

West Virginia University

Guidelines for Supervisors and Employees Regarding Swine-Origin Influenza A (H1N1) Prevention

During the flu season, WVU will be following national guidelines set by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other local and state guidelines as implemented by the Monongalia County Health Department or the state Department of Public Health.

The most important action employees can take to help control the spread of the flu is to stay home if you get sick. If you are ill with flu-like symptoms, the CDC recommends that individuals stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone -- except to get medical care or for other necessities. Be aware that those infected with seasonal and H1N1 flu may be able to infect others from one day before getting sick to 5-7 days after.

Here are a few simple steps recommended by the CDC that employees can follow to prevent the spread of influenza and increase the chances of staying healthy:

1. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
2. Wash your hands with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
3. Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
4. Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

According to the CDC, the signs and symptoms of the flu are: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. A number of people who have been infected with the H1N1 flu virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting.

What To Do If You Become Ill

The WVU Division of Human Resources is advising employees who become ill to follow their applicable departmental "call off" procedure in notifying their supervisor and reporting absences. Employees who have become ill with flu-like symptoms are reminded that communication through telephone or e-mail should be used, and in-person communications should be avoided where possible. Given the potential severity of this flu outbreak, managers and supervisors are urged to be as flexible as possible in granting leave if employees or their family members become ill with the flu virus.

The WVU Division of Human Resources has created a call-in line at (304) 293-H1N1 (4161) to answer supervisor and employee questions or refer employees to the appropriate University resources to obtain answers to questions regarding the influenza outbreak. This phone line will be answered during normal operating hours between 8:15 a.m. and 4:45 p.m. Monday through Friday.

To assist with the efforts to monitor this on-going situation, employees with flu-like symptoms are encouraged to complete, on a voluntary basis, the Influenza Survey found at <http://simpleforms.scripts.wvu.edu/src/Influenza/>.

Supervisors and employees are encouraged to reference the following websites for more information:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/general_info.htm

WV Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR)

<http://www.wvdhhr.org/H1N1SwineFluDocs.pdf>

CDC – H1N1 Flu: Information for Specific Groups

<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/groups.htm>

Managers and supervisors are strongly encouraged to post this notice in areas where employees do not have access to E-News and to discuss this information with employees in staff meetings. It is also recommended that managers and supervisors print the brochure provided by the DHHR at the web address provided above and distribute it to staff members who do not have access to a computer.