIVIRALS**

Measures such as social distancing may help slow the spread of pandemic flu, but ultimately, an effective vaccine will be needed to prevent additional cases. It could take 4-6 months before a vaccine is available, and even then it will be available only in limited amounts at first.

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/faq/vaccines/>

Antiviral medications may help limit the impact of some symptoms and reduce the potential for serious complications.

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/faq/antivirals/>

- **FACE MASKS AND RESPIRATORS**

Current federal guidance indicates that if used correctly, facemasks and respirators may help prevent some exposures to the flu. They should be used along with other preventive measures, such as social distancing, regular hand washing, and staying home when sick.

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/vaccine/maskguidance.html>

- **GOVERNMENT PREPARATION FOR A PANDEMIC**

The U.S. Government is working with countries around the world and with the World Health Organization to prepare for a flu pandemic. The Government is improving the monitoring and surveillance of viruses, developing new vaccine technology, increasing vaccine production capacity, stockpiling antiviral drugs, and collaborating with communities across the Nation to improve State and local preparedness.

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/federal/index.html#hhs>

About This Kit

This kit was developed by HHS and CDC along with input from community leaders. It is designed to provide you with key information and tools to help your organization or practice understand the threat of a pandemic and prepare for it now.

Use the resources in this kit to communicate the threat of a flu pandemic and the importance of personal preparation to the people you can influence.

II. Encourage Personal Preparedness: Activities and Tools

Your leadership is important in helping the members of your community understand the threat of a pandemic and why they should prepare now. The best ways to prepare are simple. HHS, CDC, and other health experts ask individuals to stock up on foods and necessities, improve their health habits, and plan ahead for how to care for themselves and their family members during a pandemic.

Stock Up:

Having extra supplies on hand will make it easier to stay at home for extended periods of time and will help if supplies are limited in local stores due to staff absenteeism and supply chain interruptions.

Improve Health Habits:

Frequent hand washing, and coughing and sneezing into your sleeve or a tissue (covering your mouth and nose) are still the best ways to stay healthy and to prevent the spread of germs. Everyone *thinks* they already do this, but healthy habits are practiced less often than many realize.

Plan Ahead:

Individuals should start planning for what they will do if children are dismissed from school, if public transportation is interrupted, or if a family member becomes sick and needs care during a flu pandemic.

Here are some ways to encourage those you care about to prepare. Choose ways that best suit your organization's size, culture, and existing communication systems.



Activities	Tools To Help You
<p><u>1. Use Existing E-Mails and Newsletters To Distribute Information.</u></p> <p>Use systems you already have in place, such as e-mails and newsletters, to share information on pandemic flu and preparedness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Begin with introductory information and attach or distribute the “Fact Sheets” in Sections IV and V of this kit. ◦ Share information on stockpiling and health. ◦ Mail a letter and materials to your members’ homes. ◦ Send out the “chain” e-mail in Section XIII to help reach a broader audience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact Sheets • Sample Introductory E-mail on Pandemic Preparedness • Pandemic Preparedness Checklist • Sample E-mail and Checklist on Stocking Food and Supplies • Sample E-mail on Good Health Habits • Sample Newsletter Article on Pandemic Flu Preparedness • Sample Newsletter Article on Stocking Food and Supplies • Sample Newsletter Article on Good Health Habits • Sample “Chain” E-mail • Links to Resources
<p><u>2. Make Information Available on Your Intranet Site.</u></p> <p>Intranet Page: Post a page about pandemic flu preparedness on your Intranet and then send an e-mail to employees, members and/or patients directing them to the new pages.</p> <p>Posters and Flyers: Print and hang posters and distribute fact sheets throughout common areas, such as bathrooms, break rooms, waiting rooms, and kitchens to encourage preparedness and good health in your group’s location and at home.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample “Chain” E-mail • Links to Resources • Cover Your Cough Poster • Fact Sheets

Activities	Tools To Help You
<p><u>3. Host or Speak at Meetings and Group Activities.</u> Add an agenda item to existing meetings, hold brown-bag sessions at your group’s location, or invite a guest speaker (such as a representative from the local health department) to explain what individuals can do to prepare for a pandemic and why it is important.</p> <p>The talking points sheet in this kit contains key information to assist you in speaking to others about the importance of pandemic flu planning.</p> <p>Organize a food and supplies drive to collect items that will be necessary to have on hand during a pandemic. Supplies can be kept in a collective food pantry or given to those who are unable to stock up on their own.</p> <p>Invite input from the people you employ, represent, serve or care for about ways to encourage preparedness in the community and at home.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking Points on Pandemic Flu Preparedness • Food & Supplies Drive Poster Template • Food and Supplies Drive Checklist • Fact Sheets
<p><u>4. Offer Incentives.</u> Encourage employees and members to participate in preparation activities by offering small incentives, such as pizza parties. Incorporate your organization’s incentive programs or try one of the <i>Incentive Ideas</i> in this kit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentive Ideas • Sample E-mail Introducing Incentive • Fact Sheets

III. Spread the Word to Other Community Leaders

Activities	Tools To Help You
<p><u>1. Talk to Your Peers.</u> Use the materials in this kit to help you speak at meetings and talk to peers in your professional circles about the importance of encouraging your community to prepare for a pandemic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Present at professional meetings, conferences, and brown-bag sessions. ◦ Encourage colleagues to prepare and to spread the word about this kit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking Points–How To Get Your Peers Involved • Fact Sheets
<p><u>2. Distribute Information Through E-Mail and Newsletters.</u> Contact peers through e-mails and newsletters of professional organizations. Customize the sample copy in Sections XXII and XXIII to encourage your colleagues to get involved in this effort.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample Newsletter Article – How To Get Involved • Sample E-mail– How To Get Involved • Fact Sheets

IV. Fact Sheet: Pandemic Flu Basics

The threat of a flu pandemic is real. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other leading public health experts agree that it is not a question of IF a pandemic will occur, but WHEN it will occur. Preparing now will make a difference to you and your family during a pandemic.

What is a flu pandemic?

A flu (influenza) pandemic is an outbreak of a new flu virus that spreads around the world. The virus will spread easily from person to person, mostly through coughing and sneezing. Because the virus is new to people, everyone will be at risk of getting it.

What are the effects of a flu pandemic?

A flu pandemic will have a significant impact on society. A pandemic could result in a large number of people falling ill, including children and young adults, with many deaths. A pandemic could also require restrictions on travel, alterations to normal business operations, and dismissal of students from school to help slow the spread of infection.

The United States was overwhelmed by the 1918–1919 flu pandemic, which caused the deaths of at least 675,000 Americans. If a pandemic of similar severity occurred today, 90 million Americans could become ill, and approximately 2 million Americans could die.

In addition to the impact on human health, a flu pandemic presents a major threat to the world economy.

Why should we be concerned now?

CDC and other leading public health experts agree that the threat of a flu pandemic is real—it's not a question of IF one will happen, but WHEN it will happen. They are concerned now that the H5N1 virus (bird flu) is changing and could evolve into a pandemic flu virus.

Why should we prepare now?

It is impossible to predict when the next flu pandemic will occur or how severe it will be. Regardless of where a pandemic starts, everyone around the world will be at risk. If you do not take steps to prepare *before* a pandemic, it will be harder for you to follow important health advice *when* a pandemic occurs.

What are the symptoms of a pandemic flu infection?

The symptoms of a pandemic flu infection will likely be similar to those of seasonal flu, but they may last longer and be more severe.

Will there be a vaccine available for pandemic flu?

A vaccine for pandemic flu may not be available for 4-6 months after a pandemic starts, and even then, it may only be available in limited amounts.

Will we need to wear facemasks and respirators during a flu pandemic?

If used correctly, facemasks and respirators may help prevent some exposure to flu viruses. However, facemasks should be used along with other preventive measures, such as frequent hand washing.

How does pandemic flu differ from seasonal flu?

There are important differences between pandemic flu and seasonal flu.

- People will have little or no immunity to pandemic flu since it is a new virus to humans. With seasonal flu, people have some immunity built up from previous exposure to the viruses.
- Symptoms of pandemic flu may be more severe than seasonal flu.
- More people are likely to die from pandemic flu than from seasonal flu.
- Pandemic flu could happen at any time of the year. Seasonal flu usually occurs in the fall and winter in the United States.
- Vaccines for pandemic flu may not be available for 4-6 months after a pandemic starts. Vaccines for seasonal flu are available each year and are based on known flu strains.

How is the United States preparing for the next flu pandemic?

- The United States is working with other nations and the World Health Organization (WHO) to strengthen systems to detect and contain outbreaks of viruses that may cause a pandemic.
- The United States is improving vaccine technology in order to produce vaccines quickly and in large quantities.
- Preparedness information and checklists have been developed for different sectors of the economy and for individuals, families and communities, to help reduce the effects of a pandemic.
- The Government is providing funding, advice, and other support to States to assist with pandemic preparation.
- The Government is providing up-to-date information through www.pandemicflu.gov, the official Government Web site on this topic.
- The United States is stockpiling antiviral medicines, such as Tamiflu, to treat persons sick with pandemic flu.

How should individuals prepare?

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), CDC, and health experts ask individuals to stock up on foods and other necessities, improve health, and plan ahead for how they will care for themselves and family members during a flu pandemic.

Stock Up:

- Store nonperishable foods, bottled water, over-the-counter drugs, health supplies, and other necessities.
- HHS recommends having a 2-week supply, but stocking up can take place over time.
- These supplies can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages.

Improve Health:

- Wash your hands with soap and water frequently throughout the day.
- Cover your nose and mouth with your sleeve or a tissue when you cough or sneeze.

Plan Ahead:

- Plan for what you will do in the following cases:
 - if schools are dismissed
 - if you cannot go to work, or
 - if you or a family member becomes sick and needs care.

How do I learn more?

For more information, visit www.pandemicflu.gov

V. Fact Sheet: Community-Based Interventions

Community-based interventions are steps that are taken to help limit contact between people. When several steps are taken together, they will slow the spread of illness even more.

Some community-based interventions that may be effective in reducing contact between people in the event of a flu pandemic include the following:

- Dismissing students from schools and closing day-care centers
- Arranging alternate work options, such as working from home and staggered work schedules
- Canceling public gatherings (e.g., faith-based and community events)
- Avoiding public transportation
- Avoiding crowded places (e.g., concerts, sporting events, open markets, shopping malls).

When Community-Based Interventions May Be Necessary

There is no way to know when a pandemic will emerge. However, CDC and other leading public health experts say the threat of a pandemic is real. It is not a question of IF a pandemic will occur, but WHEN it will occur. Experts are concerned that the H5N1 virus (bird flu) is changing and could cause a human flu pandemic.

When a flu pandemic occurs, community-based interventions will be the best way individuals can reduce their exposure to the virus. In the event of a pandemic, Federal, state, and local agencies will provide guidance on the need for community-based interventions— but it is up to individuals to understand the role of these interventions.

Why Community-Based Interventions May Be Necessary

Some illnesses, including colds and flu, are easily spread from person to person. Community-based interventions may be necessary to keep your germs away from others or vice versa.

How Pandemic Flu Spreads

The virus will spread easily from person to person, mostly through coughing and sneezing. Because the virus is new to people, everyone will be at risk of getting it.

Preparing for Community-Based Interventions

- Store a 2-week supply of essential supplies at home – water, nonperishable foods, and other necessities.
- Improve your health habits now, such as washing your hands often and covering your nose and mouth with a tissue or your sleeve when you sneeze or cough.
- Find out what your elected officials, workplace, school, congregation, and other community groups are doing to prepare for a flu pandemic.

VI. Sample E-mail on Pandemic Flu Preparedness

You may have heard about the threat of a flu pandemic. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other leading health experts say it is not a question of IF a pandemic will occur, but WHEN it will occur.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), a flu pandemic can start anywhere, will spread quickly, will be widespread, and will affect multiple areas of the United States and other countries at the same time.

A flu pandemic can affect as much as 40 percent of the population during periods of peak illness. It is important to be aware that our Nation and our community will be affected in many ways, including widespread illness, disruptions to child care and transportation, and a possible shortage of supplies.

It is important for everyone to take action at home to prepare for a flu pandemic.

Here's what health experts recommend doing:

1. Be informed. Knowing the facts is the best preparation.
2. Stock up on food, medicines, and other essential supplies to make it easier to stay at home for an extended period of time. See the attached checklist for suggested items.
3. Take steps to limit the spread of germs. Wash your hands regularly, and cough or sneeze into a tissue or your sleeve.
4. Plan for what you might do if schools are dismissed, if you can't go to work, or if a family member needs care.

More information about protecting yourself and your family can be found at www.pandemicflu.gov.

Your health and safety is our number one priority, and we encourage you to prepare now before a pandemic occurs.



VII. Pandemic Flu Preparedness Checklist

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), CDC, and health experts ask individuals to stock up on foods and other necessities, improve health, and plan ahead for how they will care for themselves and family members during a flu pandemic.

Stock Up:

- Store nonperishable foods, bottled water, over-the-counter drugs, health supplies, and other necessities.
- HHS recommends having a 2-week supply, but stocking up can take place over time.
- These supplies can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages.

Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home: (For additional ideas and suggestions, consult your local Red Cross chapter).

Examples of food and nonperishables

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, and soups
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Peanut butter or nuts
- Dried fruit
- Crackers
- Canned juices
- Bottled water
- Canned or jarred baby food and formula
- Pet food
- Other nonperishable foods

Examples of medical, health, and emergency supplies

- Prescribed medical supplies, such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment
- Soap and water, or alcohol-based (60%–95%) hand wash
- Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Thermometer
- Antidiarrheal medication
- Vitamins
- Fluids with electrolytes
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Flashlight
- Batteries
- Portable radio
- Manual can opener





VIII. Sample E-mail and Checklist on Stocking Food and Supplies

Planning now will make it easier for you and your family during a pandemic. One simple action you can take to reduce the impact of a flu pandemic is to stock up on supplies. This will make it easier to stay at home for an extended period of time and will be helpful in the event that you are unable to get to a store (or if stores are out of supplies).

Store a 2-week supply of water and food. Store the following types of food:

- Nonperishable foods (items that will keep for a long time) that do not require refrigeration
- Easy-to-prepare foods
- Foods that you and your family regularly eat.

Examples include ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, vegetables, and soups; protein or fruit bars; and bottled water.

Also, it is important to remember other essential supplies that are often overlooked:

- Regular prescription drugs to ensure a continuous supply in your home
- Nonprescription drugs and other health supplies, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins
- Other essential supplies such as soap or alcohol-based (60%–95%) hand wash, cleaning supplies, a flashlight, batteries, toilet paper, and tissues.

Stocking personal emergency supplies is a good idea for any type of emergency, but especially for a pandemic, which can last for several months. One easy way to stock up is to simply add a few extra items to your grocery cart each time you shop.

Attached is a checklist of items to have on hand for an extended stay at home. Visit www.pandemicflu.gov for more information.



Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home: (For additional ideas and suggestions, consult your local Red Cross chapter).

Examples of food and nonperishables

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, and soups
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Peanut butter or nuts
- Dried fruit
- Crackers
- Canned juices
- Bottled water
- Canned or jarred baby food and formula
- Pet food
- Other nonperishable foods

Examples of medical, health, and emergency supplies

- Prescribed medical supplies, such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment
- Soap and water, or alcohol-based (60%–95%) hand wash
- Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Thermometer
- Antidiarrheal medication
- Vitamins
- Fluids with electrolytes
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Flashlight
- Batteries
- Portable radio
- Manual can opener
- Garbage bags
- Tissues, toilet paper, and disposable diapers

IX. Sample E-mail on Good Health Habits

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other leading health experts agree that the threat of a flu pandemic is real. Improving our health habits is a simple way to slow the spread of germs and helps us all start preparing now.

In an effort to keep everyone healthy, please improve health habits here at [insert your organization's name] and at home.

Here are simple steps that everyone should take.

1. Wash your hands throughout the day:
 - a. after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing;
 - b. after using the bathroom;
 - c. after being near someone who is ill;
 - d. after touching items handled by many people;
 - e. before and after eating or drinking; and
 - f. after handling garbage.
2. Never cough or sneeze into your bare hand. Use a tissue to avoid spreading germs to your hand and then to things you touch. Then, throw the tissue into the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve.
3. Keep your telephones, computers, keyboards, and other frequently touched machines or equipment clean.

These simple habits can help keep all of us healthy, and we encourage you to practice them here at [insert organization's name] and at home to minimize the spread of germs.

More information about protecting yourself and your family can be found at www.pandemicflu.gov.



X. Sample Newsletter Article on Pandemic Flu Preparedness

The Possibility of a Pandemic Is Real: Setting the Stage

You may already have heard the word “pandemic,” and you may be wondering what it really means. A flu (influenza) pandemic is an outbreak of a new flu virus that spreads around the world. The virus will spread easily from person to person, mostly through coughing and sneezing. Because the virus is new to people, everyone will be at risk of getting it.

Pandemics have occurred repeatedly throughout history. Few people alive today can recall the last major pandemic (1918–1919), and they typically regard the potential of such an event as impossible. This is not the case. In fact, scientists think the H5N1 virus, better known as avian (bird) flu, may be changing and could evolve into a pandemic flu virus.

During the next pandemic, many people will get sick and some will die. If a pandemic similar to the pandemic of 1918 were to happen today, health experts estimate that 90 million Americans could get sick, and nearly 2 million Americans could die. People will not be able to come to work because they are sick or are caring for someone who is sick. Services in our community, such as utilities, grocery stores, and public transportation, may be disrupted. Schools may be dismissed. Eventually there will be a vaccine; however it will take time to produce a large supply.

Preparing now will make it easier for you and your family during a pandemic. We encourage you to take some simple steps, such as stocking up on food, medicines, and other essential supplies; practicing good health habits; and making advance plans to minimize confusion and disruption in an emergency.

While no one can prevent a pandemic from happening, government, communities, and individuals can work together to prepare the nation for a flu pandemic and minimize its impact. It is up to every one of us to be involved in preparing our families.

We are currently in the process of making pandemic flu information readily available. In the meantime, information about protecting yourself and your family can be found at www.pandemicflu.gov.

This information is brought to you by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.





XI. Sample Newsletter Article on Stocking Food and Supplies

During a pandemic flu, you need to be ready to take care of yourself and your family. Preparing *now* will make it easier when one occurs.

One simple step you can take now is to stock supplies for an extended stay at home. During a pandemic, if you cannot get to a store or if stores are out of supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand. These can also be useful in other types of emergencies.

Store a 2-week supply of water and food. Store the following types of food:

- Nonperishable foods (those that will keep for a long time) that do not require refrigeration
- Easy-to-prepare foods
- Foods that you and your family regularly eat.

Examples include ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, vegetables and soups; protein or fruit bars; and bottled water.

Also, it is important to remember other necessities that are often overlooked:

- Regular prescription drugs to ensure a continuous supply in your home
- Nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, fever reducers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins
- Other essential supplies, such as soap or alcohol-based (60%–95%) hand wash, cleaning supplies, a flashlight, batteries, toilet paper, and tissues.

While no one can prevent a pandemic from happening, all levels of government, communities, individuals and families need to work together to take steps to prepare for a pandemic and minimize its impact.

See the attached supply checklist, or visit www.pandemicflu.gov for more information.

This information is brought to you by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home: (For additional ideas and suggestions, consult your local Red Cross chapter).

Examples of food and nonperishables

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, and soups
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Peanut butter or nuts
- Dried fruit
- Crackers
- Canned juices
- Bottled water
- Canned or jarred baby food and formula
- Pet food
- Other nonperishable foods

Examples of medical, health, and emergency supplies

- Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment
- Soap and water, and alcohol-based (60% to 95%) hand wash
- Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Thermometer
- Anti-diarrheal medication
- Vitamins
- Fluids with electrolytes
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Flashlight
- Batteries
- Portable radio
- Manual can opener
- Garbage bags
- Tissues, toilet paper, and disposable diapers

XII. Sample Newsletter Article on Good Health Habits

Help Keep Our Community Healthy!

As a member of our [Insert your organization's name] family, your health is important to all of us. In an effort to keep everyone healthy and limit the spread of germs, please practice the following simple, yet essential, good health habits.

Cough and Sneeze Etiquette

- Never cough or sneeze into your bare hand. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue to avoid spreading germs and then throw the tissue into the trash.
- Don't have a tissue handy? Cough or sneeze into the bend of your arm. It may feel strange at first, but soon it will come naturally.
- Wash your hands as soon as possible after coughing or sneezing. Use alcohol-based hand gel, if soap and water are not available.

Hand Washing Etiquette

- Always wash your hands:
 - after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing;
 - after touching your eyes, nose, or mouth;
 - after using the bathroom;
 - after being near someone who is ill;
 - after touching things handled by many people;
 - before and after eating or drinking; and
 - after handling garbage.
- Wash your hands thoroughly:
 - Wet your hands with warm running water.
 - Scrub between your fingers, on the backs of your hands, and under your nails for the amount of time it takes you to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice.
 - Dry your hands with paper towels or an electric hand dryer.
 - Use a paper towel when you turn off the tap.
- If soap and water aren't available, use alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers, keeping hands wet for 10-15 seconds.

Keep your telephones, computers, and other frequently touched machines or equipment clean and regularly disinfected.



These simple activities can have a big impact on the health of our community. We ask that you practice these good health habits, and we encourage you to implement them at home as well.

This information is brought to you by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

XIII. Sample “Chain” E-mail

The threat of a flu pandemic is real. It is not a question of IF it will occur, but of WHEN it will occur. You need to be ready to take care of yourself and your family during a flu pandemic.

Preparing *now* will make it easier for you and your family during a pandemic. Here are a few quick tips:

- Stock up on food, medicines, and supplies. You should have enough for 2 weeks!
- Improve your health habits. Sneeze and cough into a tissue or your sleeve and wash your hands with soap and water frequently.
- Have a plan. Know what you plan to do if schools are dismissed, if you can’t go to work, or if a member of your family becomes sick and needs care.

Now that you’re preparing, do you know if your friends and family are?

Help spread the word about flu pandemic preparation! Send this message to your friends and family.

For more information on how to get prepared, visit
<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/individual/checklist.html>.



XIV. Links to Resources

Comprehensive pandemic flu information:

Follow the link below to access a comprehensive and searchable Web site cataloging U.S. Government avian and pandemic flu information.

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/>

Community planning:

Follow the link below to find tools to assist your group in planning for a flu pandemic.

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/community/index.html>

State and local pandemic flu planning:

HHS and other Federal agencies provide funding, advice, and other support to States to assist with pandemic planning and preparation. Information on State and Federal planning and cooperation, including links to State pandemic plans, is available on this site.

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/whereyoulive/index.html>

Individual planning:

Follow the link below to find guides, checklists, and information sheets you can use to help prepare you and your family for a flu pandemic.

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/individual/index.html>

International pandemic flu preparedness:

Follow the link below to access World Health Organization information on pandemic flu, the importance of preparation, global surveillance, and global preparedness plans.

<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/pandemic/en/>

Workplace planning:

Follow the link below to find information about workplace planning for a pandemic.

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/workplaceplanning/index.html>

Health care planning:

Follow the link below to find information about health care provider planning for a pandemic.

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/healthcare/index.html>

XV. Cover Your Cough Poster

Stop the spread of germs that make you and others sick!

Cover your Cough



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze



or cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.



Put your used tissue in the waste basket.



You may be asked to put on a surgical mask to protect others.

Clean your Hands

after coughing or sneezing.



Wash hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds



or clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner.



XVI. Talking Points on Pandemic Flu Preparedness

Is the threat of pandemic flu real?

- The threat of a flu pandemic is real.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other leading public health experts say it is not a question of IF a pandemic will occur, but WHEN it will occur.
- Experts are concerned that the H5N1 virus (bird flu) is changing and could evolve into a pandemic flu virus.
- A flu pandemic could start anywhere and spread quickly.

Have there been flu pandemics in the past?

- There were three flu pandemics in the 20th century.
- The 1918–1919 flu pandemic overwhelmed the United States and the world, causing the deaths of at least 675,000 Americans and 50 million people worldwide.
- If a pandemic of similar severity occurred today, 90 million Americans could become ill, and nearly 2 million Americans could die.

Why do we need to prepare?

- Preparing *now* may make it easier for you and your family during a pandemic.
- During a pandemic, you may need or want to stay home for an extended period of time, and essential goods may be in short supply.
- If you do not prepare *before* a pandemic, it will be harder for you to follow important health advice *when* a pandemic occurs, such as staying home for longer periods of time.
- While the Government is working to improve vaccine development technology, there may not be a vaccine for 4-6 months once a pandemic starts.
- If everyone who *can* prepare *does* prepare, responders will be able to help more people, particularly those most in need, during a pandemic.
- The Government cannot do this alone. It's up to each of us to prepare at home, in the community, and at work.

How can we prepare?

- **Stock up** on food, medicines, and supplies to make it easier to stay at home:
 - Store nonperishable foods, water, and other necessities.
 - The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recommends having a 2-week supply, but stocking up can take place over time.
 - Stocking up can also be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages.
 - Have a supply of over-the-counter and prescription drugs and other health supplies.
- **Improve your health habits *now*** to lower your risk of infection and slow the spread of disease during a pandemic:
 - Germs from the flu are spread from person to person by droplets from coughs and sneezes that move through the air to people nearby, or they are spread by touching surfaces that contain flu droplets.
 - Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze.
 - Sneeze and cough into a tissue or sleeve. Sneezing into your bare hands can spread the germs.



- **Plan** for what you will do if the following happens:
 - if schools are dismissed,
 - if you can't go to work, or
 - if a family member becomes sick and needs care.

How can you learn more?

- Go to www.pandemicflu.gov.
- Visit [[insert your intranet address, if applicable](#)]

XVII. Food-Drive Poster Template

Come join

[Insert your organization name]

for a Food and Supplies Drive!

Help your community members in need.

Help fill our flu pandemic pantry!

Stocking up now will make it easier for our community during a flu pandemic and other emergencies.

Location:

Date(s):

Time(s):

SHOPPING LIST

Examples of food and nonperishables

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, and soups
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Peanut butter or nuts
- Dried fruit
- Crackers
- Canned juices
- Bottled water
- Canned or jarred baby food and formula
- Pet food
- Other nonperishable foods

Examples of medical, health, and emergency supplies

- Thermometer
- Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Fluids with electrolytes
- Soap and water, or alcohol-based (60%–95%) hand wash
- Vitamins
- Soap
- Manual can opener
- Tissues, toilet paper, and disposable diapers
- Garbage bags

You CAN make a difference!

[INSERT Address] [Phone number for more info] [Web site address if applicable]





XVIII. Food and Supplies Drive Checklist

Getting Started

Host a food and supplies drive to help stock necessities for those in need. Stocking up now will make it easier for your community during a flu pandemic, or other emergencies that may arise, when stores may be out of supplies or not accessible.

Set a Goal: Aim high! Set a pounds-per-person goal, or ask people to fill a certain number of bags.

Planning

- Select a coordinator to lead the drive.
- Appoint team captains to take charge of the promotion, kickoff events, and competitions.
- Find a corporate sponsor to store the supplies.
- Coordinate the delivery of supplies to the storage location.

Promote Your Drive and Get the Word Out

- Display posters in high-traffic areas.
- Publicize the drive in your publications and bulletins.
- Send e-mail messages and make announcements at meetings.
- Distribute food/supply collection bags, flyers, and donation envelopes.

Create Incentives

- Give prizes to or sponsor a party for the team that collects the most food/supplies.
- Add fun categories: the most tuna or peanut butter or the most enthusiastic collectors.

Make It Fun

- Build momentum with daily updates on your progress.
- Challenge other groups in your community.
- Hold a kickoff event: Make the admission price a bag of food or supplies.

Schedule Deliveries and Pickups: Offer to pick up items from community members if they are unable to bring them to the drive.

Celebrate Success: Have a post-drive party to congratulate yourselves on a job well done!



Sample Food and Supplies Shopping List: (For additional ideas and suggestions, consult your local Red Cross chapter).

Examples of food and nonperishables

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, and soups
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Peanut butter or nuts
- Dried fruit
- Crackers
- Canned juices
- Bottled water
- Canned or jarred baby food and formula
- Pet food
- Other nonperishable foods

Examples of medical, health, and emergency supplies

- Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment
- Soap and water, and alcohol-based (60% to 95%) hand wash
- Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Thermometer
- Anti-diarrheal medication
- Vitamins
- Fluids with electrolytes
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Flashlight
- Batteries
- Portable radio
- Manual can opener
- Garbage bags
- Tissues, toilet paper, and disposable diapers

XIX. Incentive Ideas

Some organizations already have incentive programs in place that work well. If your organization does, use them to encourage pandemic preparedness. Listed below are some additional ideas for encouraging pandemic preparedness.

- Provide food/refreshments for those who attend presentations on pandemic preparedness. For example, host a brown-bag lunch session and provide dessert.
- Start a monthly raffle, and enter employees who attend pandemic preparation presentations.
- Mail the “Fact Sheets” to employees’ homes or leave them in their office mailboxes, and reward those who complete the checklists.
- Present your employee(s) or members with a gold star or another prize as a reward for stocking up on foods and necessities at home.
- Recognize those who contribute ideas on how to encourage pandemic preparation.

XX. Sample E-mail Introducing Incentives

Hello,

The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are urging individuals to prepare for a flu pandemic. Health experts say it is not a question of IF a flu pandemic will happen, but WHEN it will happen. Individual preparation now, such as stocking up on necessities at home and improving health habits, will help when a pandemic strikes.

Our community cares about the health of all and would like to assist you in your effort to prepare yourself and your family. To help you kick off your preparation, we will [insert incentive idea].

For more information on how to prepare yourself and your family, see www.pandemicflu.gov

Thank you,

[Insert Name]



XXI. Talking Points – How to Get Your Peers Involved

Is the threat of a flu pandemic real?

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other leading public health experts say the threat of a pandemic is real.
- It is not a question of IF a flu pandemic will occur, but of WHEN it will occur.
- Experts are concerned that the H5N1 virus (bird flu) is changing and could evolve into a pandemic flu virus.

What is a flu pandemic?

- A flu (influenza) pandemic is an outbreak of a new flu virus that spreads around the world.
- The virus could spread easily from person to person, mostly through coughing and sneezing.
- Because the virus is new to people, everyone will be at risk of getting it.
- There were three flu pandemics in the 20th century.
- The 1918–1919 flu pandemic caused the deaths of at least 675,000 Americans and 50 million people worldwide.
- If a pandemic of similar severity occurred today, 90 million people could become ill and nearly 2 million Americans could die.

What does preparation mean?

- The Government is working to prepare the Nation for a pandemic.
- Communities and individuals also need to prepare.
- Personal preparedness is as easy as taking these simple steps:
 - Stocking up on necessities to make an extended stay at home easier
 - Improving hand washing and cough and sneeze etiquette to limit the spread of germs
 - Planning ahead in case schools are dismissed, you can't get to work, or you or a sick family member requires care.
- If people don't prepare now, a pandemic could produce these consequences:
 - Affect as much as 40% of the population
 - Result in failed businesses, lost jobs, and increased sickness and fatalities
 - Threaten the world economy.

What can you do as a community leader to help?

- Government alone can't prepare the Nation for a pandemic.
- This challenge requires leadership from those most respected and trusted in the community.
- As a community leader, you can
 - Share information on pandemic flu and preparedness with your group and
 - Encourage your group to get prepared.
- While no one can prevent a pandemic from happening, working together to prepare the Nation will help minimize its impact.

What is the “Take the Lead” initiative and how do I join?

- Government leaders and national and state-level organizations support your leadership in helping your group and their families prepare for a pandemic.
- You don’t need to be an expert on pandemic flu. You will be provided with resources that can be used to inform your group about pandemic flu.
- You will be given easy-to-use tools to encourage your group to prepare.
- You will be linked to other national and local preparedness efforts to learn from and share information.
- **Learn more, talk to me, or visit www.takethelead.pandemicflu.gov for more information.**

XXII. Sample Newsletter Article – How to Get Involved

Flu Pandemic Preparedness—Your Leadership Is Needed

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and other leading health experts agree that the threat of a flu pandemic is real and urge all levels of society to prepare. A flu (influenza) pandemic is an outbreak of a new flu virus that spreads around the world. The virus will spread easily from person to person, mostly through coughing and sneezing. Because the virus is new to people, everyone will be at risk of getting it.

Pandemics have occurred repeatedly throughout history. The most severe—the flu pandemic of 1918—was responsible for over 50 million deaths worldwide and affected roughly one-fifth of the world’s population. Now, experts are concerned that the H5N1 virus (bird flu) is changing and could cause the next human flu pandemic.

If a pandemic of similar severity to that of 1918 were to occur today, estimates are that 90 million Americans could become ill, and nearly 2 million could die. In addition to the dramatic human toll, a flu pandemic poses a major threat to the global economy.

The government alone cannot prepare the nation for a pandemic. Our position in the community gives us a unique, powerful “voice” for spreading the word about this threat. Our leadership is essential in encouraging our group’s “families” to prepare now to ensure that both they and their loved ones are ready to withstand a flu pandemic.

Preparation now, before an outbreak, could reduce sickness, death, and failed businesses. There are specific steps to help our group get prepared. Simple actions will help, such as encouraging our group to stock up on supplies to make it easier to stay at home, and to practice proper hand washing.

Government leaders at HHS and CDC are asking employers, faith-based leaders, community leaders, and medical professionals to use their influence to inform Americans of the threat a pandemic poses and to encourage preparedness. Resources are available to help you communicate this information quickly and accurately.

Help spread the word. Go to www.takethelead.pandemicflu.gov to learn more about pandemic preparedness and your role.

This information is brought to you by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



XXIII. Sample E-mail–How to Get Involved

Hello,

As you may already know, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and other leading health experts agree that the threat of a flu pandemic is real. They say that it is not a question of IF a flu pandemic will occur, but WHEN it will occur.

The United States was overwhelmed by the 1918–1919 flu pandemic, which caused the deaths of at least 675,000 Americans. If a flu pandemic of similar severity occurred today, 90 million Americans could become ill, and nearly 2 million could die.

Preparing now will make it easier for you and your family during a flu pandemic. However, the Government alone can't prepare the Nation for a flu pandemic. This challenge requires leadership from those individuals who are most trusted and respected in their communities—individuals like you. HHS has developed a kit to help leaders easily encourage preparation among our group.

With the help of the materials provided by HHS, our community is motivating its members to get prepared by sharing information and ideas. I encourage all of you do the same.

Visit www.takethelead.pandemicflu.gov to learn how you can prepare and how you can help those around you do the same. Start now by sharing information with your family, friends and colleagues. While no one can prevent a flu pandemic from happening, we can work together to prepare the nation to help minimize its impact.

Thank you,

[insert name]

