



Pandemic Influenza: Personnel and Office Procedures

March 17, 2020
Version 3, draft

An influenza pandemic is a global outbreak of a new influenza virus for which a vaccination has not yet been developed and the numbers of people who will be impacted are globally multiplied. The impact of a pandemic on lives cannot be predicted. People will be asked to be vigilant in basic hygiene habits such as hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and staying home if sick.

The workplace, schools, businesses, and churches may all feel the impact of the virus and may need to close for an extended period of time for the well-being of staff, students, and/or congregants. It may be that the government quarantines or request places to self-quarantine for a period of time. It might also be that an executive decision is made by the President and the Director of Operations to voluntarily close the office.

This policy reflects the practice of the Southeastern District Office if a time of office closure is necessary. What is most important to note is that our response and the need to act will vary based on why and who closes the Office. If the Office goes to voluntary remote office status, the opportunity to enter the Office building to complete a task that can only be done within the office is possible. However, the office will not be staffed. If there is a mandatory requirement for remote office status, then the Office building is completely closed.

The guidelines below attempt to address the most immediate actions but they will also be influenced by daily Office conference calls and the most current information that the staff has. The Director of Operations and the Business Administrator are responsible for overseeing the operations of the SED office.

Personnel

1. Personnel will use sick leave time, if they are sick. If sick leave has been exhausted and additional leave is needed, the worker may use vacation leave. Once leave options have been used up, the worker is asked to speak with the Director of Operations regarding additional days that may be needed as a result of a pandemic virus. During this time of national crisis, we will work to be as flexible as we can while still maintaining the office work presence.
2. If you are sick or not feeling well, then during this time of heightened sensitivity, stay home. If you are out for more than three days, you will need a note from a physician that states you are cleared to return to work. Generally, this means that you are fever-free for 24 hours. In a time of pandemic flu, that will increase to 48 hours fever-free.



3. If you are diagnosed with the specific pandemic virus, you must inform the Director of Operations immediately and self-quarantine. Returning to the Office will require a physician's note and at least 48 hours fever-free.
4. If you are not sick but concerned because an employee was diagnosed with the virus, and you choose to self-quarantine, then you may use unscheduled vacation leave.
5. If you are fearful of coming into the Office, speak with the Director of Operations and ask for unscheduled vacation leave.
6. If you need to be home with a family member, begin by using sick leave. Inform the Director of Operations so that arrangements for leave and time away can be arranged.
7. If you have come into contact with an individual who has tested positive, alert the Director of Operations and choose to self-quarantine. The CDC is recommending 14 days.
8. Executive Staff are fully equipped to work from remote sites. If a member of the executive staff becomes sick with the virus, they would take leave in the same way that they report days off, sick leave, and then vacation leave.

Continuity of Office Operations Plan (COOP)

1. Building
 - a. Our first concern is to have a safe working environment. If access to the building is not restricted, the Business Administrator will contact the cleaning service and ask for a deep cleaning.
 - b. While we are able to work in the Office, each employee will take responsibility for cleaning their immediate work area, phone, and computer.
 - c. If the local government has issued a mandatory quarantine for our area, the building will be closed for the duration of quarantine.
 - d. If possible, work station computers will be shut down.
 - e. If possible, the Business Administrator will check the building once every 3 or 4 days. Back-up is the Front Desk Secretary and then the Bookkeeper.
2. Communications
 - a. Phones will be forwarded to a number provided by the Front Desk Secretary, who will be primary receiver of phone calls. The Finance Secretary will serve as backup.
 - b. A special answering machine message will be activated. All staff will be reminded of how to forward messages and change their voice mail message. Sample scripts will be prepared.
 - c. The Data and Events Specialist will prepare an updated print and digital contact sheet for each staff member that includes specific information with numbers and emails for reaching one another at home. The digital version will also be placed in a special file on Egnyte share files entitled COOP. In addition, the "long list" of pastors, congregations, schools, Circuit Visitors, and Board of Director members will be placed in the COOP file on Egnyte.



- d. The Congregational Outreach and Communications Specialist will keep information on website and social media accounts current. The Staff Directory will move so that there is greater prominence on the home page. The Digital Outreach Coordinator will provide backup. E-mail blasts will be managed by Director of Operations with Communications Specialist and the Data and Events Specialist providing back up.
 - e. The Finance Secretary will serve as an initial contact with the Post Office to have the mail held. The Business Administrator will provide back up support. The Business Administrator will be authorized to pick up mail once a week, if able and transport it either to the Office or another, agreed-upon location for safe-keeping. The Director of Operations, in conjunction with the Business Administrator, will determine how best to provide for the opening, distribution, and processing of mail, as well as any subsequent bank deposits.
 - f. The Front Desk Secretary will alert FedEx and UPS that the offices are closed.
 - g. The Finance Secretary will post an Office Closed note (with phone number) on the front door.
 - h. Each Staff member will need to be diligent in monitoring and responding to email.
3. Finance
- a. The Bookkeeper will monitor electronic deposits, manage bills, payroll and monthly grants.
 - b. It is the goal of the SED to maintain policies and practices as it regards the handling and management of the District's finances. As best as we are able, we will follow the usual protocol. Using the daily morning calls, we will outline any changes in the routine. Those involved in the properly handling and recording of finances will be the Business Administrator, Financial Secretary, Bookkeeper, and the Front Desk Secretary.
 - c. The Business Administrator will electronically monitor and manage bank and investment accounts and Concordia Plan Benefits. Importance will be placed on maintaining adequate cash flow to continue office operations for a minimum of a 30-day period.
 - d. During this period, electronic processes will be utilized as much as possible to increase efficiency and safety (i.e. timesheets, paystubs, invoices, vouchers, vendor payments, MPS receipts, LCMS remittances, etc.)
4. Meetings and Conferences
- a. If it is determined that a meeting or conference should be postponed, the Data and Events Specialist will need to communicate event status to various constituencies. The Director for Operations will be in contact with entities where there are contracts. The Digital Outreach Coordinator will assist in assessing if an event can go completely digital and then provide technical assistance in shaping it.
 - b. The Director of Operations, Administrative Assistant to the President, Data and Events Specialist, and Digital Outreach Coordinator will continue to



develop and collaborate on future events, developing an alternative presentation method.

5. Call Lists and Roster Actions

- a. The Administrative Assistant to the President will have the ability to access the LCMS database so that continued work in Call list is enabled. A process for sending PIFs and SETs electronically will be developed and implemented for the duration of the event.
- b. The newsletter: Roster Actions and Prayers is maintained by the Administrative Assistant to the President, back up is the Digital Outreach Coordinator.

6. Preparations

- a. Personnel with laptops are encouraged to take them home nightly.
- b. Equipment needs will be identified and assistance through the Digital Outreach Coordinator and our IT resource will be provided.
- c. Staff will be reminded (refreshed) on accessing email, Egnyte, and Fortress off-site.
- d. A special work folder "COOP" on Egnyte will be established.

7. Deployed Staff

- a. Deployed staff are already positioned to work from remote sites.
- b. All travel will be restricted to essential only and within their respective region.
- c. Deployed staff will establish regular contacts with the congregations and missions of their regions.
- d. Executive staff will establish a weekly conference call on Tuesdays at 9:00 am.

8. Expectations

- a. The off-site emergency work day will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- b. Workers will be available for phone calls, meetings, and web conferences during that time.
- c. A daily (web) conference call will take place at 9:00. The Digital Outreach Coordinator will arrange for the meeting. The Director of Operations will convene the meeting, the Business Administrator is the backup.
- d. During the time the Office is closed – required or voluntary, we will do our best to continue operations. Unless the worker is on vacation or sick leave, this time is to be considered as work hours. All employees, salaried and hourly, will continue to be paid based on their work day while the office is closed.

