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## MERCY COLLEGE OF OHIO

### PANDEMIC PLAN

#### INTRODUCTION

The Mercy College of Ohio (MCO) Pandemic Plan was developed as a companion document to the College's Emergency Response Plan. As the threat of pandemic viruses has become better understood each community has a role to play in the prevention and response to an outbreak.

The MCO community has an obligation to be responsive as with any community of interest, given the social nature of a college campus.

The plan includes, planning and coordination, roles and responsibilities, continuity of student learning, and crisis communication as they pertain to the operations of MCO should a pandemic emergency occur.

As a member of the MCO Community we ask that you take the time to familiarize yourself with the contents of this plan. It will offer insight on what you should do to prevent being a victim of a pandemic virus and your role in reducing the effects of a pandemic crisis to the college.

As more information and response strategies develop and become available the Pandemic Plan for MCO will be updated. Should you have questions or concerns related to the information shared with in this document please contact the Incident Commander (IC).

#### PLANNING AND COORDINATION

This document has been prepared to provide guidelines and appropriate actions to be taken in preparation for and response to a pandemic. Pandemic preparedness will help MCO lessen the damaging effects of a pandemic on the college and those of our partners.

*What is a pandemic?*

In order for the College to prepare and respond to a pandemic it must have an understanding of what is meant by "pandemic." A pandemic has the following characteristics:

- It is a global disease outbreak
- Occurs when a new virus emerges

- People have little or no immunity
- There is no vaccine
- It spreads easily from person to person
- It causes serious illness
- It can spread across the country and around the world quickly
- No matter where it starts everyone around the world is at threat

*How does it spread?*

- It spreads by inhalation of airborne droplets released by the coughing and sneezing of an infected person.
- By touching contaminated objects or people, then touching your face
- Please note that infected people will spread the virus for several days before they show symptoms.

### **The Phases of a Pandemic**

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines a pandemic as consisting of six phases.

#### Period 1: Interpandemic Period

*Phase 1:* No new virus subtypes have been detected in humans. A virus subtype that has caused infection may be present in animals. If present in animals, the risk of human infection or disease is considered to be low.

*Phase 2:* No new virus subtypes have been detected in humans. However, a circulating animal influenza subtype poses a substantial risk of human disease.

#### Period 2: Pandemic Alert Period

*Phase 3:* Human Infection(s) with a new subtype, but no human-to-human spread, or at most rare instances of spread to a close contact.

*Phase 4:* Small cluster(s) with limited human-to-human transmission but spread is highly localized, suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans.

*Phase 5:* Larger cluster(s) but human-to-human spread is still localized, suggesting that the virus is becoming increasingly better adapted to humans, but may not yet be fully transmissible (substantial pandemic risk).

### Period 3: Pandemic Period

*Phase 6: Pandemic:* increased and sustained transmission in the general population.

*Source:* World Health Organization (WHO)

### **MCO Preparedness Plan**

MCO's action plan is focused on the threat posed by viruses that have passed Phase 3 and beyond. Since MCO's actions are based on the threat to each individual site, the trigger points for escalating action are based on the geographical proximity of demonstrated human-to-human transmission to each MCO site:

#### Trigger Point 1: Demonstrated human-to-human transmission

-Significant human-to-human transmission beyond immediate family.

#### Trigger Point 2: Human-to-human transmission cases in North America

-Human-to-human transmission cases within 300 miles (500 km) of an MCO site.

It must be emphasized that the Trigger Points could be reached in rapid succession and with little time allowed for implementation of these plans. MCO has identified an Incident Commander that will be responsible for monitoring and assessing various risks and threats and the potential impact on MCO. The Incident Commander will be responsible for seeing that the Pandemic Plan is consistently re-evaluated and implemented, when needed, to protect against threats to the livelihood of the organization, the ability to service all stakeholder groups. The MCO Executive Staff will serve as the Pandemic Committee and be responsible for the communication, education and implementation of pandemic information and plans.

- Vice President of Student Affairs (Incident Commander) will maintain the list of current team members and associated contact information.
  - Team 1: Planning and Coordination
  - Team 2: Roles and Responsibilities
  - Team 3: Continuity of Instruction
  - Team 4: Crisis Communication

*Trigger Point 1*

1. Provide communication and educational awareness programs to increase employee awareness of the current threat and the steps they can take and MCO is taking to prepare for it.
  - a. Provide information on the current threat.
  - b. Communicate suggested practices to control the spread, such as effective hygiene, social distancing and other preventative measures.
  - c. Provide information on the signs and symptoms of the current threat.
  - d. Provide instructions on how to respond if you or a coworker becomes sick at work.
2. Provide on-going employee training on proper cleaning techniques for infection control.
  - a. Use appropriate chemicals – select chemicals that are effective against the current threat.
  - b. Use chemicals properly.
  - c. Pre-clean heavily soiled areas according to manufacturer's directions.
  - d. Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for chemicals and infection control purposes.
  - e. Appropriate supplies and equipment to prevent cross contamination.
3. Provide information to stakeholders (faculty, staff, and students) that will help them prepare.
  - a. Chemical information.
  - b. Supply and equipment information.
  - c. Hands free or touchless dispensing.
  - d. Pandemic preparedness products.
  - e. Strategies to prevent infections and limit its spread.
4. Complete strategy for administrative duties to be completed off site.
5. Continually re-evaluate succession and reduced work force plans.
6. Review, and revise if needed, this document with Bons Secours Mercy Health (BSMH).
7. Communicate to employees that all regular Board and BSMH-approved sick and vacation leave policies apply (Employees will be notified if adjustments are made).

### *Trigger Point 2*

1. Provide sufficient and accessible infection control supplies at sites.
2. Follow BSMH guidelines for sick-at-work. Students contact college health nurse.
3. Implement alternate management/supervision plans, as necessary.
4. Implement reduced work force plans, as necessary.
5. Implement policy to reduce face-to-face contact among employees and others.
6. Restrict or cancel business travel.
7. Implement strategies agreed upon with employees to prevent infections and limit its spread.
8. Work with Bons Secours Mercy Health to maintain continuity of services and products.
9. Continue team meetings to assess status and implement additional policies as needed.

### **Sick at Work Guidelines**

- All full-time and part-time faculty and staff are to follow the Bon Secours Mercy Health guidelines for sick at work. (Refer to the hub for specific guidelines)
- All full-time and part-time students are to contact the college health nurse for instructions.

### **Supplies**

It is important to stock up in advance, because it will be difficult to get supplies after a pandemic begins. At least a two-month supply is suggested.

- Office cleaning supplies, alcohol, alcohol wipes, disposable gloves and protective or cloth masks, tissues, paper towels and trash bags. Hospital grade Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is saved for those providing direct patient care.
- Soap, alcohol-based hand wash or wipes.
- Special trash receptacles with hands-free lids.
- Surgical-type facemasks: a supply of high-quality HEPA or high efficiency particulate air filter masks. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has recommended that the minimum requirement is a disposable CDC respirator US NIOSH Certified N95, N99, or N100. (In case you need to go out in a crowded area, get sick, or need to care for a sick person.)

## **Guidelines and Practices**

### *How to Control the Spread of a Pandemic Illness*

- Maintain good ventilation in the workplace. If possible, open windows, doors and run the air conditioning. Try to thoroughly ventilate the area between shifts.
- Remove shared writing instruments, magazines and newspapers from common areas such as reception areas, waiting areas, kitchens, break rooms, etc. (Viruses can live for hours on inanimate objects.)
- Install plastic or other barriers for counter staff and those that must interact with the public, if possible. Three specific strategies that must be used to try to prevent infection and limit its spread (These must be practiced both while at the workplace and away from the workplace) are as follows:
  1. Practice social distancing and minimize contact with other people.
  2. Practice good hygiene.
  3. Continuously ventilate and clean the indoor air.

The act of social distancing refers to minimizing contact with others so as to reduce your chances of getting sick. During a pandemic, this could mean the difference between life and death.

Often it takes a day or two, even up to a week, for people to show symptoms after they are exposed. Meanwhile they are likely to be highly contagious. According to the WHO, the incubation period between infection and onset of symptoms is typically 2-3 days but can range from 1-7 days.

### *Continuously ventilate and clean the indoor air*

A primary way virus is spread is through inhalation of particles that are spread by sick people coughing and sneezing. An infected family member, visitor or co-worker can shed the virus for two days before showing any symptoms.

During a pandemic, one of the few ways to reduce the risk of spread to yourself or others is to trap and kill the virus particles with a specialized ultraviolet light air purifier. As the virus is drawn into the purifier the ultraviolet light kills it.

The process typically requires the use of photons in the ultraviolet spectral range.

Ultraviolet light in this range is useful for disinfection purposes. It destroys contaminating organic compounds. Most indoor contaminants are organic, including bacteria, viruses, dust mites and fungi.

They should be used at home and in work settings. They come in models for all sized rooms: small, medium, large, even, large industrial and office models are available.

They even make air duct purifiers for home and office central a/c systems. While this is highly recommended in a home, it is absolutely essential in an office environment where many people work and breathe the same re-circulated germ-filled air. Central air-conditioning systems are known to spread germs around, from room to room and one floor to another multiplying the problem.

#### *How to Avoid Getting Sick During a Pandemic*

Here are some social distancing tips that should be practiced during a pandemic:

- Avoid crowds and large gatherings of people, both at work and away from the workplace.
- Avoid poorly ventilated places and contact with other people in public places.
- Avoid social and recreational activities such as exercise or other classes.
- Do not come to work if sick.
- Stay away from others as much as possible if they are sick.
- Avoid public transportation (buses, subways, air travel, etc.). Find alternate ways to get to work (drive, bicycle or walk).
- If you must take public transportation to work, go early or late to avoid crowds.
- Avoid cafeterias and restaurants. Bring your lunch and eat at your desk.
- Eliminate face-to-face meetings, gatherings, trainings, etc. Instead use e-mail, teleconferencing, videoconferencing and web conferencing. Do this even if you all are in the same building.
- If you must have meetings, keep the time short. Use a large room and keep as much distance as possible between each other (at least one meter). Consider having meetings outdoors if the circumstances and weather permit.
- Do not have visitors come to your workplace.



- Avoid hand shaking, hugging or other contact.
- Do not share cups, dishes or cutlery.
- Avoid sharing of printed documents. The virus can live for several hours on an inanimate surface.
- If you must go out in public, wear a protective US NIOSH Certified N-95, N-99 or N-100 respirator mask. Make sure it fits snugly.

### *Practice Good Hygiene*

The following areas should be wiped down as often as possible:

- Cabinet handles and knobs
- Cash registers
- Copy machines
- Doorknobs or handles
- Elevator buttons
- Faucet handles
- Fax machines
- Miscellaneous office equipment (i.e. calculators, printers, shredders, fax, binding and postage machines)
- Shared keyboards and telephones
- Railings
- Tabletops and countertops
- Toilet handles
- Vending machines, refrigerators, water dispensers or fountains and coffee pots

Here are some personal hygiene tips to help you avoid getting sick during a pandemic

- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth whenever possible.
- Avoid touching inanimate objects as much as possible. Germs can linger for several hours on objects such as computer mice, copy machines, doorknobs, elevator buttons, faucet handles, fax machines, keyboards, railings, tabletops, telephones and vending machines.

- Use alcohol wipes to clean inanimate objects before touching them.
- Carry an alcohol-based antibacterial hand sanitizer to clean your hands immediately after touching things, and especially before touching your face.
- Be careful handling money, as it can be a way of transmitting germs.
- If you go out, carry an alcohol-based antibacterial hand sanitizer to clean your hands immediately after touching things. While wearing gloves may keep the hands clean, they can spread germs just as easily as bare hands.
- When in a public or work bathroom, use a paper towel to turn off the water and open the door.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues. Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve if you don't have a tissue.
- Put used tissues in a wastebasket immediately.

### *Clean Hands Save Lives!*

Here are some tips on proper hand-washing techniques:

- Wet your hands with clean running water and apply soap. Use warm water if it is available.
- Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all surfaces.
- Continue rubbing hands for 20 seconds. Need a timer? Imagine singing "Happy Birthday" twice through to a friend!
- Rinse hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a paper towel or air dryer. If possible, use your paper towel to turn off the faucet.

**Remember: If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based gel to clean hands.**

When using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer:

- Apply product to the palm of one hand.
- Rub hands together.
- Rub the product over all surfaces of hands and fingers until hands are dry.

### When should you wash your hands?

- Before preparing or eating food.
- After going to the restroom.

- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has gone to the restroom.
- Before and after tending to someone who is sick.
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- After handling an animal or animal waste.
- After handling garbage.
- Before and after treating a cut or wound.

### *Cough Etiquette*

To contain respiratory secretions, all persons with signs and symptoms of a respiratory infection, regardless of presumed cause, should:

- Cover the nose/mouth when coughing or sneezing.
- Use tissues to contain respiratory secretions.
- Dispose of tissues in the nearest waste receptacle after use.
- Perform hand hygiene after contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects/materials.

### **Individual and Family Planning**

You can prepare for a pandemic now. You should know both the magnitude of what can happen during a pandemic outbreak and what actions you can take to help lessen the impact of a pandemic on you and your family. A sick person should be isolated from others. Contact between the sick person and others should be minimized. The area around the sick person and surfaces and objects they touch should be frequently wiped down and disinfected. You should wash your hands thoroughly immediately before and after attending to a sick person. Both the sick person and the caregiver should wear disposable surgical-type masks to prevent coughing and sneezing from spreading the infection. The CDC recommends either procedure masks (i.e. with ear loop) or surgical masks (i.e. with ties) may be used to contain respiratory secretions (respirators such as N-95 or above). You should consult your health care provider for advice. The mask should not be reused and should be carefully disposed of after coughing or sneezing into it.

This checklist will help you gather the information and resources you may need in case of a

pandemic.

To plan for a pandemic:

- Store a two-week supply of water and food. During a pandemic, if you cannot get to a store, or if stores are out of supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand. This can also be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and disasters.
- Periodically check your regular prescription drugs to ensure a continuous supply in your home.
- Have any nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins.
- Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home.
- Volunteer with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response.
- Get involved in your community as it works to prepare for a pandemic.

To limit the spread of germs and prevent infection in your children, teach them to:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water and model the correct behavior.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues and be sure to model that behavior.
- Stay away from others as much as possible if they are sick. Stay home from work and school if sick.

Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home:

***Examples of food and nonperishables:***

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans and soups
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Peanut butter or nuts
- Dried fruit
- Crackers

- Canned juices
- Bottled water
- Canned or jarred baby food and formula
- Pet food

***Examples of medical, health and emergency supplies:***

- Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment
- Soap and water, or alcohol-based (60-95%) hand wash
- Medicines for fevers such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Thermometer
- Anti-diarrheal medication
- Vitamins
- Fluids with electrolytes
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Flashlight
- Batteries
- Portable radio
- Manual can opener
- Garbage bags
- Tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers

*What to Expect*

High levels of illness

*What you can do to prepare*

Practice good health habits

Listed on the Department of Health & Human Services website:

Eat a balanced diet. Be sure to eat a variety of foods, including plenty of vegetables, fruits and whole grain products. Include low-fat dairy products, lean meats, poultry, fish and beans.

Drink lots of water and go easy on salt, sugar, alcohol and saturated fat.

Exercise on a regular basis and get plenty of rest.

Get a flu shot to help prevent from seasonal flu. (Flu shots won't protect you against pandemic influenza or illness but can help you to stay healthy.)

Get a pneumonia shot to prevent secondary infection if you are over the age of 65 or have a chronic illness such as diabetes or asthma.

For specific guidelines, talk to your health care provider or call the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Hotline at (800) 232-4636. Make sure that your family's immunizations are up-to-date.)

Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home. Stock up on medicines at home.

High levels of death

Make funeral arrangements in advance and prepare your will. Make sure you have enough life insurance in advance to care for your loved ones. After a pandemic begins the rates will skyrocket and it could be difficult to get. For information on inexpensive insurance protection and free quotes from various companies go to:

<http://www.pandemicinfosite.com/pandemic-lifeinsurance.htm>.

Schools closed for an extended period

Help schools plan for a pandemic. Talk to the school nurse or health center. Talk to teachers, administrators and parent teacher organizations. Plan home learning activities and exercises. Have materials, such as books, on hand. Also plan recreational activities that your child can do at home.

Worker absenteeism as high as 40%, resulting in business closings, or disruptions or normal service: banks, stores, restaurants, government offices, utilities, and post offices, law enforcement, communications and more

Try to arrange to do your banking over the internet, or via ATM machine. Purchase any urgently needed goods in advance and enough food and supplies to last at least several weeks or more.

Your employer may be closed	The Incident Commander or your supervisor will provide further information to you on this topic.
Plan for the possible reduction or loss of income.	Save money, and arrange for credit, loan or financial assistance.
Childcare facilities may be closed	Make alternative arrangements. Keeping children in childcare during a pandemic could be very risky.
Cancellation of public gatherings and worship services	Prepare alternate plans. Consult with organizations in advance to see if they are making contingency plans.
Interruption of food delivery	Stock extra food at home. See aforementioned list of suggested items to have on hand for an extended stay at home.
Hospital & health care facilities being overwhelmed, and a shortage of staff	Consider how to care for people with special needs in case the services they rely are not available.
Shortage of medical supplies	Stock medical supplies and medicines at home. Examples of medical, health and emergency supplies for an extended stay at home follow later in this guide.
Quarantining sick and household contacts of infected people	People who are thought to be exposed to the virus could be quarantined for two weeks or more. In most cases they would be restricted to their home. Store a supply of water and food in case you are not able to get out.

### **Bibliography**

CDC Center for Disease Control

<http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>

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<http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/news/focuson/flu/default.htm>

The official U.S. government web site for information on pandemic

[influenzahttp://www.hhs.gov/pandemicflu/plan](http://www.hhs.gov/pandemicflu/plan)

World Health Organization Epidemic and Pandemic Alert and Response (EPR) web

[pagehttp://www.who.int/csr/en](http://www.who.int/csr/en)

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **College Responsibilities**

It is inevitable that changes to most departments' operations will be necessary during a pandemic, with some departments being impacted to a greater extent. The Pandemic Plan will direct impacted departments to prepare and implement practices and procedures in support of the plan.

There will be costs associated with the plan, prior to and during its implementation. Departments that have costs associated with the plan will track the costs and provide the information to their respective Executive Staff member or supervisor.

### **Vice President of Student Affairs**

The Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA) is designated as the College Incident Commander and co-chairs the Pandemic Committee (Executive Staff) along with the President of the College.

- Produces the College Pandemic Plan and updates the plan as necessary.

In the event of a pandemic, the Vice President of Student Affairs shall:

- Monitor College activities in order to ensure a safe and healthy work/learning environment and recommend and/or implement corrective action as required.
- In collaboration with the President and Human Resources, will investigate any instances of work refusal by employees.
- With assistance from Executive Staff members, will distribute PPE to employees as recommended by public health officials and provided by Bon Secours Mercy Health.
- Provide maps, floor plans and schematics to emergency responders.

### **Director of Compliance and Risk Management**

In the event the VPSA is not able to fulfill the duties as the Incident Commander, the Director of Compliance and Risk Management will assume all duties of the VPSA listed above.

### **Information Technology (IT)**

It can be anticipated that reliance on the services of IT will be heightened in the event a



pandemic is declared. Accordingly, as web services will be a key communication source, it is important that services continue uninterrupted during a pandemic.

The Director of Information Technology (Chief Information Officer) will:

- Plan operational strategies that will ensure services can be continued for as long as possible in the event of a pandemic, such as staff cross-training or prioritizing services.
- Establish or expand tools that enable employees to work from home with appropriate security and network access to applications.
- Investigate and recommend additional alternative support for the main College web server as the internet will be a key communication source during a pandemic.
- Identify the IT chain of command for pandemic planning purposes.

In the event of a pandemic, the Director of Information Technology Services will:

- Implement information technology strategies, as necessary.
- Move backup equipment in place and repair parts as necessary.
- Provide for backup power.

### **Marketing and Communications**

It is the responsibility of Marketing and Communications to identify and respond to pandemic concerns and issues promptly and to communicate proactively, openly, accurately and consistently with the College's multiple audiences.

Marketing and Communications will:

- In conjunction with the IC and President, deliver public health messages to MCO students, faculty and staff.
- In collaboration with the IC and President, determine whether an immediate response to students, faculty and staff is necessary concerning a pandemic crisis. The College will follow the lead of Bons Secours Mercy Health and the Lucas County Health Department and communicate as necessary.
- If a response is needed, inform MCO students, faculty, and staff of the pandemic crisis and maintain consistent, up-to-date communication with them.
- Coordinate pandemic crisis communications with the IC and President by creating key

messages and maintaining consistent, up-to-date communication with the spokespeople.

- Based upon the nature of the pandemic, determine whether a response to the media is necessary and manage media communications. Any effect on College operations will be communicated via the Director of Marketing and Communications, in collaboration with the IC and President.
- Collaborate with Bons Secours Mercy Health to manage post-pandemic communications with the media and MCO staff and students. Besides the media, the internet and other external communication vehicles such as the College website, college e-mail, and RAVE (emergency communication system) will be used to provide information regarding College operations and other measures taken.
- Actively monitor websites, publications, news releases, etc. of the federal, and local/municipal/regional health organizations to maintain current knowledge of pandemic preparedness.
- Marketing and Communications will support College departments in developing and disseminating programs and materials covering pandemic fundamentals (e.g. signs and symptoms of influenza, mode of transmission), personal and family protection and response strategies (e.g. hand hygiene, coughing/sneezing etiquette, contingency plans).
- Anticipate employee fear and anxiety and respond accordingly, in collaboration with the IC and President. (The Counseling & Wellness Office is available to address student-concerns related to a pandemic, while faculty and/or staff will be referred to Life Matters.)
- All global communications will occur via College e-mail and/or the College website, but various departments may have to deal with individual situations. Disseminate information to employees about the pandemic preparedness and response plan. Develop platforms (e.g. hotlines, dedicated websites) for communicating pandemic status and actions to vendors, suppliers and customers inside and outside the worksite in a consistent and timely way, including redundancies in the emergency contact system.
- Provide College contact numbers to appropriate internal and external staff.

## **Buildings and Grounds and Environmental Services**

For the purposes of this plan, it is the responsibility of the Incident Commander, or designee, to collaborate with the Mercy Health System Buildings and Grounds and Environmental Services to ensure buildings are maintained in a clean and hygienic fashion. Buildings and Grounds and Environmental Services will:

- In collaboration with the Pandemic Committee, implement and comply with any additional cleaning or sanitizing regimes as prescribed by Lucas County or Ohio Department of Health (e.g. decontaminating ill employee's office, HVAC system if infected).
- Ensure that the Building Automation System is adjusted to process changes to the ventilation systems as recommended by Lucas County or the Ohio Department of

Health. Options may include:

- Rescheduling of Building Automation System fan operation.
- For purposes of area isolation and prevention of air recirculation, utilize 100% makeup air.
- Shutting air handling systems down, if directed by Public Health.
- Ensure an adequate stockpile of cleaning and sanitizing products is maintained to prevent a shortage in the event of disruption to the supply chain. Stockpile needs to be stored in a dedicated secure space.
- Plan for staffing issues that will result from an increased demand for maintenance and cleaning services with fewer human resources due to the absence of facilities employees.

In the event of a pandemic:

- Seal off or eliminate unnecessary areas. Therefore, sealed areas will have remotely controlled air handling.
- Provide paper towels in restrooms.
- Install and maintain bulk hand sanitizer units as provided.
- Provide utility maps, floor plans and systems schematics to emergency responders.
- Move backup equipment in place and repair parts as necessary.
- Provide for backup power.

**Finance**

For the purposes of this plan, it is the responsibility of Finance to plan operational strategies that will ensure payroll services can be continued in the event of a pandemic.

The Chief Financial Officer, or designate, Payroll will communicate with:

- Key contact(s) in IT
- Key contact(s) in Human Resources (HR)
- Payroll staff
- College staff
- President

Finance will ensure access from a remote location to the following:

- M: Drive (to access reports and upload payroll file to the bank)
- Necessary payroll software
- Any necessary banking requirements
- Encourage key payroll staff to work from a remote location to minimize the spread of infection. Departmental succession will follow the existing payroll hierarchy in the event of illness.

**Supervisors**

In regard to this plan, it is the general responsibility of College supervisors to provide information to their employees in a timely manner. It is essential that decisions related to a pandemic is consistently applied. Accordingly, any issues that arise from a pandemic should be reported to the appropriate individual as identified in this plan before a decision is communicated.

College supervisors shall:

- Implement any health initiatives as directed.
- Effectively communicate with staff the importance of implemented health initiatives.
- Consider the implications of a pandemic when preparing any contracts for services.
- Identify “essential” parts of the business.
- Identify the core people that are required to keep the essential parts of the business

running.

- Identify the core skills required to keep the business running.

### **Executive Staff**

Create an overall evaluation report to help identify effective and ineffective services, practices and approaches.

- Obtain President's authorization to activate the Pandemic Plan.
- Refer to WHO, Lucas County Health Department, Ohio Department of Health, and Center for Disease Control directives.
- Test working knowledge of plan.
- Decide whether to provide employees with a list of basic materials for use in the event of a pandemic (ie. reusable masks, gloves and disinfectant, manual with information on emergency preparedness and the use of personal protective equipment).
- Estimate financial impact of/determine necessity of contingency fund for: supply shortages, cost of employee work days lost, stockpiling, hygiene supplies and implementation of alternate communication channels.

In the event of a pandemic:

- Curtail/cancel non-essential activities to limit person-to-person contact. Refer such incidents to the Pandemic Committee.
- Ensure employee attendance reporting system is current and that statistics regarding employee absences are recorded and available for reporting purposes.
- Report any instance of absence or lateness related to pandemic to Human Resources.
- Immediately report any instance of employee work refusal to the Incident Commander, who will investigate and report as necessary.
- Monitor compliance of any implemented health initiatives.
- Curtail/ban non-essential visitors to all campuses.
- Ensure that supervisors who believe a member of their staff is ill will direct the employee to seek a medical opinion from their physician or an assessment center.
- Enforce social distancing (6-foot distance between individuals).

- Implement cross-training.
- Decide when College activities such as banquets, business meetings, etc. should be cancelled in the interest of public health during individual waves of a pandemic.
- Decide if/when to refund tuition.
- Ensure that departments which enter into a contract to deliver services include clauses that will protect the College from action in the event the College closes or services cannot be delivered due to staff illness, unavailability of goods, etc.
- Investigate the possibility of alternate methods of delivering curriculum that would reduce the likelihood of person-to-person contact in the event of a pandemic. Each school/division should be prepared to provide factual information to the Vice President of Academic Affairs if the alternate methods are not a possibility.
- Stipulate that any department that receives contracted services liaises with the provider to ensure services continue in the event of a pandemic for essential items.
- Contact the Chief Financial Officer to discuss any requirements to order and stockpile supplies, taking into account storage capabilities.
- Make the decision to close specific departments when absence rates threaten safe business continuity.
- Decide when/if to close the College prior to a directive from the Lucas County or Ohio Department of Health.

### **School of Health Sciences: Nursing Program**

A pandemic may result in some challenges for the nursing program. During a pandemic, quarantine will likely only occur for initial cases. Other scenarios could include hospitals suspending the clinical component of the program during a pandemic. Nursing students could be utilized by Regional Public Health or by hospitals during a pandemic. While Public Health may ask students to volunteer, for liability reasons, the College will not coordinate this activity or recommend such action to students.

The Dean of Nursing (or designate) will:

- Liaise with the IC and President to ensure the most current information regarding

pandemic planning and its potential effect on the nursing program is available.

- Ensure contact information of nursing program students and staff is available.

Depending on what information is required, the College will maintain the contact information for students and staff and will communicate with them when the need arises.

In the event of a pandemic:

- Maintain communications with hospitals to determine how the pandemic will affect the program. Clinical Supervisors/Coordinators and the Program Director/Lead will determine and initiate communications.
- Report outbreaks as required to external agencies.
- Determine how/if the program can continue, should the clinical component be cancelled or student absenteeism becomes problematic. This will be determined in consultation with Deans, Coordinators and Clinical Partners.

### **Employees**

It is the responsibility of College employees, as well as the general public, to follow any hygiene practices or other direction provided by the Lucas County Health Department. This information will be made available to the College community through education strategies and other forms of communication.

Due to absenteeism, it can be anticipated that employees will be required to assume different/additional tasks in accordance with provisions within the respective collective agreements.

While it is impossible to predict exactly how a pandemic will affect operations until the circulating strain is identified, it can be anticipated that the College will remain open. All employees are required to work as directed, unless they are ill, while the College remains open. Employees must take reasonably necessary precautions to ensure their own and others' health and safety. Work may be on-site or remote.

In the event of a pandemic, employees considered at "high risk" by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) should work with their supervisor and follow BSMH policies.

All Board and BSMH-approved sick and vacation leave policies apply unless otherwise

announced by Executive Staff.

### **Cancellation of College Activities**

During a pandemic, it is essential to minimize person-to-person contact as much as possible to reduce the likelihood of the transmission of the virus. Individuals are encouraged to maintain a six-foot, or more, distance from each other.

College activities such as events, banquets, business meetings, etc. may be cancelled in the interest of public health during individual waves of a pandemic. In the midst of a pandemic, the public should not attend functions that contribute to the spread of the virus.

During a pandemic, Executive Staff will review all events and make recommendations to the Dean or VP in the department of which the event is scheduled, regarding the feasibility of scheduling the activity. The decision will be based on the current information available from public health officials at that particular time.

### **Closing the College**

In the event the circulating strain of a virus causes severe illness in many individuals, it may be necessary to close the College for a period of time. This decision will be reached in consultation with the Executive Staff, based on recommendations by public health officials. Any information regarding closure will be announced by the Director of Communication, in collaboration with the IC and President.

### **Staff and Students Engaged in College-Related International Activities**

The Assistant Dean of Student Life (or designate) will:

- Ensure that the coordinator of the event implements an action plan for staff and students who have recently travelled, on a college-related activity, to an area that has been affected by a pandemic outbreak. The action plan will follow the WHO and Public Health authority directives as well as medical directives of the country (countries) involved.
- Ensure, if necessary, for staff and students engaged in a College-related international activity overseas, an evacuation plan. Should travel restrictions prevent evacuation, the college will make every effort possible to assist the staff and students involved.



- Ensure timely and regular communications with staff/student travelers caught in travel restrictions in other countries.
- Ensure that normal insurance for students and staff is in place for international travel.

## **Human Resources Considerations**

### ***Executive Staff***

In order to instill a sense of calm to the College community in the event of a pandemic, it is essential that a strong leadership presence be maintained. Accordingly, the College should develop a plan that ensures continuity of leadership. In the event of the need to close the College, this aspect is essential as delaying the decision will impact the health of the College community. Executive Staff should promote and encourage a transparent and mindful approach when communicating to the college community. If the President is absent and cannot fulfill their duties, then leadership continuity will transition to the Chief Financial Officer.

### **Vice Presidents, Deans, and Directors**

In order to ensure leadership continuity, all VP's, Deans, and Directors will identify an individual who will replace them in their capacity, should they fall ill. Ideally, two replacements will be identified. If a pandemic appears imminent, VP's, Deans, and Directors will ensure that their potential replacements are kept apprised of critical departmental activities to ensure a seamless transition should the need arise.

### **Continuity of Student Learning:**

#### ***During a Catastrophic Event***

*A report of recommendations for faculty in the event that it becomes necessary for student learning to continue while implementing social distancing and without the availability of face-to-face classrooms.*

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### **Recommendations for Continuity of Student Learning**

A pandemic or other catastrophic event may result in the official suspension of all activities including face-to-face classes. The following two sets of recommendations are offered as guidelines to encourage the continuation of student learning within MCO. The first set of recommendations assume faculty and students will have Internet and/or computer access and presents a *Just-In-Time* scenario, *Scenario 1*. The second set of recommendations assume that access to the Internet and/or a computer will not be available and presents a *Just-In-Case* scenario, *Scenario 2*.

Mercy College of Ohio's IT plans to maintain service of the technology needed for continuity of student learning during a pandemic or catastrophic event. As long as communication and technology remain intact for the duration of a pandemic or catastrophic event, it is

anticipated that courses being taught online will not be greatly affected during the event. This document contains suggestions and is intended as a guide for college, and/or department pandemic or catastrophic event planning.

The following are the capsulated recommendations provided within this document.

1. MCO should develop an agreed-upon action plan addressing the continuation of student learning during a pandemic or catastrophic event to minimize student confusion, communicate expectations, and facilitate continued instruction.
2. At the department level - Development and addition of a *pandemic/catastrophic-readiness* statement to each individual course syllabus and development of modifications to the syllabus reflecting revisions necessary for continuity.
3. Faculty should be prepared to utilize online instruction tools.
4. At the course level - Preparation and distribution of a timeline of learning activity expectations before or immediately upon declaration of a pandemic or catastrophic event.
5. Address Checklist and Discussion Points at the department level.