

APEC Pandemic Flu Planning Guide for SMEs

A flu (influenza) pandemic is an outbreak of a new flu virus that spreads around the world. Because it is a kind of flu that is new to people, most people will not be protected (immune) from it. A very bad flu pandemic will make people sick and many may die, and will also affect your business. We do not know yet how bad a new flu pandemic will be until it happens. There is no flu pandemic now – but people can plan now to protect themselves, their families, and their businesses.

Stay in Business

- Develop a plan for your business during a pandemic.
- Test, review and update your plan as new information becomes available.
- Work out how to run your business if many of your employees can not come to work.
- Find out if local schools plan to close during a pandemic and the effect that may have on your employees.
- Plan where to get essential business supplies if you cannot get them from your normal sources.
- Plan for changes in demand for your services and products.
- Put some extra cash aside for your business to use in an emergency.
- Think about how you will communicate with employees, suppliers, and other business partners before, during, and after a pandemic.
- Plan how you will work with employees, other business partners, other companies, and the government before, during, and after a flu pandemic.



Protect your People

There may be limited or no access to vaccines and antiviral medications during a pandemic. However, other actions can protect people:

- Share information that will help employees and their families learn about pandemic flu and be ready for pandemic flu.
- People who have flu can spread it to others. Ask employees to stay home if they are sick during a pandemic.
- Most people with the flu will be cared for at home. Prepare to assist employees to care for sick family members at home.
- Slow the spread of disease: cover your nose and mouth with a handkerchief or tissue when coughing or sneezing, and be sure to wash your hands.
- Encourage your employees to wash their hands often with soap and water especially after coughing or sneezing, before eating, drinking, smoking, or touching their face.
- Flu virus can spread easily when people are close together. Plan how you will help your employees avoid large groups, continue working, and keep people apart from each other at your business.
- Wear a mask if health officials tell you to.

Prepare at Home

During a flu pandemic you may not be able to get to a store or market. Your town may not be able to get water to your home or business.

Stock up on:

- extra food that will not spoil;
- food and supplies for children;
- clean water to last for at least 2 weeks or a water purification system;
- flashlight and batteries;
- soap and water to wash hands;
- thermometer;
- handkerchiefs/tissues;
- extra cash;
- key documents and identification (passport, government issued identification, health records, health insurance papers);
- supplies for animals.