Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plan

Employees may be exposed to infectious diseases by coming into contact with the general public, customers, students, and coworkers in the course of performing their work duties. The risk also arises that workers may be exposed to an infectious disease in their own home or elsewhere in the community and preventative measures must be taken to prevent the spread of disease among workers and guests.

It is necessary to have a plan to protect our employees, students, and any individual that interacts with our business from exposure to infectious diseases. Individual risk factors are increased in those with older age, presence of chronic medical conditions, immunocompromising conditions, and pregnancy and such individuals should be informed of their increased risk. The Disease Response Coordinator shall be responsible for researching health and government authority guidelines, outlining procedures specific to any concerning outbreaks, training staff, and implementing protocols for best practices.

All employees and students shall be educated in the signs of communicable illness and be advised NOT to attend their work shift or participate in group classes in the event they have any of the following risk factors:

- Fever over 99.9
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Cough and/or shortness of breath
- Head or body aches
- Sore throat
- Recent exposure to anyone with a communicable disease

Employees shall be encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of communicable diseases, including the list of symptoms specific to recent area outbreaks if they suspect possible exposure. Employees are to report to the Disease Response Coordinator when they are sick or experiencing symptoms of specified diseases.

In the event of an outbreak of a highly contagious disease, employees shall follow federal, state, local, tribal, and/or territorial recommendations regarding the development of contingency plans for situations that may arise as a result of outbreaks. Examples of policies that may be implemented:

- Social distancing, staggered work shifts, downsizing operations, delivering services remotely, and other exposure-reducing measures.
- Conducting essential operations with a reduced workforce, including cross-training workers across different jobs in order to continue operations.
- Use of Personal Protective Equipment to prevent the spread of disease such as facial coverings, gloves, or gowns.

Basic Infection Prevention Measures

■ Frequent and thorough hand washing will be encouraged and signage appropriately placed; handwashing stations and alcohol-based sanitizer stations shall be provided throughout the premises for workers, customers, and worksite visitors.
■ Workers and students will be encouraged to stay home if they are sick.
■ Respiratory etiquette will be encouraged, including covering coughs and sneezes.
■ Tissues and trash receptacles shall be provided for staff, customers, and the public.
■ Contactless/touchless options will be made for payment, student check-in, retail delivery, etc.
■ Regular housekeeping practices shall be maintained, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other elements of the work environment. Cleaning chemicals shall be selected based on information from Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved disinfectant labels with claims against emerging viral pathogens. Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims are expected to be effective against harder to kill viruses. Employees shall follow the manufacturer's instructions for use of all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, PPE).

Policies and Procedures for Prompt Identification and Isolation of Sick People

Prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a critical step in protecting workers, customers, visitors, and others at a worksite. In the event that a staff member or guest shows signs of illness while on the premises, they shall be isolated to a separate enclosed room until they can be transported from the facility. All areas that the infected person were on premises will be immediately disinfected and all doors opened to ventilate the area. Additional disinfecting measures shall be followed according to CDC guidelines specific to the disease.

Workplace Flexibilities and Protections

■ Sick employees are encouraged to stay home and communicate their illness symptoms to the Disease Response Coordinator.
■ Sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and employees shall be made aware of these policies.
■ A healthcare provider's note is NOT required for employees who are sick with acute respiratory illness to validate their illness or to return to work, as healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely way. Return to work shall be based on CDC guidelines for lapsed time of last symptom. Employee shall track symptoms daily to report to Disease Response Coordinator before being allowed to return to work.
■ Employees shall be allowed to stay home to care for sick family members with no repercussion to employment status.

Workplace Controls

Occupational safety and health professionals use a framework called the "hierarchy of controls" to select ways of controlling workplace hazards. In other words, the best way to control a hazard is to systematically remove it from the workplace, rather than relying on workers to reduce their exposure. During an outbreak, when it may not be possible to eliminate the hazard, the most effective protection measures are (listed from most effective to least effective): engineering controls, administrative controls, safe work practices (a type of administrative control), and PPE. There are advantages and disadvantages to each type of control measure when considering the ease of implementation, effectiveness, and cost.

A. Engineering Controls

Engineering controls involve isolating employees from work related hazards. In workplaces where they are appropriate, these types of controls reduce exposure to hazards without relying on worker behavior and can be the most cost-effective solution to implement. Engineering controls may include:

- Installing high-efficiency air filters.
- Increasing ventilation rates in the work environment.
- Installing physical barriers, such as clear plastic sneeze guards.

B. Administrative Controls

Administrative controls require action by the worker or employer. Typically, administrative controls are changes in work policy or procedures to reduce or minimize exposure to a hazard.

- Encouraging sick workers to stay at home.
- Minimizing contact among workers, clients, and customers by replacing face-to-face meetings with virtual communications and implementing telework if feasible.
- Establishing alternating days or extra shifts that reduce the total number of employees in a facility at a given time, allowing them to maintain distance from one another while maintaining a full onsite work week.
- Developing emergency communications plans, including a forum for answering workers' concerns and internet-based communications, if feasible.
- Providing workers with up-to-date education and training on outbreak risk factors and protective behaviors (e.g., cough etiquette and care of PPE).

C. Safe Work Practices

Safe work practices are types of administrative controls that include procedures for safe and proper work used to reduce the duration, frequency, or intensity of exposure to a hazard.

- Providing resources and a work environment that promotes personal hygiene. For example, provide tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfectants, and disposable towels for workers to clean their work surfaces.
- Requiring regular hand washing or using of alcohol-based hand rubs. Workers should always wash hands when they are visibly soiled and after removing any PPE.
- Posting handwashing signs in restrooms.

D. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

While engineering and administrative controls are considered more effective in minimizing exposure to contagious disease, PPE may also be needed to prevent certain exposures. While correctly using PPE can help prevent some exposures, it should not take the place of other prevention strategies. Examples of PPE include: gloves, goggles, face shields, face masks, and respiratory protection, when appropriate. During an outbreak of an infectious disease, recommendations for PPE specific to occupations or job tasks may change depending on geographic location, updated risk assessments for workers, and information on PPE effectiveness in preventing the spread of disease. Employers should check the OSHA and CDC websites regularly for updates about recommended PPE.

All types of PPE must be:

- Selected based upon the hazard to the worker.
- Properly fitted and periodically refitted, as applicable (e.g., respirators)
- Consistently and properly worn when required.
- Regularly inspected, maintained, and replaced, as necessary.
- Properly removed, cleaned, and stored or disposed of, as applicable, to avoid contamination of self, others, or the environment.

Employers are obligated to provide their workers with PPE needed to keep them safe while performing their jobs. The types of PPE required during an outbreak will be based on the risk of being infected with the disease while working and job tasks that may lead to exposure.

Lower Exposure Risk jobs are those that do not require contact with people known to be, or suspected of being, infected with infectious disease nor frequent close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) the general public. Workers in this category have minimal occupational contact with the public and other coworkers.

Additional engineering controls are not recommended for workers in the lower exposure risk group. Employers should ensure that engineering controls, if any, used to protect workers from other job hazards continue to function as intended. Additional PPE is not recommended for workers in the lower exposure risk group. Workers should continue to use the PPE, if any, that they would ordinarily use for other job tasks.

Medium exposure risk jobs include those that require frequent and/or close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) other people who may be infectious disease carriers.

Customers shall be informed about symptoms of communicable diseases and sick customers will be asked to minimize contact with workers until healthy again, such as by posting signs about disease symptoms at entrances. When appropriate, customers' and the public's access to the worksite shall be limited, or restricted access to only certain workplace areas. Face-to-face contact shall be minimized (e.g., phone-based communication, telework). Workers with medium exposure risk may need to wear some form of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) specific to exposure for the workplace: combination of gloves, a gown, a face mask, and/or a face shield or goggles. PPE ensembles for workers in the medium exposure risk category will vary by work task, the results of the employer's hazard assessment, and the types of exposures workers have on the job. Disease Response Coordinator will determine and acquire PPE based on CDC and governing authority recommendations specific to a local outbreak.