

**CabinetOffice**

**Civil Contingencies Secretariat**



# **PANDEMIC INFLUENZA CHECKLIST FOR BUSINESSES**



HM Government

**PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES**

## Pandemic influenza checklist for businesses

The government recommends that all organisations adopt robust and flexible generic business continuity management arrangements which will help ensure that the impact of any disruptions will be minimised. Current advice from the World Health Organisation is that countries should be planning for a possible influenza pandemic, although timing of onset is highly unpredictable. In the event of an influenza pandemic, businesses will have a key role to play in reducing the risk to employee's health and safety as far as possible, as well as maintaining essential operations. Given the highly uncertain nature of an influenza pandemic, we cannot know in advance how serious it will be and who will be most affected, it is therefore important that plans are developed which can address a range of scenarios. The UK influenza Pandemic Contingency Plan contains more information on the types of scenarios which may arise.

To assist you in developing and reviewing plans, the Government has developed the following checklist specifically regarding pandemic influenza. It identifies important and specific activities which organisations can do to prepare for a pandemic as well as where more general guidance will be provided by the Government. Directed mainly at medium and large businesses, some elements will be of use to smaller businesses. Further information can be found at <http://www.ukresilience.info> including Guidance on contingency planning for a possible influenza pandemic and Chapter 6 of Emergency Preparedness (the statutory guidance that supports Part 1 of the Civil Contingencies Act; Chapter 6 covers business continuity planning). General information on an influenza pandemic and the impact it might have, including the UK contingency plan, can be found at <http://www.dh.gov.uk/pandemicflu>.

***This checklist is not exhaustive. It is a guide to help you start thinking about what you may need to plan for.***

### **1 Plan for the impact of a pandemic on your business:**

Complete	In progress	Not started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify a pandemic coordinator and/or team with defined roles and responsibilities for preparedness and response planning. The planning process should include input from a wide range of stakeholders e.g. health and safety representatives and trade union officials.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify the critical activities undertaken by your business which would have to continue during a pandemic, as well as the employees and other inputs that support those activities (e.g. raw materials, suppliers, sub-contractor services/products, logistics, process controls, security). Consider how internal resources could be re-allocated to ensure those activities are maintained.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discuss with your suppliers/sub contractors whether they have robust Business Continuity plans in place – your organisation is only as good as those on whom it depends.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider preparing an additional pool of workers to undertake key tasks and provide training where appropriate (e.g. contractors, cross train employees, retirees).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine the potential impact of a pandemic on your business-related travel (e.g. should international travel be curtailed in certain countries due to quarantines and/or border closures). Note that current planning assumes that domestic travel will not be restricted, although the Government may advise against non-essential travel.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Find up-to-date, reliable pandemic information on the Department of Health Website <a href="http://www.dh.gov.uk/pandemicflu">http://www.dh.gov.uk/pandemicflu</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish an emergency communications plan and revise periodically. This plan should identify key contacts (with back-ups), chain of communications (including suppliers, customers and employees), and processes for tracking and communicating business and employee status.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Implement an exercise to test your plan, and revise periodically taking into account updated advice and guidance from Government.

## 2. Plan for the impact of a pandemic on your employees and customers:

Complete	In progress	Not started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guided by advice issued by Government, forecast and plan for employee absences during a pandemic. This could be the result of a number of factors including personal illness, family member illness, bereavement, possible disruption to other sectors for example closures of nurseries and schools or reduced public transport.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	As a general approach to reducing the spread of the infection across the country, assess your business needs for continued face to face contact with your customers/suppliers and consider plans to modify the frequency and/or type of face-to-face contact (e.g. video or tele-conferencing instead of travelling to meetings) among employees and between employees and customers. Whilst there is no intention to restrict domestic travel, the Government is likely to advise against non-essential travel, and this should be taken into account in planning.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan for a likely increase in demand for employees welfare services, if they are available, during a pandemic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify employees and key customers with special requirements, and incorporate the requirements of such persons into your preparedness plan.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider your customers' needs during a pandemic and whether to review your business model and arrangements to continue to meet those needs. (e.g. enhance mail ordering and internet shopping capacities)

## 3. Establish policies to be implemented during a pandemic:

Complete	In progress	Not started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guided by advice issued by Government, establish policies for sick-leave absences unique to a pandemic, including policies on when a previously ill person is no longer infectious and can return to work after illness (i.e. when they are no longer showing symptoms and feel better) and agreeing them with trade unions and other professional representative bodies.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish policies for flexible worksite (e.g. working from home) and flexible work hours (e.g. staggered shifts).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guided by advice from Government, establish policies for reducing spread of influenza at the worksite (e.g. promoting respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette, and asking those with influenza symptoms to stay at home).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guided by advice from Government, establish the current policies for employees who are suspected to be ill, or become ill at the worksite (e.g. infection control response, sick leave policies).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Set up authorities, triggers, and procedures for activating and terminating the company's response plan, altering business operations (e.g. reducing operations as necessary in affected areas), and transferring business knowledge to key employees. This should include nominating deputies for key employees in advance, in case of absence.
And in the early stages of a pandemic with outbreaks overseas, but not yet in UK			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guided by advice from the FCO (which would be informed by the latest information from the World Health Organisation and/or advice from Health Departments), establish policies on travel to affected geographic areas overseas and develop policies on managing employees working in or near an affected area when an outbreak begins (and later on in the pandemic). We are not recommending that staff should be asked to stay at home for 2 weeks after return from affected areas.

## 4. Allocate resources to protect employees and customers during a pandemic:

Complete	In progress	Not started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide sufficient and accessible means for reducing spread of infection (e.g. provision of hand washing facilities or hand-hygiene products).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider additional measures to reduce the risk of infection, such as more frequent cleaning on premises, and ensure the resources to achieve these will be available.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider whether enhanced communications and information technology infrastructures are needed to support employees working from home, tele-conferencing instead of face to face meetings and remote customer access.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider policy on access to medical treatment for UK staff working overseas, and whether any specific arrangements need to be put in place, and more generally develop policies, based on duty of care, on managing your overseas staff taking into account possible reduced access to consular services.

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**5. Communicate to and educate your employees:**

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Complete	In progress	Not started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disseminate easily-accessible information about pandemic flu to your workforce which is appropriate to the stage of alert (e.g. signs and symptoms of influenza, modes of transmission when this information is available), personal and family protection and response strategies (e.g. hand hygiene, coughing/sneezing etiquette, contingency plans). This should be based on the information already available on the DH website.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disseminate information to employees about your pandemic preparedness and response plan for your business, including their role in this plan.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop platforms (e.g. hotlines, dedicated websites) for communicating pandemic status and actions to employees, vendors, suppliers, and customers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that DH, HPA and WHO websites are the sources for timely and accurate pandemic information (domestic and international).

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**6. Co-ordinate with external organisations and help your community**

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Complete	In progress	Not started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Find out about pandemic planning in your region and locality, for example through regional resilience teams and local resilience forums, and liaise with agencies and local responders.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Share best practice with other businesses in your community, as well as through industry associations.

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