

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA ALERT SYSTEM

**SIX PHASES ESTABLISHED BY
THE WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION**

Inter-pandemic Phase New virus in animals, no human cases	Low risk of human cases	1
	Higher risk of human cases	2
Pandemic Alert New virus, causes human cases	No, or very limited, human-to-human transmission	3
	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 INFLUENZA ALERT SYSTEM

Almost daily we hear about the outbreak of avian flu and how it is spreading to countries around the world. While the avian flu is not yet in the United States, it may arrive here in the near future. Experts at the World Health Organization and elsewhere believe that the world is now closer to another influenza pandemic than at any time since 1968, when the last of the previous century's three pandemics occurred. It is impossible to anticipate when the next pandemic might happen or how severe its consequences might be.

Local education agencies play an integral role in protecting the health and safety of the districts' staff, students and their families. Because of the complicated issues that schools would face should a true pandemic occur, it is imperative that we plan and prepare now. It is only a matter of time before the next pandemic arises, so by developing a strong response plan now, we are prepared for what will inevitably happen in the future.

The World Health Organization uses a series of six phases of pandemic alert as a system for informing the world of the seriousness of the threat and of the need to launch progressively more intense preparedness activities. The designation of phases, including decisions on when to move from one phase to another, is made by the Director-General of the World Health Organization.

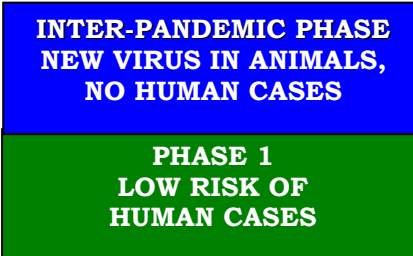
Changes from one phase to another are triggered by several factors, which include the epidemiological behavior of the disease and the characteristics of circulating viruses. It is important for school officials to designate someone to monitor influenza surveillance systems and help gather and disseminate information as needed to staff, students, and parents.

To help school officials address the different phases of this alert system, the following set of guidelines for schools has been developed. These are general actions for schools to take that coincide with each color-coded pandemic phase level. In the event that the World Health Organization changes from one phase to another, school districts may or may not need to take specific protective actions. These are general guidelines and you can add or delete as you feel appropriate.

PHASES OF PANDEMIC INFLUENZA AND

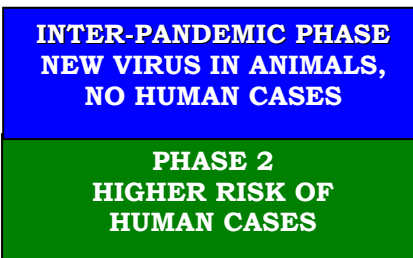
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

Each of the following pandemic influenza phases represents an increasing risk to the general population. **Each school district is responsible for developing and implementing appropriate and specific pandemic response plans.**



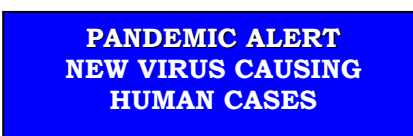
This phase is declared when there is a low risk of human cases. The following actions should be considered:

- Implement a sound health and hygiene program for all staff and students to follow.
- Develop specific pandemic response procedures and add to existing emergency plans.
- Conduct routine inventories of first aid and medical supplies.
- Verify that illnesses are properly monitored at each school site.
- Increase pandemic influenza awareness and strengthen training for school staff.



This phase is declared when there is a higher risk of human cases. The following actions should be considered:

- Review and update school emergency plans; include pandemic response procedures.
- Review current communication plan to notify parents in times of emergency.
- Provide staff members and parents/guardians with any information that would strengthen a schools ability to respond to a pandemic.
- Promote the importance of reducing the spread of illness; remind parents to keep sick children at home and remind staff members to stay home when they are sick.



**PHASE 3
NO OR VERY LIMITED
HUMAN-TO-HUMAN
TRANSMISSION**

This phase is declared when there is no, or very limited transmission among humans, but the virus continues to spread rapidly among animals. The following actions should be considered in addition to any specific plans that are developed and implemented:

- Communicate the current phase level to all staff members and train them in pandemic response plans as they are developed.
- Identify a person in your agency who will monitor government sources for warnings.
- Gather and disseminate pertinent information as it becomes available.
- Establish an internal planning team and develop specific pandemic response procedures.
- Identify who will make the decision to close schools and at what point that decision will be made.
- Begin to consider the possibility of school closures and that staff members may not be able to report to work.
- Continue to make sure that proper health and hygiene procedures are being followed by staff and students.
- Review whether the precise characteristics of the pandemic threat require the refinement of any current emergency plans.

**PANDEMIC ALERT
NEW VIRUS CAUSING
HUMAN CASES**

**PHASE 4
EVIDENCE OF INCREASED
HUMAN-TO-HUMAN
TRANSMISSION**

This phase is declared when there is evidence of an increased number of human to human transmissions. The following actions should be considered:

- Communicate the increase in phase level to all staff members.
- Monitor influenza surveillance systems for the current characterization of the virus.
- Identify the need to implement any recommended social distancing measures.
- Encourage students and staff members who become ill after traveling to affected countries to see their health care provider.
- Report an increase in student and staff illness to your local Dept. of Public Health Services.

**PANDEMIC ALERT
NEW VIRUS CAUSING
HUMAN CASES**

**PHASE 5
EVIDENCE OF SIGNIFICANT
HUMAN-TO-HUMAN
TRANSMISSION**

This phase is declared when there is significant transmission among humans. The following actions should be considered in addition to any specific recommendations from local and state health officials:

- Communicate the increase in phase level to all staff members and parents.
- Monitor influenza surveillance systems for the current characterization of the virus.
- Identify the need to implement any additional social distancing measures.
- Evaluate your chain of command and identify key decision makers.
- Assess school events and take additional precautions, if necessary.
- Consider assigning mental health counselors for students and staff members, if needed.
- Discuss student's fears concerning a pandemic and offer available resources.

PANDEMIC

**PHASE 6
EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINED
HUMAN-TO-HUMAN
TRANSMISSION**

This phase indicates the presence of a true pandemic. In conjunction with local and state health officials, determine the appropriate response with these considerations in mind:

- Communicate the increase in phase level to all staff members.
- Review the districts chain of command ensuring that a decision maker is available at all times.
- Gather and provide pertinent information to students, staff and parents.
- Assess the pandemic condition on a regular basis and evaluate whether any further protective measures are needed.
- Evaluate recommendations from health officials for social distancing and quarantine and be prepared to respond accordingly.
- Consider canceling special events.
- Mobilize Crisis Response Teams to meet the mental health needs of students and staff members, if needed.

ADDITIONAL LINKS AND RESOURCES

Official US Government Website

www.pandemicflu.gov

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/gen-info/index.htm

Center for Disease Control - Respiratory Hygiene Etiquette

www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/pdf/resphygiene.pdf

School District (K-12) Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist

www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/pdf/schoolchecklist.pdf

World Health Organization – Avian Influenza Information

www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en

World Health Organization's Human Case Count

www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/country/en

Precautions for Travel to Countries Reporting H5N1

www.cdc.gov/travel/other/avian_influenza_se_asia_2005.htm