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## Pandemic Plan

### Objectives

- To prepare SWAECC for the possibility of a pandemic, including:
- To educate employees about a possible pandemic and its possible impacts on SWAECC's business operations.
- To implement reasonable measures to mitigate the impact of a pandemic on SWAECC and employees.
- To develop plans and policies for responding to a pandemic.
- To promote employee wellness and minimize opportunities for employees to be exposed to the disease while at SWAECC.

### Background

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak. A pandemic occurs when a new virus emerges for which people have little or no immunity and for which there is no vaccine. The disease spreads easily person-to-person, causes serious illness and can sweep across the country and around the world in a very short time.

It is difficult to predict when the next pandemic will occur or how severe it will be. Wherever and whenever a pandemic starts, everyone around the world is at risk. Countries might, through measures such as border closures and travel restrictions, delay arrival of the virus, but cannot stop it.

### Levels of Response

Given that the exact nature of the next pandemic cannot be determined in advance, this plan addresses the threat with three general levels of response: **Seasonal, Epidemic and Pandemic.**

These levels are defined as follows:

#### **Seasonal**

The common illnesses experienced from year to year. The strains of these illnesses seen during a normal season are generally the same as or similar to those in previous seasons and there exists some pre-existing immunity to these illnesses. Vaccines provide some level of protection in that they provide a level of immunity to commonly-seen strains of these illnesses.

#### **Epidemic**

An epidemic is an illness that affects many persons at the same time and spreads from person-to-person in a locality where the illness is not permanently prevalent. An epidemic occurs when a group of people with little or no immunity to the illness are exposed and become ill. The rapid spread through any segments of the population can raise the risk for other effects.

#### **Pandemic**

A pandemic is a health emergency prevalent throughout an entire country, continent or the whole world; epidemic over a large area. A pandemic occurs when an illness, previously non-prevalent or seasonal in humans, develops the ability to infect humans and spread from person-to-person.

### Preparation & Response Efforts

#### **Employee Education**

When a credible pandemic threat is identified, SWAECC will distribute their PANDEMIC PERIOD GUIDELINES SUMMARY document to all SWAECC employees. In addition, efforts will be made to educate employees about potential effects, how it spreads and how SWAECC is preparing. Numerous educational resources are available from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

Employee luncheons, posters and broadcast email will be used to convey this information to employees.

Existing communication tools and communications plans would be used to educate and communicate pandemic-related messages to employees.

**Seasonal**

- Do not report to work if sick
- Do not return to work until all symptoms have cleared (provide specific guidance from public health organizations)
- Practice social distancing

**Epidemic**

- Limit face-to-face meetings
- Limit travel to affected areas
- Communicate changes in policy and/or procedures
- Practice social distancing

**Pandemic**

- Preparing for the pandemic
- SWAECC pandemic response procedures
- Suspend face-to-face meetings, except for business-critical functions, e.g. safety, operations
- Practice social distancing in any interactions
- Suspend business travel, except for business-critical functions, e.g. safety, operations
- Limit access to Cooperative facilities by non-essential personnel

**Vaccines**

Employees will be encouraged to obtain vaccines, if one exists for a particular virus and when appropriate, and opportunities to obtain them will be offered.

**Seasonal**

- Schedule opportunities for employees to obtain vaccinations
- Encourage employees to participate

**Epidemic**

- Schedule additional opportunities for employees to obtain vaccinations

**Pandemic**

- Concerted effort to vaccinate all employees

**Sanitary Practices**

Supplies to maintain a sanitary environment will be kept on hand and deployed, as necessary, including: Hand Sanitizer, Disinfectant Spray, Rubber Gloves and Masks.

**Seasonal**

- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer or anti-bacterial/anti-viral foam dispensers in all common areas (restrooms, break rooms, conference rooms and at all meetings where food and drink are served).
- Disinfectant spray (e.g. Lysol) in all restrooms
- Facial tissues (e.g. Kleenex) in all meeting rooms and break rooms
- Brief cleaning crews on disinfecting techniques

**Epidemic**

- No additional Measures

**Pandemic**

- Make respiratory masks and rubber gloves available for employees exhibiting symptoms, when available.

### **Recommended Temporary Policy Changes during a Pandemic**

Policies related to paid leave should be reviewed with possible impacts from a pandemic in mind. The following issues will be among those considered:

#### **Paid Leave**

Seasonal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employees should not report for work, if they show symptoms</li><li>• Employees should not return to work from an illness-related absence until they are symptom-free</li></ul>
Epidemic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supervisors encouraged to send sick individuals home</li></ul>
Pandemic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relax definition of paid leave to allow leave to be taken to care for sick family members</li></ul>

#### **Business Travel**

Seasonal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No changes</li></ul>
Epidemic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employees should be cautioned concerning travel to affected areas</li></ul>
Pandemic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Non-critical business travel suspended</li></ul>

#### **Meetings**

Seasonal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No changes</li></ul>
Epidemic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Face-to-face meetings should be minimized</li></ul>
Pandemic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Face-to-face meetings suspended except for business-critical functions</li></ul>

#### **Work from Home**

Seasonal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No changes</li></ul>
Epidemic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employees with the ability to work from home and a demonstrated need to do so may be allowed to do so (with Supervisor approval)</li></ul>
Pandemic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CEO and Vice Presidents will access work-from-home options for the employees in their Divisions and, when possible and appropriate, employees with the ability to work from home would be encouraged to do so.</li><li>• Employees working from home would be expected to put in a normal work week and be available during normal business hours. In such a situation, employees will use all remote access options available to them for performing work from home.</li></ul>

### **Business Continuity**

SWAECC CEO and VPs will re-examine the Emergency Restoration Plans on a periodic basis

### **Coordination/Monitoring**

The CEO and VPs will monitor information from the Arkansas Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization for notification of pandemic activity. This should provide adequate lead time to prepare for arrival of the pandemic.

A significant increase in the level of contagious illness will determine if specific action related to the activation of the ERP is required.

### **Post-Pandemic Evaluation**

Following the pandemic, all procedures and policies related to pandemic response would be examined for effectiveness and modified to prepare the Cooperative for a similar event in the future.