

Guidelines for Retail and Food Service Operations in the event of a pandemic flu outbreak

--Compiled by the Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO)

Additional Considerations:

Use masks or respirators to prevent the spread of germs when coughing.

Consumer demand may increase for non-perishable and pre-packaged goods rather than fresh meat and fish, produce and salad bars and ready to eat deli and restaurant foods.

Consumer demand for curb-side pick up, Internet shopping and self check-out may increase.

There may be a need to decrease or suspend ordering products from countries/areas where the pandemic flu was thought to have originated or where the outbreak is wide spread.

Consider revising receiving procedures to avoid all human contact between the driver and the receiving personnel.

Consider shifting store duties such that more work is performed during hours that the store is closed to minimize human contact between consumers and employees.

Develop a plan to minimize vendor time in the store.

Consider restricting repair and maintenance of equipment to only essential work.

Managers of retail food stores and food service operations should:

- Recognize the symptoms of the flu (fever, cough, sore throat, congestion, muscle aches or conjunctivitis). Symptoms specific to a particular outbreak can be found at: www.pandemicflu.gov or www.cdc.gov.
- Develop a plan that defines when employees should be excluded or restricted from work; in addition to when they can be allowed to return.
- Require employees to inform their manager if they believe they may have been exposed to pandemic influenza or have symptoms of the flu.
- Reinforce proper hand washing procedures with all employees, especially after coughing, sneezing or touching their eyes, nose, or mouth. Consider use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers in conjunction with proper hand washing. Use single use non-latex gloves to avoid bare hand contact of food.
- Consider providing additional hand washing alternatives at the store or food service entrance, such as hand sanitizer gels, sanitizer wipes and/or portable hand wash stations.
- Increase the number and visibility of hand washing signs and cover your cough signs. (www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm)
- Reinforce proper cleaning and sanitizing of food contact surfaces with all employees handling exposed food.
- Incorporate plans to clean and sanitize non-food contact shared or common surfaces throughout the facility, such as phones, intercoms, keyboards, door handles, drinking fountains, etc.
- Typically, pandemic flu is passed person to person and not through eating food items, so unless the CDC advises otherwise, be prepared to provide consumers with information regarding safe handling procedures, including recommended cooking times and temperatures.

Additional information is available at the following links:

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/flu
- US Dept. of Health and Human Services: www.pandemicflu.gov
- World Health Organization: www.who.int
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration: www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3327pandemic.pdf

