

**The Pennsylvania State University
Pandemic Response Plan**

Introduction

Pandemics are a part of public health history. In the 20th century, there were three pandemics – in 1918, 1957, and 1968. The 1918 pandemic was the most deadly, killing approximately 50 million people worldwide, 675,000 in the United States. Influenza experts have consistently warned that pandemic influenza is inevitable and historically has occurred in intervals of 11 to 42 years. The question now is whether the H5N1 avian influenza will be that next pandemic; the challenge is that we do not know when the next pandemic will come nor how virulent it will be.

The most cautious approach is to base current planning on the assumption that the new virus will be comparable to the 1918 flu strain, which was both easily transmitted between humans and extremely deadly. Although this approach is conservative, it is also sensible. If H5N1 (or a similarly virulent strain) is not the virus of the next pandemic, the planning will improve our preparedness for a future pandemic influenza strain or another sort of public health disaster such as SARS, smallpox or anthrax.

At Penn State, the planning for pandemic influenza occurs within the context of University-wide emergency planning and preparedness. Each administrative unit and academic department will respond to an infectious disease pandemic initially as they would to any emergency – with a concern for protection of human life and safety first and then for continuity of University operations, including continuity of instruction, research and graduate education. To the extent possible, the response should be guided by carefully planned procedures and protocols, recognizing that any emergency will also demand flexibility and agility in a rapidly evolving situation.

Assumptions

The pandemic response plan is based on a number of specific assumptions derived from the public health literature, the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control, and the Pennsylvania Department of Health. General assumptions are:

- The first outbreaks in the U.S. are likely to occur in major metropolitan areas where the rates of international and business travel are high.
- Susceptibility to the virus will be universal.
- Efficient and sustained person to person transmission signals an imminent pandemic.
- Some persons will become infected but not develop clinical illness and will thus unknowingly transmit infection.
- Each infected individual will transmit the infection to two other individuals.
- Persons who become ill may shed virus and can transmit infection for up to one day before the onset of illness, with the highest contagion during the first two days of illness.
- The attack rate will be 30% or higher in the overall population, highest in school-aged children and declining with age.

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- The number of hospitalizations and deaths will depend on the virulence of the virus. Estimates differ ten fold between more and less severe scenarios. Planning should include the more severe scenario.
- Of those infected, about 50% will seek medical care (this could be higher if anti-viral medications and vaccines are available).
- Absenteeism will be in the range of 40%.
- Each disease wave will last between 6 and 8 weeks.
- There will be more than one wave of disease separated by several months (5-8).
- The disease will occur simultaneously throughout the U.S. (and world) and therefore outside assistance will be unlikely or limited at best.
- Because a vaccine needs to closely match an influenza virus, it is unlikely that a vaccine would be available early in a pandemic and quantities will be limited even when available. A vaccine will probably be available later in the pandemic (second and subsequent waves) but quantities may not meet demand and there will need to be priority lists for distribution.
- Isolation, quarantine, social distancing and personal hygiene practices are likely to be at least somewhat effective in slowing transmission and thus reducing the overall impact of the disease, especially very early in the outbreak.

Further, at Penn State we assume the following:

- The first wave will occur during either the fall or spring semester, while classes are in session.
- On their own, students may begin to leave the campus when the first cases occur.
- Faculty and staff absenteeism will be in the range of 40%, increasing quickly if local K-12 schools and businesses begin to close.
- When the University cancels classes and advises the students to return “home,” there will be approximately 5,800 who will remain in University Park because of travel restrictions or because they do not have a suitable alternative living option. They are:

700 domestic students and 600 international students living in residence halls who cannot travel home

500 international students and family members in PSU “family” housing

4,000 students (graduate and undergraduate) living in off-campus housing who will remain in the Centre region

- Public health recommendations for isolation, quarantine and social distancing are likely to rely on voluntary participation. PSU will provide for isolation and quarantine of PSU students and residents of PSU Residence Halls.
- The University will suspend classes for 4-8 weeks for each wave of the pandemic.

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- Recovery and resumption of normal campus activities will be slow and difficult, with great emotional, physical and financial impact to individuals and the institution.

Projections of Avian Influenza Impact

	Population	Low Severity	Moderate Severity	High Severity
<i>Pennsylvania</i>	12,406,292			
Cases		3,004,915	3,004,915	3,004,915
Hospitalizations		37,553	112,658	225,318
Deaths		9,062	27,185	54,369
<i>Centre County</i>	140,476			
Cases		35,119	35,119	35,119
Hospitalizations		421	1,264	2,529
Deaths		102	309	818
<i>PSU</i>	42,000			
Cases		10,500	10,500	10,500
Hospitalizations		126	378	750
Deaths		30	92	185

Numbers for Centre County and PSU extrapolated from Pennsylvania population predictions from Trust for Americas Health www.healthyamericans.org. The “Moderate Severity” column projections were based on the CDC FluAid 2.0 program and estimated for a pandemic strain three times more lethal than the 1968 pandemic (the 1918 pandemic was six time more lethal than he 1968 pandemic). These extrapolations may not be accurate for PSU due to variability in severity of illness in different age groups.

Pandemic Response Plan

What follows is a document in several parts. First is an overall Pandemic Response Plan designed to be broad in scope. It defines the stages of pandemic disease and then categorizes University response at each of four levels (A-D). It contains a basic outline of the activities and responsibilities of various key University departments and areas in an evolving disease scenario.

Following this are a number of much more detailed documents, each defining in a much more specific way, guidelines for action once it is clear that a pandemic is occurring. Each plan was developed by the individuals most involved in that part of the response, but in every instance, in consultation with the entire Infectious Hazards Planning Group. These are, because of the nature of this particular public health challenge, drafts. They will need to change as more is known and learned about the specifics of a given virus or other infectious agent.

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Abbreviation Key

AIRT	Animal Issues Response Team
ANGEL	This is an on-line course management system used at PSU by faculty, staff and students
CAPS	Counseling and Psychological Services
COG	Centre Region Council of Governments
COOP	Continuity of Operations Plan
DOH	Department of Health
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
EHS	Environmental Health and Safety
EMG	Emergency Management Group
HR	Human Resources
IHPG	Infectious Hazards Planning Group
MNMC	Mount Nittany Medical Center
OHR	Office of Human Resources
OPP	Office of Physical Plant
PEMA	Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency
POD	Points of Dispensing
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PSU	Penn State University
UHS	University Health Services
WHO	World Health Organization

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<i>Incident Response Level Criteria and Corresponding WHO Phase</i>				
<i>PSU Emergency Plan Incident Response Level Criteria</i>	<i>No current health and safety hazard</i>	<i>Minimal immediate hazard to students, faculty and staff. Can be resolved with minimal outside agency assistance.</i>	<i>Endangers students, faculty and staff, and requires coordination with outside agencies. PSU implements travel restrictions.</i>	<i>Significant risk to students, faculty and staff and requires substantial coordination with outside agencies.</i>
<i>WHO Phase</i>	<i>Phase 3 – Pandemic alert period</i>	<i>Phase 4 – Elevated pandemic risk</i>	<i>Phase 5 – Pandemic imminent</i>	<i>Phase 6 – Pandemic period</i>
<i>Situation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Situation • Human infections with a new subtype, but no sustained human-to-human spread 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small, highly localized clusters anywhere in the world with limited human-to-human transmission. • International travel advisories begin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large clusters, but still localized. • Public health authorities urge to prepare for social distancing. • International travel warnings and passenger screenings begin. • Virus characterized as having a high rate of transmissibility and/or mortality. • Worried “well” begin to use resources. • Trough between waves. • Isolated cases or clusters in Pennsylvania. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased and sustained transmission in the general US population. • Confirmation of a high rate of transmissibility and/or mortality. • Immediately preceded by falling class attendance, students leaving campus and public health recommendations to curtail/cancel public activities in PA. • Rising employee absenteeism. • International travel restrictions.

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<i>Emergency Management and Policymaking Responsibilities</i>				
Infectious Hazards Planning Group (IHPG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Pandemic Response Plan. • Joint review of plans with MNMC and PA Department of Health and other partners. • Track preparedness tasks and accomplishments. • Identify essential functions and personnel campus wide. • Encourage departments to draft and update Emergency Continuity of Operations Plans along with specific Pandemic Response components. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess threat and implement appropriate Level B activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess threat and implement appropriate Level C activities. • Advise Presidents Council and activate PSU EMG. • Plan for recovery in post-pandemic period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IHPG dissolves when EMG is activated.
University Relations and IHPG, UHS marketing manager (see Appendix F)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop pandemic influenza communications for all levels A-D. • Plan for general information call center. • Provide appropriate periodic updates to faculty, staff and students. • Issue focused educational campaign, self-protection information, handwashing, promote seasonal flu vaccinations. • Share PSU Pandemic Response Plan widely • Develop and post pandemic planning web site, linked to PSU home page. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue Level B Communications • Select technical expert spokespersons for internal and medical communications. • Refine plan for call center content. • Refine level C communications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue Level C communications (protocol for suspected cases, preparation for social distancing, transportation home). • Refine Level D communications including script for telephone call center. • Develop post-pandemic communications (medical clearance, recovery). • Distribute PPE to members and call center staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue Level D communications (self-protection, social distancing, etc.). • Call center takes calls 24/7. • Coordinate internal messages and news releases. • Manage media relations issues.

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Emergency Management Group (Led by Vice President for Finance and Business Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endorse PSU Pandemic Response Plan. Oversee University-wide emergency planning. Assess PPE needs and provide funding to stockpile needed supplies. Review and confirm succession plan for PSU leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue Level A activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activate EMG. Distribute PPE to members. Evaluate influenza pandemic effects; reevaluate response plan and priorities. Authorize implementation of Pandemic Response Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for post-pandemic recovery and resumption of normal PSU operations. Plan for revised instruction calendar and completion of the semester.
PSU Director of Emergency Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine PSU Emergency Plan and unit/department COOPs. Coordinate planning with COG and regional authorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement PSU's Emergency Plan. Coordinates response with MNMC, COG, State College health officer, PEMA and PA Department of Health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather information on number of suspected cases on campus, and in Centre County. Advise Presidents Council. Continue coordination with external agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activate PSU EMG and Center. Gather number of cases on campus and in County; report to EMG. Advise EMG.
<i>Responsibilities of Essential Departments and Units</i>				
Continuity of Operations and emergency plans will guide all general departments and units.				
Dining/Food Services (see Appendix A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities and education re: influenza. Identify suppliers and alternates for Level D meals. Assess pandemic response personnel and PPE needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for delivery of Level D meals. Identify alternate suppliers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pandemic response personnel receive PPE. Order and stock Level D meals to support students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pandemic response personnel must report to work. Provide Level D meals to students and employees who remain on campus.
Energy Services (OPP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities. With assistance from EHS, provide education and training to staff. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop work schedules in anticipation of Level D. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pandemic response personnel must report to work. Follow emergency plan to maintain essential services.

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Environmental Health and Safety (see Appendix C)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities. • Assess needs for pandemic response personnel. • Draft PPE policy for PI pandemic response personnel. • Assess pandemic response personnel PPE needs and stock. • Draft plan for handling of medical waste. • Promote self-care and handwashing. • Provide educational program on influenza and response to all pandemic response employee units. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With Occupational Health, fit test pandemic response personnel. • Review cleaning procedures with housekeepers. • Plan for increased volume of infectious waste. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic response personnel receive PPE. • Provide instructions to departmental safety officers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic response personnel must report to work. • Arrange for additional medical waste pickups. • Assist public health officials with investigation of suspected cases. • If POD is activated provide appropriate resources.
Facilities Services (OPP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities. • Needs assessment for housekeeping supplies. • Assess pandemic response personnel PPE needs and stock. • With assistance from EHS, train housekeepers for hygiene and cleaning of personal contact surfaces (e.g., doorknobs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue Level A activities. • Develop specific staffing plans for Levels C and D. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic response personnel receive PPE. • Review standards for cleaning in quarantine/isolation facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic response personnel must report to work. • If POD is activated, provide appropriate resources. • Change housekeeping procedures to prioritize pandemic response personnel areas, remaining students/families, and cleaning of personal contact surfaces.

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Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue Level A activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide how class suspension will affect tuition and other payments. • Make plans for payroll continuity. • Evaluate and plan for telework solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic response personnel must report to work. • To allow staff to work from home, consider allowing off-campus access to financial planning, budgets and payroll information systems.
Housing and Residence Life (see Appendix A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities. • Develop housing plan to support pandemic social distancing, quarantine, isolation. • Assess pandemic response personnel PPE needs and stock. • Work with UHS & EHS to develop tracking system for students remaining in residence halls. • In cooperation with EHS train support staff on hygiene and Level D plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform students of social distancing policy; ask them to plan for leaving campus if classes are suspended. • Review Level D COOP to support students/families who remain when classes are suspended. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic response personnel receive PPE. • Develop work schedules to cover facilities where students are housed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement housing aspects of pandemic influenza social distancing, quarantine and isolation. • Pandemic response personnel must report to work. • Support international students, families and others who remain in PSU residences (family housing and students in other PSU residences). • Provide essential non-medical support services to students in quarantine/isolation.

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Human Resources (see Appendix B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities. Develop guidelines for supervisors and employees. Advise on HR aspects of pandemic influenza planning; identify issues and guidelines. Assess pandemic response personnel PPE needs and stock. Review teleworking policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform campus of policies for teleworking, social distancing and pandemic response personnel. Work with departments to develop plans for providing substitutes for pandemic response personnel. Develop tracking systems for employee absenteeism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind campus-wide pandemic response personnel of their duties and responsibilities. EAP available to employees for counseling services. Gather employee absenteeism data and report to IHPG/EMG. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pandemic response personnel must report to work. Implement HR aspects of pandemic influenza social distancing plan. May direct faculty and staff to stay home. To allow work from home for HR staff, consider allowing off-campus access to HR information systems. Gather employee absenteeism data and report to EMG EAP and HR reps direct employees to counseling services
Information Technology Services (includes telecommunications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities. Review IT needs for increased teleworking and distance learning. Facilitate and support the development of distance learning alternatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist in planning for general information call center. Assist in expanding use of ANGEL for course management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with implementation of distance learning. Assist with implementation of call center. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pandemic response personnel must report to work. Support distance learning. Support general information call center, if implemented. If POD is activated, provide appropriate resources.
International Student Services and Study Abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities. Coordinate tracking/information systems with University travel offices so as to maximize effectiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue advisories for students, faculty and staff planning international travel. Issue advisories for students, faculty and staff and visitors arriving from affected regions. Review policies and procedures for recalling students from affected regions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise and communicate with overseas students, faculty and staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pandemic response personnel must report to work. Continue to advise, communicate with overseas students, faculty and staff. When possible, support overseas students, faculty and staff who are unable to return.

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Occupational Health Service (see Appendix B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities. Assess pandemic response personnel PPE and N95 needs and inventory; order stock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With EHS, fit test pandemic response personnel. Support seasonal flu vaccination for employees in occupational health programs. Promote seasonal flu vaccination for all PSU staff. Review surveillance procedures with PA Department of Health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report suspected cases to UHS director. Support OHR in assessing fitness for work. Develop protocols to support HR decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pandemic response personnel must report to work. Report cases to UHS director. Assist PA Department of Health with investigation of suspected employee cases and contact tracing. Identify recovered cases for use as pandemic response personnel.
POD Planning Group including limited dispensing of medicines to essential personnel (chaired by UHS Clinical Director) (see Appendix E)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify POD first responders and inform them of their responsibilities. POD first responders receive training. Develop priority list for vaccination/medication distribution. Drill POD plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drill POD Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare to activate POD and provide appropriate resources. Notify community re: priority distribution plan. 	<p>If vaccine or antivirals are to be distributed via POD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activate on-campus mass dispensing site. POD first responders must report. Provide appropriate resources. Adjust procedures and notification if limited dispensing.
Provost, Office of (see Appendix G)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop emergency plans for each college/academic department. Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate with faculty re: emergency plan. Work with HR to develop guidelines for faculty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate with faculty re: decision to suspend classes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pandemic response personnel must report to work. Develop plan for return to regular class schedule Develop recovery plan re: credit/graduation requirements.

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Student Affairs (see Appendix D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities. Assess pandemic response personnel PPE needs and stock. Develop plan for communication with students (including call center) Develop plan for facilitating transportation of students home. Provide emotional support services/resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue level A activities. Confirm transportation plan resource availability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pandemic response personnel receive PPE. Ask students to plan for leaving campus if classes are suspended. Implement call center. Provide emotional and social support to students. Implement transportation plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate with parents and families. Communicate with students/families remaining in State College: in family housing and in other PSU housing. Communicate re: student deaths.
University Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities. Assess pandemic response personnel PPE needs and stock. Influenza awareness training (symptoms and hygiene) for dispatchers, security and police. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop plans to provide security support to various facilities/services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review POD responsibilities. Pandemic response personnel receive PPE. Assist in implementing transportation plan. In consultation with transportation services, develop alternate approach for parking during level D. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pandemic response personnel must report to work. Consider special parking rules for essential personnel. Prepare for crowd control: social distancing measures, residential housing. If POD is activated, secure campus mass dispensing sites.

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University Health Services (see Appendix H)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities. • Assess PPE and N95 needs and inventory; order stocks. • Create self-care information/packets for students. • Develop surveillance plan for individuals with acute respiratory illness • Draft guidelines for on-campus POD. • Draft guidelines for internal UHS protocol. • Draft plan for service delivery at alternate sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give seasonal influenza vaccinations. • Review PPE and N95 needs; inventory. • Pandemic response personnel receive N95 fit testing. • Order self-care items. • Promote seasonal influenza vaccination. • Continue to refine surge care plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic response personnel receive PPE and N95s. • Daily report suspected cases to UHS Director. • CAPS provides counseling services. • Provide guidance to campuses re: isolation and quarantine of students, faculty and staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic response personnel must report to work. • Daily report cases to Director. • Provide acute health services to remaining students in PSU residences, family housing and off campus housing. • Provide residential visits for ill students. • Assist PA Department of Health with investigation of suspected cases and contact tracing. • CAPS provides counseling services • Monitor health status of students in isolation/quarantine.
VP for Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify pandemic response personnel and inform them of their responsibilities. • Assess pandemic response personnel PPE needs and stock. • Review plans and impacts to lab animal care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop plans to staff essential labs. • Develop priority lists for lab support. • Develop guidelines for graduate student research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic response personnel receive PPE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic response personnel must report to work. • AIRT supports laboratory animals. • To allow Division staff to work from home, consider allowing off-campus access to information systems.

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<i>Responsibilities of other Officials, Units and Departments</i>				
All Departments and units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft, update Emergency and COOP. • Instructional departments should consider developing/enhancing distance learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Level A. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare to activate COOP. • Plan distancing measures/dispersement for essential personnel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate Emergency and COOP. • Report absent employees to HR. • Support directives from EMG.
Unit/College HR Reps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit volunteers for POD support. • Influenza awareness training (symptoms and hygiene) • Assist in communications with unit/department employees re: pandemic and emergency plan content. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor campus communications and disseminate information. • Remain available for further instructions. • Report absent employees to Central HR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Level C. • Report absent employees to HR.