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Flu Guidance for Supervisors of HR Staff

At the start of our new academic year, the University has developed guidance for supervisors of Human Resources staff for handling influenza, including the new H1N1 (swine flu) virus, in the Princeton workplace.

DETAILED INFORMATION AVAILABLE

More detailed guidance for all HR employees and HR policies related to flu in the workplace, including a list of frequently asked questions, can be found at www.princeton.edu/hr/progserv/er/policyguid/h1n1workguid.pdf

Information about influenza for the entire campus community is available on the University's H1N1 web page at <http://web.princeton.edu/sites/emergency/swineflu>.

ROLE OF SUPERVISORS DURING INFLUENZA SEASON

Supervisors will play a key role in helping to minimize the spread of illness by remaining vigilant and encouraging employees to adhere to the guidance in this communication as well as the personal hygiene and other precautions detailed on the University's [H1N1](#) Web page. Not doing so may result in even higher absenteeism due to illness, with potentially significant impacts on a department's ability to function effectively.

Supervisors should direct staff members experiencing flu-like symptoms, i.e., fever with cough and/or sore throat, to go home, or remain at home, and contact their personal physicians.

HOW TO RESPOND TO FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS

Employees should self-isolate, i.e., stay away from others, in their homes until no longer contagious.

The guideline is for employees to remain isolated during illness and for at least 24 hours after fever is gone, except to get medical care. Fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medication.

Staff members should consult with their personal physician to determine when they are no longer contagious and can return to work. In most cases, employees may plan on returning to work after the period of self-isolation is completed. A doctor's note is not required to return to work **unless** an employee is returning from a short-term disability leave.

LEAVE TIME AVAILABLE DURING INFLUENZA SEASON

Benefits-eligible HR staff may use [sporadic absence](#) time to cover personal illness or care for an immediate family member who is ill. Unionized employees should refer to their collective bargaining agreements for absence policies. Staff members who do not have sufficient sporadic absence time may use accrued vacation time or take unpaid leave to cover their absence. The sporadic absence policy provides eight (8) sporadic absence days each fiscal year; employees may roll over any portion of their unused sporadic absence days from one fiscal year to the next, up to a combined maximum of 16 days per fiscal year.

Borrowing Sporadic Absence Time (new interim policy provision)

Individuals may borrow up to eight (8) sporadic absence days from their FY2011 allocation of sporadic absence time

provided they:

- have exhausted their sporadic absence days **and**
- have no more than 30 days of accrued vacation time **and**
- borrow and use them **only** from September 1, 2009, to March 31, 2010 **and**
- use it to cover absences **only** from H1N1 or flu-like illness **and**
- borrow up to a maximum of four days for each occurrence of H1N1 or flu-like illness during this period **and** no more than eight (8) sporadic absence days in total.

Employees with more than 30 days of vacation accrual are expected to use that time before being advanced sporadic absence time.

Short-term Disability

Staff members who are sick and absent from work for at least eight (8) full consecutive calendar days may qualify for [short term disability](#).

DISCLOSURE OF MEDICAL INFORMATION

Supervisors should not ask or require any employee to disclose whether or not they have been diagnosed with H1N1 flu or flu-like illness. Under University policy and applicable law, health information about an individual is considered private and should not be disclosed to others. If employees voluntarily tell supervisors that they have been diagnosed with H1N1 flu or flu-like illness, supervisors should not share this information with others in the department without first consulting with HR.

PREVENTION AND PROTECTION

Everyone can help protect themselves and others from getting sick by practicing good hygiene at all times. Recommended precautions include washing your hands frequently with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth to prevent the spread of germs.

If you have specific questions not addressed on the HR or H1N1 web pages linked above, please call the Office of Human Resources at 8-3300.
