

## HR INFORMATION

### **What USF employees and managers can do to combat the flu:**

- If an employee feels ill and is experiencing any of the following symptoms, they should consult their personal physician:
  - Fever
  - Sore throat
  - Cough
  - Body Aches
  - Headache
  - Chills
  - Fatigue
- To combat the risk of influenza, practice good health habits, including frequent hand washing and sanitizing. If you work in an area that shares the use of equipment, you may wish to consider using alcohol/disinfectant wipes to reduce the likelihood of spreading germs.
- If you are not feeling well, especially if you are or may be contagious, do not report to work. If you are under the care of your physician, only return to work upon the recommendation and full release of your physician.
- If unable to report to work as scheduled, be sure to follow the normal call-in procedures established by your area/department.
- In the event that you do not have ample sick time to cover an absence related to illness, you may elect to use accrued annual leave to cover an absence. Current leave balances (sick and annual) are available in [GEMS Self Service](#).

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: What are the symptoms of Swine Flu?**

**A: The symptoms of swine flu (also known as “H1N1 Virus”) in people are expected to be similar to the symptoms of regular human seasonal influenza and include fever (usually 100 degrees or higher), body aches, lethargy, lack of appetite and coughing. Some people with swine flu also have reported runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.**

**Q: What should I do if I believe I have one or more of the symptoms?**

**A: If you are not feeling well and exhibit one or more of the symptoms, employees are encouraged to consult their health care physician immediately and stay home until you are feeling better! Influenza is contagious, and Swine Flu (H1N1 Virus) is no different. We always encourage employees to exercise safe and considerate practices in the workplace that include removing oneself when you know or believe that you may be at risk of spreading infectious germs or viruses to your co-workers.**

**Q: Will leave be grant if I need to be out sick or if I am caring for a family member that is sick?**

**A: The USF System has a sick leave policy in place for all individuals in benefit-earning positions. If you are out ill, you may use accrued sick, compensatory leave, or annual leave to keep you in a paid status. If you are a member of the Sick Leave Pool, you may also qualify for leave time under the guidelines that govern the usage of time in that Program.**

**Q:** Will I receive paid sick leave if I am out of work because I have the H1N1 virus influenza, have been exposed to a family member with influenza, or I am caring for a family member with influenza?

**A:** Again, USF system policies and regulations on Leave (sick and annual) will apply. The regulations specifically state that an employee will be covered by accrued sick leave for purposes of the employee's own personal illness, injury, exposure to a contagious disease, disability where the employee is unable to perform assigned duties, or for appointments with health care providers. In addition, sick leave may be used for the illness, injury, or appointment with health care providers of a family member. If you have any questions on current leave balances, you may verify your personal balances through [GEMS Self Service](#) or consult with your departmental Leave Coordinator.

**Q:** Can I use other types of leave if I deplete my sick leave?

**A:** Yes, any annual leave or compensatory leave that has been earned may be used to cover an employee's absence from work.

**Q:** Does FMLA apply if I contract Influenza A (H1N1)? Does FMLA apply if my spouse or child contracts Influenza A (H1N1), and I must stay home to care for him/her?

**A:** Possibly, provided the employee and family member meets the eligibility requirements. Employees are eligible if they have been employed with the university at least 12 months (not necessarily consecutively) and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12 months preceding the first day of the leave. A qualifying condition is one that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility or continuing treatment by a healthcare provider. The continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a healthcare provider or one visit and a regime of continuing treatment.

**Q:** I am a parent. Will I be allowed time off from work to care for a sick child, or to care for a child or children who have been dismissed from school due to a precautionary mandatory school closing?

**A:** Employees will be encouraged to utilize accrued sick and vacation time in the event that they have an affected child who is either personally ill or whose school has been shut down to help the prevention of the spread of infection.

**Q:** Will I be required to provide proof of an illness?

**A:** If you are directly affected by the H1N1 virus, we would ask for a release from your attending physician that states that you are able to return to work. This is to protect you and your coworkers, ensuring that it is safe for you to return to the workplace.

**Q:** Will the University close down?

**A:** The University has an Emergency Management Team that very carefully watches any situation that could potentially impact the university community, including our students, faculty, and staff. We will continue to monitor the H1N1 virus very closely and will review new information as it becomes available to determine an impact on our operations. If there is a closure of any USFSP facilities (full or partial) or cancellation of University-related activities or events, information will be available on the main USF SP webpage. Administrative leave will be provided for emergency closing of facilities as provided in the leave regulations.

**Q: Can I be sent home if I show symptoms of influenza?**

**A: Our desire is to maintain a healthy work environment for all of our employees. In the event that you are exhibiting flu-like symptoms, especially if you are running a fever with a temperature of 100 or higher, your supervisor may encourage and require you to leave the workplace. Prior to making this determination, supervisors should contact HR in such situations. The bottom line is if you are not feeling well, STAY HOME! Use common sense when determining whether or not you are fit for work if you exhibit any of the stated symptoms, and take any appropriate precautionary steps to protect yourself, your family members, and your coworkers.**

**Q: What if I just want to talk about this to someone. Who can I call?**

**A: There are a number of resources that are available on this web page. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is continually monitoring the situation and provides regular updates on their website (located at <http://www.cdc.gov/media/transcripts/2009/t090428.htm>). In addition, Human Resources is available to assist you by answering any questions that you may have regarding absences, physician's statements/releases, impact of FMLA, or other general employment-related questions. If you have questions regarding your personal health or that of an immediate family member, please consult your personal health care physician.**