

LifeServe Pandemic Event Policy

Pandemic Definition

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak and can be caused by a variety of agents, including influenza and coronaviruses. With the increase in global transport and communications, as well as urbanization and overcrowded conditions, epidemics have the potential to quickly take hold around the world resulting in a pandemic. During a pandemic, transmission can be anticipated in the workplace not only from patients to workers in healthcare settings, but also among co-workers and between members of the general public and workers in other types of workplaces.

Overview

A pandemic event would greatly decrease LifeServe Blood Center's ability to collect, process, and distribute blood to our community. Planning for a pandemic is essential to providing a safe environment for employees, to help minimize the impact on our blood center upon arrival, and to plan for continued operation to supply the blood products for our community in a crisis.

Scope

This Pandemic Policy applies to all employees of the LifeServe Blood Center with oversight from the Senior Leadership Team consisting of the CEO, VP of Business Development, VP of Finance, Medical Directors, VP of Quality and Human Resources, VP of Operations, Director of Hospital Services, Director of Quality Assurance, Director of Purchasing, Director of Donor Services, Director of Information Services, and Director of Recruitment.

Safety and Handling

In the event of a pandemic event, all staff should follow necessary precautions such as good hand washing techniques, coughing or sneezing into the bend of your arm, and staying away from work following the recommendation times as stated by CDC and after symptoms are resolved to prevent the spread of the disease.

References and Guides

Reference and guide material used were from:

www.cdc.gov

www.flu.gov

www.hhs.gov

www.who.int/en

AABB Interorganizational Task Force

European Blood Alliance (EBA)

Blood Safety Depending on the infectious agent implicated in a pandemic, transmission of infection by a blood transfusion may be possible. The FDA, AABB or other blood agencies may require additional donor screening or testing to minimize the risk of transmission,. Also, the FDA and blood centers may take emergency steps to limit blood shortages – eg, temporary changes to requirements relating to donor deferral, donor qualification, infectious disease testing, cGMP regulations, etc. .

Blood Supply Blood centers are considered critical to health care infrastructure as well as the need for transportation and fuel priorities, communication support as well as other assistance needed to guarantee blood needs can be met in the event of a pandemic.

Staffing Issues Absenteeism among blood center staff may be at least proportional to local or regional attack rates. This will be due to illness, care for ill family and concern or public health messages encouraging social distancing. Work rules will be reviewed to define the circumstances of exposure, illness and recovery under which people will be required to remain out of, and allowed to return to, the workplace.

Education to Employees Staff must understand that basic hygienic measures must be followed at all times. In the case of viral infections, and in particular influenza, immunization and antiviral medications can reduce transmission of infection. Annual vaccinations for seasonal influenza are encouraged and provided to LifeServe employees at no cost during clinic times and based on the availability of the vaccine.

Donor Issues Donors must feel comfortable that measures taken in blood centers during a pandemic will provide them protection from unreasonable risks of infection while donating.

Communication Planning Strategies will be developed and implemented for communicating with staff, donors, drive sponsors, suppliers and the public about pandemic-related issues. This includes prospective education about pandemic responses, redundant methods to reach these audiences during a pandemic, and appropriately designed messages.

Glossary of Terms Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
World Health Organization (WHO)
American Association of Blood Banks (AABB)
Blood Center Exchange (BCx)
Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
LifeServe Blood Center (LS)

Initial Steps

When a pandemic event is declared within the US and when significant illness is experienced at the blood center, the following plan will be initiated.

Communication

- The District Health Department and Iowa Department of Public Health recommendations will be followed to avoid causing unnecessary panic. Joint communication efforts will be considered where possible.
 - Employee communication will be provided in a timely manner to provide continued updates to the staff. The mechanisms to be considered are mass email, telephone, posting of information, website.
 - Employees are regularly educated about the pandemic with handouts and information through the internal communication channels, such as the intranet, prior to a pandemic.
 - Employees are encouraged to acquire and maintain regular healthcare services, to acquire good handwashing and personal hygiene techniques. In the event of a flu pandemic, employees are encouraged to receive flu vaccinations when provided by the employer.
 - Educational communications will be provided regarding company policies for compensation and sick leave absences that may be unique to a pandemic.
 - Senior Leadership will meet weekly to discuss the overall approach for departmental planning. Each departmental Director will hold meetings with staff to share the updates.
 - If a department Director is out sick, then senior management will identify the departmental chain of command for each department. There may be a need to identify Directors covering more than one department during the illnesses.
 - A communication plan with media will be created to announce the collection site openings, mobiles, and hours of operation. Triggers will be established to initiate communications with the public, donors, and hospitals regarding the impact of the pandemic on donations and the blood supply.
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**Operational
Planning
Considerations:**

- Ensure that financial resources are identified
 - Notify testing and blood customers of any service delays
 - Identify if testing reference lab will need to temporarily handle new customers. Notification of FDA for emergency clearance to test for these sites.
 - Ensure calling trees are in place and available from homes
 - QA audits will need to be prioritized. Some activities may need to be suspended to continue to support critical operations.
 - Critical and non-critical tasks will be identified for laboratory functions. Critical tasks may include such items as testing lot release reviews, apheresis QC review, SOP changes for urgent changes, and any deviations in manufacturing or urgent manufacturing needs.
 - Consider creating a Variance package to FDA that may request any deviations that we can foresee with testing or testing algorithms.
 - Order a buffer of critical supplies when first announcement is made that a pandemic illness has been reported within any contiguous states.
 - Identify any cross training of staff that is necessary to perform critical activities.
 - When staff reduction approaches 50% departments must determine on duties encompassing product safety and availability issues and other critical control point activities.
 - Task assignments will be delegated primarily on availability and training. In order to accomplish the first priority tasks, it may be necessary to adjust or extend shifts/hours.
 - When the pandemic is more prevalent, a daily morning strategy meeting will be implemented to assess staffing, work-load, priorities, and assignment of daily tasks.
 - Initiate end of day meeting to determine anticipated staffing/hours scheduling for the next day and incomplete task rollover.
 - Identify need to have a separate Post Donation Illness call back voice mail to alleviate staff phone time.
 - Identify payroll schedule.
 - Medical Director, or designee, will develop recommendations for incubation periods and when staff can come back to work following an exposure or illness.
 - Consideration will be given to cleaning of incoming supply packaging to limit exposure.
 - HR and senior management will develop policy for PTO, Extended Illness Bank, unpaid leave, and other personnel issues during the time frame.
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**Donor Services
and
Recruitment
Departments
Implementation
Plan**

- Critical and non-critical activities will be defined so that activities can be prioritized as needed.
- There may be a need to stockpile supplies.
- Coordinate with Recruitment that specific blood mobiles are targeted.
- Get information to staff on how to protect themselves and their family. Identify need for face masks and/or goggles.
- Ensure sufficient resources in place to meet the blood needs. Identify space to isolate donors from others, preferably three feet.
- Identify person responsible to handle staff call-ins if regular person is ill.
- Collect as much blood as safety/quality allows.
- Allow telerecruitment staff to have a call list sent to their home and work from home.
- Target call lists of O Positive and O Negative.
- Donor Services staff may be required to pre-label blood bags. Ensure enough staff can register donors.

**Laboratory /
Product
Management
Implementation
Plan**

- Identify handling of quality control and maintenance if extended absenteeism being experienced.
 - Identify the spokesperson to approve customer communications regarding reference testing and turnaround times.
 - Identify if the right combination of trained staff is available to work. Staff may have to be scheduled according to accommodate the duties.
 - Additional staff may be trained to allow the batch release review to release products for labeling.
 - Take supply inventory and consider stockpiling supplies. Lot release will require vigilant monitoring.
 - The work volume will probably fluctuate based upon donations and also client donations. It may be necessary to take in testing or ship out testing due to staffing problems and location of pandemic flu in the country.
 - If necessary blood will be released only to patients that have an order to transfused blood. Hospitals will be notified that blood will not be shipped for patients without immediate need to transfuse.
 - If a request for blood is received from another blood center a decision for provision of service will be made by the Executive Team.
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Surveillance Once a pandemic has been identified, surveillance monitoring can be assigned for monitoring public health advisories (federal and state) and informing staff of when it is nearing our geographic area. See www.cdc.gov website.

Contacting Staff Each Director, or their designee, will be responsible to contact their departmental staff for scheduling work assignments.

A system is in place for a current list of telephone numbers for each departmental staff person.

There will be a need to establish regular communication chain within departments and interdepartmentally regarding the blood center status.

Donor Appointments Donors will be encouraged to schedule a blood donation appointment to curtail exposure to each other during the donation process. It may not be feasible to do this in all mobile sites; however, scheduling can be encouraged.

Pandemic Alert Levels

**WHO
Pandemic Alert
Levels**

The CDC has adopted the current alert levels based on the WHO global influenza preparedness plan reflected in the Table below.

Agent Characteristics	Risk to Humans	Alert Level
Inter-pandemic phase	Low risk of human cases	1
New virus in animals, no human cases	Higher risk of human cases	2
Pandemic Alert	No or very limited human to human transmission	3
New virus causes human cases	Evidence of increased human to human transmission	4
	Evidence of significant human to human transmission	5
Pandemic	Efficient and sustained human to human transmission	6

Pandemic Event Planning

Planning for a Pandemic

Pillars for strategy will be used to assist LifeServe Blood Center in preparedness planning of a Pandemic Event. The pillars used are based on the Federal Governments National Strategies.

Pillar One: Preparedness & Communication

Activities that should be taken before a pandemic to ensure preparedness, and the communication of roles and responsibilities to all levels of LifeServe.

Pillar Two: Surveillance and Detection

Providing situational awareness to ensure the earliest warning possible to protect the employees.

Pillar Three: Response and Containment

Actions to limit the spread of the outbreak and to assist with the impacts of a pandemic.

Pillar Four: Roles and Responsibilities

Defining the roles and responsibilities of employees in the event of a pandemic outbreak.

Action Steps to Prevent the Spread of a Pandemic Agent

Pillar One – Preparedness and Communication

Take the following steps to prepare and communicate to help keep staff from getting sick. An influenza virus is one of the most likely agents to be the cause of a pandemic and will be used as the prototype agent during the following discussion.

Step	Action
1	Practice good hand hygiene by washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol based hand cleaners are also effective.
2	Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder; not into your hands.
3	Use supplied PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) to help prevent exposure.
4	Clean work stations frequently to prevent further exposure, such as equipment, phones, work stations, and computers.
5	Avoid using other employees' equipment to prevent exposure.
6	Advise sick employees to stay at home or in their residence following the recommendations of the CDC or until they no longer have a fever (100 degrees) or signs of a fever (chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating). Note: this should be determined without the use of fever reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen).
7	Talk with your health care provider to find out if you should be vaccinated for seasonal flu and/or the pandemic strain of flu if available.
8	Encourage employees to receive the flu vaccines as they become available. LifeServe will provide access to the flu vaccine to all employees at no cost during clinic times provided by an outside source. Note: it is recommended that all employees receive available vaccinations, if at all possible.
9	Encourage donors to keep appointments if they are asymptomatic to assist with the current blood needs.

**Surveillance
and Detection –
Pillar Two**

During influenza pandemics, employees are advised to reduce the frequency, proximity and duration of contact with fellow employees and customers (social distancing) to minimize face-to-face contact and the risk of spreading infection.

Step	Action
1	Advise sick employees to stay at home or in their residence following the recommendations of the CDC or until they no longer have a fever (100 degrees) or signs of a fever (chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating). Note: this should be determined without the use of fever reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen).
2	Establish and appoint Management staff to maintain contact with sick employees by email or telephone to provide social distancing and reduce the spread of the flu virus.
3	Encourage employees at a higher risk of complications from flu to check with their health care provider about their options. Note: People at higher risk of flu complications who get sick will benefit from early treatment with antiviral medications.
4	Encourage employees to get vaccinated against seasonal flu and the pandemic flu vaccine as available.
5	Discourage employees and donors from attending work and sponsored blood drives until they are free of a fever or use of fever reducing medication for at least 24 hours.
6	Encourage employees to cover their mouths and noses with a tissue when they cough or sneeze by providing access to tissue and running water and soap or alcohol-based hand cleaners.
7	Establish regular schedules for frequent cleaning of surfaces and items that are more likely to have frequent hand contact such as desks, door knobs, keyboards, or counters.
8	Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces such as chairs, work items, and keyboards shared can be wiped down prior to each use.
9	Identify employees that could work from home, stagger shifts, and are able to work flexible hours.

Response and Containment – Pillar Three

If the flu conditions are more severe, consider the following steps and actions to limit the spread of the outbreak and to assist with the impacts of a pandemic:

Step	Action
1	Allow employees at higher risk for complications to stay home. Socially distancing employees that are sick from healthy individuals. These employees should make this decision in consultation with their health care provider.
2	Conduct active screening of employees when they arrive at work by asking employees about symptoms during the previous 24 hours. Symptoms such as fever, chills, cough or sore throat.
3	Find ways to increase social distancing in the workplace if possible. Provide space between work stations and cancel face to face meetings as to prevent the spread of the flu.
4	Find ways to increase social distances with donors by using every other donor bed, to leave beds open between donors, or at least place donor beds 6 feet apart.
5	Extend the time sick employees stay home or in their residence to at least 7 days, even if they feel better sooner. Note: Those employees who are still sick after 7 days should continue to stay home until at least 24 hours after symptoms have gone away.
6	If staff becomes ill at work, they will be promptly sent home. If the person is at a mobile, they should be removed from the work area of the mobile. A driver will be sent to pick up the sick employee when possible.
7	Identify the need to cancel business if flu is prevalent in schools, businesses, and/or communities to prevent the spread of the flu virus.
8	Reduce risk of infected persons entering the work sites. Post prominent notices at all entry points to advise staff and visitors not to enter if they have influenza symptoms.
9	Ensure adequate supplies of tissues, hand sanitizing gels, and cleaning supplies are available.
10	Establish cleaning protocols for shared work areas such as desktops, tables, telephones, door knobs and stair rails.
11	Postpone conferences and attempt to conduct internal meetings by telephone or email. Cancel any unnecessary travel.
12	When operationally allowed, shift changes should be set up to minimize staff exposure to each other. The avoiding of staff in the lunch/break room should be implemented.

Roles and Responsibilities of Employees – Pillar Four

Provide communication and current information to employees regarding their roles and responsibilities in the event of a pandemic. All Senior Management are expected to communicate and discuss the current information with their employees.

Role	Responsibility
CEO/ VP of Operations/ VP of Quality and Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and plan for operations with minimal staff. • Develop flexible leave policies to allow employees to stay home to care for sick family members or for children if schools dismiss or childcare programs close. • Appoint a contact person through email and phone to speak with ill employees. • Identify employees that are able to work from home or have the ability to be flexible with staggering shifts. • Provide text messaging and widgets on company website to update employees on current flu situations.
VP of Finance/Director of Purchasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with suppliers and purchasing to ensure the continuation to operate and provide service.
Medical Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaccine and antiviral priorities
VP of Quality and Human Resources / Director of Quality Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehearse command and control with post donation information and retention and documentation of PDI's. • Communicate with the AABB Task Force and the FDA regarding any changes in donor eligibility requirements.
VP of Operations/ VP of Quality and Human Resources/ Director of Quality Assurance/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post donation information protocols, messaging to staff on flu outbreaks • Communicate with local and regional emergency management and public health authorities to ensure timely access to surveillance information and awareness of blood-related issues. • Communication and education to staff on ways to prevent the spread of the flu virus. • Work with Supervisory staff on supply and inventory levels to maintain normal business production during pandemic.

VP of Business Development/ VP of Operations/ Director of Hospital Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital communications and blood product supply inventory. • Triage of potentially limited component inventories to those most likely to benefit from transfusion. • Work with Supervisory staff on supply and inventory levels to maintain normal business production during pandemic.
Director of Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Messaging donors, staff, drive sponsors, media and the public regarding safe donations, etc. • Develop strategies to encourage donors to make and keep appointments.
Director of Information Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable computer access to employee's residence to allow staff to work at home and provide social distancing.
VP of Quality and Human Resources/ VP of Operations/ Director of Donor Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and education to staff on ways to prevent the spread of the flu virus. • Work with Supervisory staff to assist with absenteeism and flexibility with work schedules due to decrease staffing.
Managers and Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical stock of supplies and inventory to maintain normal business production in the event of a pandemic. • Work with department heads to assist with absenteeism and flexibility with work schedules due to decrease staffing.
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay home if sick to prevent the spread of the flu virus. • Get vaccinated against seasonal flu, when vaccines are available. • Maintain healthy lifestyles. • Wash hands frequently and avoid touching your nose, mouth or eyes. • Provide alternate numbers to employer so they have a mechanism of reaching employees during a pandemic event.

**Educational
Signs to Donors
and Staff**

Signs should be posted in areas, as they are available and updated by CDC, for staff and donors to stay educated regarding the signs and symptoms of the flu and ways to prevent the spread of the flu virus. Signs posted are the following but not limited to:

- Stop! Do you Feel Sick?
 - Cover your Cough
 - Where to Wash
 - 8 Ways You Can Stay Healthy at Work
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Do you feel sick?



**You may have the flu if you have fever or chills
AND
a cough or sore throat**

You may also have a runny nose, body aches,
a headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting

**If you think you have the flu,
tell your supervisor and stay home,
except to get medical care.**

For more information visit www.flu.gov
or call 1 (800) CDC-INFO (232-4636)



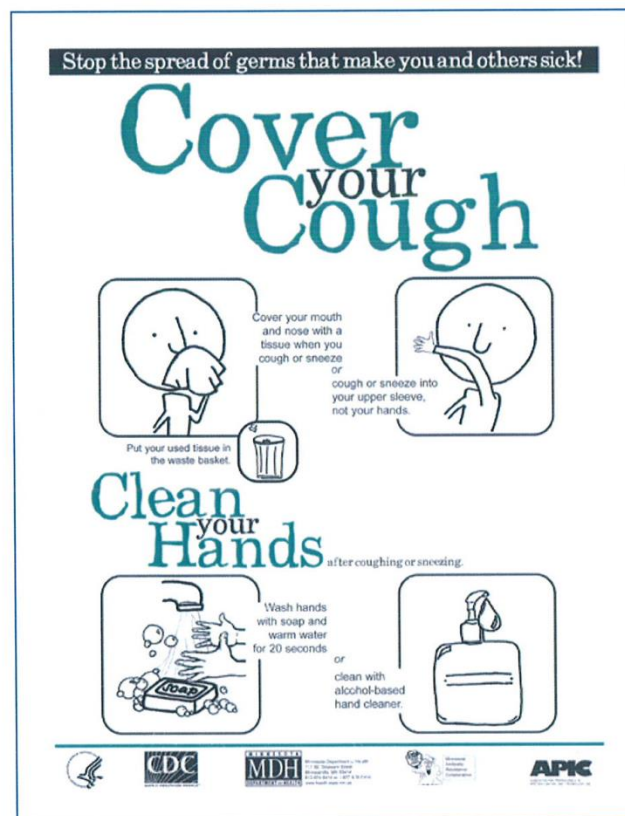
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Additional Communication Resources for Businesses to Share with Employees

CDC Posters about Flu Prevention for Businesses

Use the following posters and fact sheets in your offices, hallways, and around the buildings to educate employees about ways to prevent the spread of flu.

www.cdc.gov/germstopper/materials.htm (available in different sizes and languages)



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Other Posters about Flu Prevention for Businesses

www.publichealth.va.gov/flu/materials (includes other posters, brochures, buttons, stickers, and other materials)



8 Ways You Can Stay Healthy at Work

You can protect yourself and others by following these key action steps.

1. **Maintain a healthy lifestyle** through rest, diet, exercise, and relaxation.
2. **Wash your hands frequently** with soap and water for 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand cleaner if soap and water are not available. Be sure to wash your hands after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose.
3. **Avoid touching your nose, mouth, and eyes.** Germs spread this way.
4. **Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue,** or cough and sneeze into your elbow. Dispose of tissues in no-touch trash receptacles.
5. **Keep frequently touched common surfaces clean,** such as telephones, computer keyboards, doorknobs, etc.
6. **Do not use other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment.** If you need to use a co-worker's phone, desk, or other equipment, clean it first.
7. **Don't spread the flu! If you are sick with flu-like illness, stay home.** Symptoms of flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) or chills *and* cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting. CDC recommends that sick workers stay home if they are sick with flu-like illness until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines.
8. **Get vaccinated against seasonal flu, when vaccine is available in your area.** If you are at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 flu complications you should receive the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine when it becomes available. People at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 flu complications include pregnant women and people with chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, heart disease, or diabetes). For more information about priority groups for vaccination, visit www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu/vaccination/acip.htm

For more information:

- ▶ Visit: www.flu.gov
- ▶ Contact CDC 24 Hours/Every Day
 - 1 (800) CDC-INFO (232-4636)
 - TTY: (888) 232-6348
 - cdcinfo@cdc.gov



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