

Viral outbreaks of diseases like Influenza, Coronavirus, SARS, or the Enterovirus Can spread quickly with devastating consequences. Awareness is crucial in protecting yourself, your family, and your employees and ensuring your organization continues operations.

VIRAL OUTBREAK AWARENESS

CORONAVIRUS

Reported illnesses have ranged from infected people with little to no symptoms to people being severely ill. Reported symptoms include fever, cough and shortness of breath. The CDC believes symptoms of Coronavirus may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 after exposure. Thorough handwashing and use of hand sanitizer and limiting contact with potential contaminated items is considered best practice.

SARS AND ENTEROVIRUS 68 (EV68/EV-D68/HEV68)

Other respiratory illnesses, such as SARS or EV-068, are spread when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or touches a surface that is touched by someone else, and are more likely to spread throughout a workplace.

SEASONAL FLU

Seasonal influenza is more common and widespread. Flu season typically begins when cold weather strikes and can last into spring. For many people, the seasonal flu is a mild illness, but for others it can result in serious infections or hospitalization. Influenza is also spread through coughing, sneezing and talking, however, there are vaccines available. Health professionals recommend a yearly seasonal flu vaccine.

In addition to seasonal flu there are other types of influenza including swine flu and avian flu. Travelers should use increased caution and preventative measures when visiting locations where flu outbreaks are occurring.



WHILE THERE ARE CURRENTLY NO VACCINES TO PREVENT EITHER OF THESE PARTICULAR ILLNESSES, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PREVENTIVE ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE.

PREVENTION STRATEGIES FOR EMPLOYEES

- > Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- > **Avoid** touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- > **Avoid** close contact with those who are ill.
- > Clean and disinfect common areas and frequently touched surfaces.
- > Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve, not your hand.
- > **Stay home when you are sick.**
- > **Avoid** traveling to areas affected by a viral outbreak.
- > Know the symptoms and consult your doctor if you have them (or if you have contact with someone who does).

PROTECT EMPLOYEES AND PLAN FOR BUSINESS CONTINUITY

- > Develop a Pandemic/Epidemic Plan as referenced in by local department of health agencies.
- > Ensure employees are trained in the details of the plan such as how to identify hazardous conditions related to the epidemic or other health and safety concerns, how to mitigate these concerns, and communicate questions or problems to leadership.
- > Preserve vital records off site.
- > Establish a continuity plan for employee absenteeism and consider flexible schedules or telecommuting.
- > Utilize teleconferencing or online meetings in place of large, in-person gatherings.
- > Cancel non-essential travel to areas affected by an outbreak.
- > Compile contact info for employees' emergency contacts, clients, the public health department, and police/fire/paramedics.
- > Have masks, gloves, and cleaning agents available at your site.
- > Monitor news coverage and public health information.
- > **Encourage employees who are ill to stay out of the workplace.**
- > Monitor news and public health information.

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