

# **Pandemic Flu Planning**

## **Tips for Using the Planning Tool**

1. Departments should first identify essential services that must be continued. Key questions for a manager to answer include:
  - a. What are your essential services?
  - b. Which employees in your department and others are critical to performing those essential services?
  - c. Who is the back up for each of those employees to perform the essential service when the primary employee has a need to be out?
  - d. Do you have documented business procedures for a third employee to follow in the event the primary and secondary resources are not available?
2. Departments should use the MCG's Telework/Flextime Policy when determining which positions should be eligible for working from home. This includes an evaluation of whether or not the duties can effectively be performed from a remote location. When considering a position for working from home due to a pandemic flu situation, departments need to ensure that only those that can be performed from home are included for this purpose.
3. A position that is not normally included in a department's Telework or Flextime Plan may be included in eligibility to work from home during a pandemic when the position's duties can be performed from home. In other words departments have flexibility to include more positions than they normally would in planning for pandemic purposes.
4. In considering a position for the possibility of working from home, departments should consider internet connectivity requirements and systems to which the employee will need access to perform from home. If these are not available, working from home may not be an option. Also, priority may have to be given to employees whose positions perform more essential services and thus connectivity for those employees takes priority.
5. In determining positions that may work from home, departments must also consider which positions are critical for the department's essential services for business continuity. Employees in positions essential for business continuity should also be given first priority.
6. Inform your employees if you have designated them as essential personnel for business continuity purposes. HR can provide emergency contacts to departments via a query.
7. Verify that those employees have the necessary access to systems that would be required should they be needed to work during a pandemic closing.
8. Make sure that other employees know that they are not designated as essential personnel and therefore would need to use available sick or annual leave if they had a need to be absent unless the school has been closed due to a pandemic emergency in which case administrative leave may be an option.
9. Make sure employees would know who to contact or who they will hear from if MCG were to be closed but essential services need to go on.

10. Ensure that each employee has a designated back up so that essential services can be continued in the event of a pandemic.
11. Departments will also be expected to advise employees that they may self identify as being at risk if exposed to a co-worker or customer with pandemic flu. These individuals should be able to let their supervisor know that they will need to be considered for some sort of self-isolation, which may include working from home, working in a more secluded location, or working alternate hours, so as to not put them at risk. Supervisors may request such an employee to present a statement from his/her physician that he/she would be at risk if exposed. However, the supervisor may not require any specific information on the employee's condition. If an employee in such a situation is not in a position that is conducive to working from afar, that employee should be reminded of the availability of sick leave and/or annual leave.
12. According to material from the Centers for Disease Control, MCG may be expected to report to local public health officials if the number of absences among its employee base reaches 10%. Therefore, we will need departments to notify Human Resources daily of the number of employees absent who are citing flu like systems. The process will be as follows:
  - By 10:00 AM each day the primary departmental contact will be expected to send an email to the HUMANRESOURCES\_BENEFITS resource email account with the department name and the number of employees absent due to flu like symptoms. Departments will be instructed to not include employees on other forms of scheduled or unscheduled annual or sick leave. The reporting need only be in the form of the following example, email to HUMANRESOURCES\_BENEFITS, subject Flu Reporting, and then in the body of the email, "Human Resources – 2 absences"
  - Human Resources will record for the institution the total number of absences and determine if reporting to Jimmy Murray as the Pandemic Planning Coordinator is required.
  - Departments will be asked to report by budget unit similar to the Budget Prep process. Each unit that submits a budget as part of budget prep will also report their number of absences daily.
13. Managers may also want to review other relevant policies like Sick or Annual Leave for a refresher on permissible uses. Remind employees that they may want to ensure that they are saving sick leave if it becomes necessary to take it due to their own personal illness or the illness of a family member.