Emergency Preparedness Committee

Influenza Preparedness & Response Policy

January 17, 2013

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Environmental & Emergency Management 978-934-2618
Emergency Preparedness Committee

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Influenza Preparedness & Response Policy 2013

Introduction:

There is currently a widespread flu virus throughout our region and country. Planning and program implementation at the federal, state and local public health level to educate and safeguard the general public is increasing due to the escalation of cases. The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for preparedness and appropriate response to effectively address anticipated cases of the flu at UMass Lowell.

A pandemic event is referenced in the UMass Lowell Crisis Management Plan as a Level 4-A “Major Emergency” that impacts a sizable portion of the campus and/or outside community. Level 4 emergencies may be single or multi-hazard situations, and often require considerable and timely coordination both within and outside the University. Level 4 emergencies also include imminent events on campus or in the general community that may develop into a major University crisis or full disaster. (Examples: heating plant failure, extended power outage, severe storms, major fire, significant chemical hazard, contagious disease outbreak, or domestic water contamination.).

This UMass Lowell 2013 Influenza Flu Preparedness and Response Policy recognizes multiple university departments and public agencies working together for a common goal of educating and protecting the greater University community from the spread of the flu.

UMass Lowell Influenza Program Structure:

* Influenza Program Implementation: Emergency Preparedness Committee
* Lead Department for monitoring flu program & providing direction: Student Health Services
* Lead Department for providing employee guidelines: Human Resources
* Lead Department for Public Notification (media interaction): University Relations
* Lead State Department to provide outside health information: MA Dept Public Health
* Lead Local Department to provide outside health information: City of Lowell Health Dept.
* Lead local hospital to support UML concerns: Lowell General
* Lead local Ambulance Co. for transportation purposes: Trinity Ambulance Co.

University Guideline for Students with flu or influenza-like illness (ILI):

- **Students with flu-like symptoms**, can contact Health Services **Flu Hotline 978-934-4894**. Flu symptoms include: sudden onset of fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Occasionally people have diarrhea and vomiting. For more information go to: [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov) or [http://www.mass.gov/flu](http://www.mass.gov/flu)
• **If student is a commuter** and has Influenza-like illness, the student should remain at home until fever (<100°F) is absent for a minimum of 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.

• **If student is a resident on campus** and has influenza-like illness, it is recommended that the student go home if at all possible. The student is to remain at home or place of recuperation until fever (<100°F) is absent for a minimum of 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.

• **If student is a resident on campus and has influenza-like illness and is unable to leave campus**, the student should call the Flu Hotline to report their illness and notify their resident adviser. Student Health Services (SHS) can provide each student with a Flu Care Kit and instructions on self-care. Students will be advised to self-isolate. SHS staff will check on student by telephone. Students should remain out of class until their fever (<100°F) is absent for a minimum of 24 hours without fever-reducing medication. University Dining Services will provide meals and liquids. Students should contact their RA to arrange delivery.

• **All students with influenza-like illness** should notify their professors via phone or email about their absence. Students should keep up with their academic work as much as their illness allows. Students are expected to make up any missed assignments and Health Services will not excuse students from their academic work.

• Operations & Services, EEM, and EMS Staff will assist to clean appropriate areas to minimize the spread of flu virus. The university will maintain the hand-sanitizing stations throughout all campus buildings.

• The Dean of Students Office should only be notified if a student is hospitalized. Emergency room visits do not constitute a hospitalization. Students do not need medical clearance to return to class or campus.

• For specific questions regarding these guidelines, please contact the University’s Student Health Services Department at 978-934-4991.

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**University guideline for employee diagnosed with flu or “Influenza Like Illness (ILI):**

• **If employees experience flu-like symptoms**, it is recommended they contact their health care provider for diagnosis and any medically necessary treatment.

• **The symptoms of flu** include sudden onset of fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have diarrhea and vomiting but that is not common. For more information go to: [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov) or [http://www.mass.gov/flu](http://www.mass.gov/flu).
• If employee is diagnosed with the flu, the employee should not go to work. Employees should notify their supervisors. Employees should remain at home until such time as fever (<100°F) is absent for a minimum of 24 hours without fever-reducing medication before returning to work.

• For specific questions regarding this guideline please contact the University’s Human Resources Department at 978-934-3560.

University guideline for faculty interaction with student with flu like symptoms
University flu prevention and awareness guideline for employees and students

From: Nancy Quattrocchi, Executive Director of Student Health Services – January 18, 2013

As you may know, flu can spread easily from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to prevent the spread of flu at UMass Lowell and need your help to accomplish this. Check our web page at www.uml.edu/student-services/health/ for the latest information.

Here are a few things you can do to help prevent the spread of the flu virus:

- **Practice good hand hygiene** by washing your hands with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners also are effective.

- **Practice respiratory etiquette** by covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don’t have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth; germs are spread this way.

**Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** A fever is a temperature taken with a thermometer that is equal to or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius. Look for possible signs of fever: the person feels very warm, has a flushed appearance or is sweating or shivering. For additional information on signs and symptoms visit www.flu.gov or http://www.mass.gov/flu.

**Stay home if you have the flu or a flu-like illness for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever** (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever (have chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating) without the use of fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen). **Don’t go to class or work.**

**Students should call Student Health Services at 78-934-4894 to report a fever and other flu symptoms.** Resident students are strongly encouraged to go home. Families should have a plan in place to care for ill family members. See http://www.mass.gov/flu for specific information.

**Talk with your health care providers about whether you should be vaccinated for seasonal flu.** Persons with chronic cardiac, respiratory, or neurological conditions are at high risk for complications from the flu and are strongly advised to receive the flu vaccine.

**Seasonal flu vaccine clinics were offered on campus in October and November and an additional clinic will be held Jan. 24, 2013.** Detailed information about the clinic will be available on UML Today, the Student Health Services web page, and electronic message boards throughout campus.

**If you need flu information relative to a Study Abroad program,** please go to www.cdc.gov/travel.

For the most up-to-date information on flu, visit www.flu.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636) or visit: http://www.mass.gov/flu.
Flu Information and Resources:

- Massachusetts Department of Public Health Flu Facts web site: http://www.mass.gov/flu

- UMass Lowell Student Health Services Department’s web site: www.uml.edu/student-services/health/

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: www.flu.gov