

**United for Families**

A stylized world map in a light blue color, centered on the Atlantic Ocean, set against a dark blue gradient background. The map shows the outlines of continents and major islands.

**PANDEMIC  
RESPONSE  
PLAN**

**STRATEGIES FOR BUSINESS CONTINUITY IN A CRISIS**

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## **Introduction**

**Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by a group of viruses` and is directly transmitted from person to person by infectious droplets sprayed into the air by coughing and sneezing. Influenza can be transmitted for several days prior to the appearance of symptoms. A yearly vaccination is recommended to protect against the virus strains predicted to be present that season.**

**A pandemic occurs when a novel virus appears and the population has little or no immunity. This causes the virus to spread quickly around the world.**

**International health experts are warning that there is the possibility of a deadly human influenza pandemic that might emerge from the continuing spread of the H5N1 avian flu virus (“bird flu”). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the virus needs only to spread efficiently and be sustainable among humans, to meet the prerequisites for a pandemic. United for Families must assure that the services provided the children and families it serves remain uninterrupted.**

## **Approach**

**This report is the preliminary response to a potential pandemic, and serves as a planning tool only. This plan will be reviewed and revised annually to adequately reflect the current situation and latest best practices.**

## **Guiding Principles**

- 1. UFF will do its best to minimize any disruption to the system of care benefiting children and their families.**
- 2. UFF will strive to protect the workplace environment and safety of its staff and its contract providers.**
- 3. UFF will communicate its actions and decisions through a designated spokesperson.**
- 4. UFF will be steadfast in its commitment to return business back to normal as quickly as possible, despite any challenges.**

# Response Plan

## *Prior to a Pandemic:*

### Communication/Education:

- ✚ Disseminate to staff materials regarding signs and symptoms of influenza and mode of transmission
- ✚ Disseminate to staff materials regarding personal protection (hand hygiene, coughing/sneezing etiquette)
- ✚ Disseminate to staff the Pandemic Response Plan
- ✚ Encourage staff to be vaccinated with an annual flu vaccine.
- ✚ Anticipate possible work- from- home needs/requirements.
- ✚ Pandemic Response Plan will be available on the UFF website.

### Continuity Planning:

- ✚ Assume 1/3 of staff could become infected
- ✚ Assume the length of the illness will be 6 to 8 weeks
- ✚ Assume the office may not be utilized due to the lack of safety provided in a group setting
- ✚ Identify the staffing patterns needed to complete the necessary critical tasks
- ✚ Identify tasks that can be completed from home
- ✚ Assure proper signatory coverage for financial disbursements

### Service Needs:

- ✚ List of foster homes not waived for emergency use
- ✚ Discuss with SAMH and local substance abuse and mental health providers the possible need for services during and following the pandemic

## ***During a Pandemic:***

### **Communication:**

- ✚ **Communication with internal and external partners**
- ✚ **Updates to website daily or as necessary**
- ✚ **Updates to the UFF automated attendant telephone service daily or as necessary**
- ✚ **Regularly updated list of on-call numbers for staff**

### **Continuity Planning:**

- ✚ **Maintain list of affected staff and family members and their condition**
- ✚ **Maintain/update list of foster homes that can be used in case a foster parent is unable to provide in home care due to illness**
- ✚ **Daily analysis of all emerging health situations**

## ***Following a pandemic:***

- ✚ **Determine the extent of service needs for staff, their families, the dependent children and the foster parents**
- ✚ **Contact SAMH and substance abuse and mental health providers to report needs**
- ✚ **Evaluate the support United for Families can offer other providers who may be in need**