



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

Strategic Human
Resources Policy
Division


April 27, 2009

President Colleen Kelley
National Treasury Employees Union
1750 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006-4600

Dear Ms. Kelley:

The attached memorandum from John Berry, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management to Executive agencies is provided for your information. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact us at 202-606-2930 at your convenience.

Sincerely,


for Ana A. Mazzi
Deputy Associate Director
Center for Workforce Relations
and Accountability Policy

Enclosure



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

April 26, 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: JOHN BERRY
Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Berry".

SUBJECT: Advice to Federal Employees and Agencies on Preventing the Spread of the Current Flu and Maintaining Readiness to Use HR Flexibilities if Necessary

We are requesting that you share this memorandum with all your employees. Although the advice has been developed by the Department of Homeland Security and is intended primarily for employees who work at locations in which they may come in contact with people carrying the swine flu virus, we believe much of this information is of benefit to all employees to maintain awareness in what may be a rapidly changing environment.

The interim guidance below, that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed, recommends actions you can take personally, as well as advice for what to do if you encounter someone you assess to be exhibiting symptoms consistent with an influenza-like illness.

Guidance for Passive Surveillance

Should you encounter travelers who appear unwell, including those with a cough or apparent fever:

- Separate that individual to a private room or area maintaining six feet distance from employees and the public.
- After separating the traveler from others, the CDC quarantine station should be notified.
- To protect others, the ill traveler should wear a surgical mask.
- A room that separates the ill traveler from the airspace of others is preferred.

Additional Guidance for Employees Regarding Protecting Their Health

- CDC recommends that a distance of six feet should be maintained between all employees and someone who appears ill.
- The use of N95 masks is suggested if an employee must maintain closer contact than the six feet of distance.

The interim recommendations also provide additional guidance for the use of surgical masks, gloves, and hand sanitizers. As always, hand washing is suggested following frequent contact with an ill traveler, as well as when interacting with the traveling public in general.

Employees working along the border and at ports of entry should closely review the guidance at www.cdc.gov/swineflu.

For key facts on swine influenza see the CDC Web site at http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/key_facts.htm.

Guidance for Agencies on the Use of HR Flexibilities

While the appropriate agencies continue to monitor the spread of human swine influenza, I want you to be aware of the wide range of human resources (HR) policies and flexibilities already in place and available to assist in meeting employee and agency needs.

During the past several years, OPM has been developing policies and procedures to prepare for a pandemic influenza. A substantial amount of information and advice on HR rules and flexibilities is already available at OPM.gov. I am including more specific links below for your convenience.

Federal departments and agencies must achieve two equally important goals:

- (1) Protect the public and the Federal workforce, and
- (2) Ensure the continuity of operations (COOP). Agencies have prepared their own pandemic influenza preparedness and COOP plans and OPM guidance is offered in support of those plans.

In the geographic areas affected by swine flu, which at present are very limited, OPM and all Federal agencies want to review previous preparations for the potential for absenteeism of Federal employees or contractors due to illness and the ability to care for sick family members or for children if schools/day care centers should close. Based on our pandemic influenza work, we know that in the most extreme circumstance, we could encounter fear of going to work, need for social distancing, and disruption of agency operations. We, like all Federal agencies, will continue to monitor the situation and work with appropriate authorities. OPM will publish additional information and guidance as needed.

We will continue to monitor the situation and work with appropriate authorities. OPM will publish additional information and guidance as needed. For key facts on swine influenza see the CDC Web site at http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/key_facts.htm.

For online resources and a full range of the latest human resources flexibilities and benefits relating to pandemic influenza, see OPM's Web site at www.opm.gov/pandemic/. See Compensation Policy Memorandum (CPM) 2008-09, June 17, 2008, posted on our Web site for a wide range of information on the various HR flexibilities. This information is available at www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2008/2008-09.asp.

Additional Information

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact your OPM Human Capital Officer. Employees should contact their agency's human resources offices for assistance.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers
HR Directors