

## H1N1 INFORMATION FOR SUPERVISORS

In light of H1N1, this information is provided as a guide for supervisors to communicate with and manage staff and allow for business continuity during flu season. Updates will be provided as additional information becomes available. *Supervisors are strongly encouraged to contact Human Resources to identify solutions to unique situations that may not be covered here.*

Visit the UWT flu website to find the latest information on the flu and steps UWT is taking to keep its community healthy: <http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/issues/h1n1/>.

### Prevention

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#### Vaccinations

Encourage staff to get a seasonal flu shot as soon as possible. Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department recommends a 28-day waiting period between the seasonal flu shot and the H1N1 shot, so getting your seasonal flu shot now allows you to be ready when the H1N1 vaccine becomes available in mid-October.

All health insurance plans available to benefits-eligible faculty and staff cover seasonal flu shots and will cover the H1N1 vaccine once it is available.

We are finalizing details for a free immunization clinic at UWT in mid-October for benefits-eligible staff, faculty and graduate students covered by GAIP. No appointments are necessary, but employees will need their health insurance card and photo ID. A UWTline message will be sent out once this is scheduled.

Seasonal flu vaccine is also widely available now in the community, at pharmacies, big box warehouse stores, and some supermarkets.

#### Preventative Measures

- If sneezing or coughing, cover nose and mouth with tissue and throw it away
- Frequent hand washing with soap and water
- Have hand sanitizer available to staff and at all counters where there is regular contact with students or the public.
- Print and post flu safety flyers: <http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/materials.htm>

For additional prevention information, see: <http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/issues/h1n1/symptoms.cfm>

### Attendance and Absences

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Refer employees to UWHR's Guide for Staff during Flu Season so that they understand what the University is asking each employee to do in order to keep our community healthy during what is expected to be a difficult flu season: <http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/polproc/flu>

Supervisors have the authority to approve leave situations on a case-by-case basis and involve HR as needed. Requests for leave should continue to be approved through the department's regular procedures.

#### Unscheduled Absences

Each supervisor is strongly encouraged to communicate and train employees on the call-in procedures for their respective units, so that employees understand their responsibility in reporting unscheduled absences. All employees are responsible for adhering to these requirements on a daily basis.

*Employees who are experiencing flu or flu-like symptoms are asked to stay at home until fever free for 24 hours, without fever reduction medications, to avoid spreading illness to others, including those who are in high-risk categories. Average duration of incapacity for the flu, including H1N1, is approximately three (3) to five (5) days. (Please note that all forms of the flu may impact employees differently both in severity and duration.)*

An employee may also require leave to care for a sick family member, relative, or household member.

### Doctor's Certification

In accordance with current advice from public health authorities, medical certifications will NOT be required for flu or flu-like illness unless there are special circumstances. Supervisors who believe they have special reason to be concerned about an employee's situation should contact HR.

FMLA: In most situations the flu does not meet the definition of a serious health condition under the FMLA unless complications develop. If an employee or family-member requires inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider for flu, the FMLA may apply. A doctor's certification may be requested to determine an employee's eligibility for FMLA. Please contact HR for assistance in these situations.

Learn more about UW's Family Medical Leave and Family Care Act policies:

<http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/roles/mgr/leavetoday/fmla/index.html>

### Use of Leave

Staff may use the following types of accrued leave in the event that they are unable to work due to their own illness or need to care for an ill family member:

- Sick Leave
- Personal Holiday (in full-day increments)
- Annual Leave
- Discretionary Leave
- Compensatory Time

If an employee does not have enough accrued leave to cover time away from work, they should be put in Leave Without Pay status until they return to work. If an employee has Leave Without Pay, please contact the Payroll Coordinator, Danelle Dauron, immediately to avoid overpayment.

## **Business Continuity**

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Consider the positions and projects within your workgroup(s) to assess which tasks can be completed from home. Ensure that your employees are familiar with the available tools (email access, remote desktop, how to forward their phone, etc.) so that temporary telework arrangements can be set up quickly and easily.

Take time in team meetings to discuss the challenges this flu season is likely to pose for your unit and ask employees to think about cross-training and what kind of support may be needed in a situation where several team members could be unexpectedly out ill for several days and at the same time.

Supervisors are encouraged to be prepared for maximum flexibility during this period of time. This flexibility may include cross-training, flexible core working hours, telework, etc. Supervisors should review each position individually and as a part of the team to determine what flexibility may be achieved. Some positions may not be open to as much flexibility as others, based on the type of work performed. *Supervisors are encouraged to work with HR to evaluate alternative work options.*

### Cross-Training

Consider core and essential functions as well as key positions that carry out these responsibilities. If these individuals are not able to report to work, who in the organization is trained to fill in during these temporary periods for operational continuity? Review staffing and backup needs. This is also an opportunity for providing employees with growth and training.

### Temporary Flexible Core Working Hours / Temporary Telework

When establishing an alternative work option, always establish a clear, common understanding of the terms of arrangement by putting it in writing. Share a copy with the employee and place a copy in the employee's department file. The written agreement should state that this arrangement is temporary, and that the supervisor retains the right to revise or revoke the agreement, based on departmental work requirements or business need. *Supervisors are encouraged to work with HR to discuss written agreements.*

If a flexible work schedule is not an option, based on the analysis of impact on department operations and/or the employee's work record in your department, be prepared to explain the rationale to the employee.

The following list is a suggested impact-analysis framework when considering an alternative work arrangement within your unit:

- Determine the effect on your department's goals and commitments, including costs, customer service, safety, and security
- Determine if the work or position is conducive to either flexible work or telework, based on the business operations, hours of work, work with clients and other employees in order to be effective
- Determine whether equipment will need to be purchased, its cost, and availability
- Determine whether work will involve use of the employee's home computer: evaluate your unit's system security requirements so that the University's information security/computing resources and confidential data are not at risk
- Consider if only a limited number of people/positions in one work group can have a flexible work arrangement in order to manage the work
- Determine how to evaluate the effectiveness of an alternative work option
- Consider whether the employee's past productivity and overall work record demonstrates the ability to fulfill the terms of the alternative work option
- If the employee is covered by a union contract, review contract and discuss with HR
- If the employee is overtime-eligible, discuss core work week calculations to determine appropriate regular hours worked (and/or eligibility for overtime) with HR

Additional Info for business continuity

Administrative Tool Kit: <http://www.washington.edu/itconnect/emergency/abct/>

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**For additional information:**

UW flu information website: <http://depts.washington.edu/chsweb/h1n1/>

General flu information: <http://flu.gov/index.html>

Centers for Disease Control (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/qa.htm>

CDC Guidance for Business and Employers: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/business/guidance/>

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**Summary Talking Points for Discussion with Staff:**

- Vaccinations and prevention
- Sick leave reporting procedures for unit
- UWHR's Guide for Staff during Flu Season  
<http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/polproc/flu>
- Business Continuity Options (cross-training, temporary alternate schedules, temporary telework, etc.)