

Sept. 13, 2009 -- Frequently Asked Questions regarding UC Denver preparedness for 2009 H1N1 flu pandemic

Q: Have classroom attendance policies been adjusted to accommodate students who get the flu?

A: Any adjustments will be made at the school/college or program level. The deans have been asked to work with their faculty to determine what accommodations are possible, given the nature and duration of the class and impact on development of competencies. Faculty should contact their department chair or dean; students should contact their professor.

Q: May an instructor ask an ill student to leave the classroom?

A: Yes, an instructor may ask an ill student to leave a classroom. However, when taking such action, the instructor should take steps to ensure the student does not suffer academically. The instructor should follow up with the student to ensure he/she receives instructional material that may have been missed. Faculty members may wish to tell students in advance that they should not come to class if they flu-like symptoms.

Q: What are flu-like symptoms?

A: The most detailed information is available at the [Centers for Disease Control](#) Web site. In summary, the CDC says the symptoms of 2009 H1N1 flu virus are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. A significant number of people who have been infected with 2009 H1N1 flu virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting.

Q: What if a co-worker comes to work with flu symptoms?

A: Supervisors must send employees home from work if they show flulike symptoms. They should not return until they are free of a fever or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications for 24 hours.

Q: If a member of my family has the flu can I stay home to care for them?

A: If a family member or others living in your household (including you) have the flu, you should stay at home to care for them.

Q: What are my options if I get the flu and do not have a sick leave balance?

A: (for employees who earn paid leave): If you or a member of your household has the flu and you do not have any accrued sick leave, you can use annual leave. If you do not have any paid leave, you are placed on unpaid leave.

Q: Do I need a note from my doctor for a flu-related absence?

A: While leave policies might require a physician's statement for such absences or to return to work from such absences, they will not typically be required for flu-related absences.

Q: If I need to stay home for a flu-related reason, can I work from home?

A: Supervisors can allow limited alternate work arrangements in response to a flu outbreak. Such arrangements must document the location of work, work expectations and timeframes.

Q: What should I do if the campus is closed in response to the flu?

A: In the event of a campus closure, employees will be notified of their specific work status, what to expect and how to get up-to-date information.

Q: How are we tracking flu absences?

A: For staff and faculty, The Human Resources Department is working with department liaisons to identify specific contacts for reporting daily H1N1 related absences. **For students**, absences are being sampled daily in classes where attendance is normally taken. For example, attendance reports from labs in Chemistry and Biology and some large classes at Anschutz Medical Campus will be collated by the H1N1 **Incident Command Team** chaired by Provost Roderick Nairn.

Q: What is being done to help reduce spread of illness on our campuses?

A: Covering your cough/sneeze and frequent hand-washing are the most effective preventive measures, according to infectious disease experts. Hand sanitizers have been placed in high-traffic areas at both campuses, and more dispensers will be installed in classroom areas in the coming weeks. Flyers describing other prevention techniques are posted around campus and are available online at http://pandemicflu.gov/takethelead/poster_cough.pdf.

Q: Will the university offer flu vaccines?

A: There will be **two flu vaccines this year**: One for the regular flu that occurs each season and one for the 2009 H1N1 flu. Public health guidelines recommend that students, staff and faculty be vaccinated against the **seasonal flu**. You may obtain seasonal flu vaccination through your health care provider, at clinics in the community, at the hospital where you work, and at clinic being held on both campuses (see http://www.ucdenver.edu/faculty_staff/alert/Flu/Pages/GetaFluShot.aspx). Copayments may apply. The **2009 H1N1 flu vaccine** most likely will be available in late October or early November and will be distributed through the Colorado Department of Health and Environment. CDHE has asked the University of Colorado Denver to help vaccinate students, staff and faculty members, especially those who are at highest risk: health care workers, people under 25 years of age and pregnant women. Details about distribution of the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine are not yet available.

Q: What happens if large numbers of students, staff or faculty get sick?

A: Each school/college and administrative department has a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). Deans and department heads have been asked to review their plan to ensure that it is adequate to handle absences as high as 40 percent. More information about COOP planning is available by calling Essi Ellis 303-724-1031 or essi.ellis@ucdenver.edu.

Q: Where is the most up-to-date information about the H1N1 pandemic?

A: The Centers for Disease Control (see <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>) provide the most current and reliable information about 2009 H1N1 flu. The latest information pertaining to UC Denver is available at www.ucdenver.edu/flualert. Here are additional links to flu information sites:

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

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/epr/h1n1.html>

World Health Organization (WHO) <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html>