

Pandemic Influenza/Contagious Threat Annex to the
Continuity of Operations Plan of the
Virginia Institute of Marine Science
College of William & Mary



CONFIDENTIAL

version 3, July 14, 2008

Pandemic Influenza/Contagious Threat Annex to the
Continuity of Operations Plan of the
Virginia Institute of Marine Science
College of William & Mary

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION:	1
ASSUMPTIONS:	1
GENERAL ASSUMPTIONS.	1
OBJECTIVES.	2
CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS.	3
PANDEMIC EVENT ACTION STAGES	3
ALTERNATE WORK SCHEDULES:	4
ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS.	5
STUDENT EVACUATION PLANS.	6
VENDORS:	6
HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT:	7
MONITORING PANDEMIC STATUS	7
WORKFORCE PROTECTION.	7
IMPLEMENTATION:	8
RECOVERY.	9

INTRODUCTION:

This document is the Pandemic Influenza Emergency Response Plan of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science of the College of William & Mary. As part of its Continuity of Operations Plan, the Institute anticipates and plans for actions to be taken for significant contagious disease threats such as pandemic flu. A pandemic outbreak of a virulent new influenza virus could overwhelm health and medical capabilities as well as all levels of government and industry worldwide and result in high rates of morbidity and mortality. This type of outbreak could result in tens of thousands of deaths, millions of hospitalizations, and hundreds of billions of dollars in costs to the world economy. Vaccines will take many months to reach effective production numbers and will probably not be available for the first wave of pandemic flu. This Annex documents the Institute's planned response to communicable diseases and in particular to a highly communicable disease of this type and is intended to work in concert with the William & Mary's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and Emergency Management Plan (EMP).

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) includes the School of Marine Science (SMS) of the College of William & Mary. Because VIMS is part of the College and because it relies upon some function of the College for general operations, this Plan draws most heavily from the Pandemic Influenza/Contagious Threat Annex to the Continuity of Operations Plan of the College. However, situations differ between the VIMS campus at Gloucester Point and the main campus of the College. For example, VIMS has neither any resident population nor any undergraduate students. Therefore, there are substantial differences between the Plan for the Institute and the Plan for the College.

ASSUMPTIONS:

GENERAL ASSUMPTIONS.

- That communicable diseases not pandemic will be manageable in accordance with the Institute's COOP and EMP.
- That the first pandemic flu outbreak will occur outside the U.S. or with warning such that VIMS and the College will have some lead time in which to respond.
- The overall pandemic flu wave will last 8-13 weeks with multiple waves probable; local outbreaks of the flu will be 6-8 weeks long.
- The health and safety of the campus community will be of paramount importance.
- Susceptibility to pandemic flu will be universal.
- Additional resources and support from State and Federal agencies will not be available or will be limited.

- The Institute's greatest risk is an easily transmissible, highly contagious virus. Maintaining any portion of the Institute's three overriding missions, research, education, and advisory services, would be exceptionally difficult especially as the surrounding community, including most services, would be similarly depleted.
- If a severe outbreak were to occur, William & Mary should expect to suspend on-campus classes for 7-10 weeks. The class suspension decision will be needed early to allow residential students to return to a less-risky home environment. The College's response to this very difficult circumstance would dictate some of the response at VIMS.
- VIMS should expect at least a partial closure and a substantial, perhaps extreme, reduction in the ability to conduct business.
- Social distancing to reduce contact between individuals will slow but not stop the spread of the virus. Minimizing public assemblies, proper cough/sneeze etiquette, increased hand washing, use of protective clothing and the closure of the Institute will all contribute to slowing the virus spread.
- Workforce absenteeism could be 40 percent or higher due to illness and to the need for faculty, staff, and graduate assistants to care for family. Fear of infection will keep some persons from the work place. Back-up options will be necessary for essential functions. As essential employees recover, they will be sorely needed to maintain even a closed status and prepare for recovery and re-opening.
- Innovative work approaches will be essential to maintaining even minimal viability of the Institute.
- Individuals who recover will have a significant degree of immunity and their efforts at work will be vital to the recovery of the Institute.
- Businesses, schools, child care, and adult care facilities, as well as emergency services such as police and fire response will all be severely affected.
- Communications will be vital throughout, from initial closure to recovery. Families, the surrounding community, local and state government and elected officials will all require periodic updates.

OBJECTIVES.

- Minimize communicable disease risks, and particularly pandemic flu risks to students, faculty, and staff.
- Protect and preserve research to the extent possible with the Institute closed; the intent is to reduce all research activity to a maintenance level if the decision is made to close.
- Protect Institute facilities and infrastructure to enable reopening after the pandemic.

- After the pandemic, resume normal teaching, research and advisory service operations as soon as possible.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS.

- In response to a severe health scenario such as a highly infectious and fatal virus, the Institute expects to close and suspend operations for an interval of weeks or months until the threat reasonably subsides. Except for a few exceptions approved by the Dean/Director, all faculty will be required to leave campus. Most campus academic, administrative and support operations will be minimized or closed. Current estimates for a pandemic suggest closure could last as long as 12 weeks.
- Minimal utilities will be supplied to buildings. Housekeeping and maintenance activities will be provided on a minimal basis until the re-opening of campus buildings has been announced. Buildings not in use will be secured in a way to prevent re-entry by all but approved personnel. Research activities that depend upon campus facilities will be reduced to a maintenance level, *i.e.*, keeping cryogenics topped up and equipment in a standby mode using minimal power and marginal environmental control. Non-replaceable and essential living stocks will be maintained. A small number of essential employees will be needed to maintain safe, secure, and hazard-free buildings and to maintain minimal functionality of critical equipment and systems. The way in which these essential staff members conduct themselves while on campus will be in a manner to minimize exposure to others who may be carrying the virus.
- With workforce absenteeism at 40 percent or higher, it is anticipated that all essential Facilities Management staff as well as other support staff will be needed to maintain the Institute in a closed condition, capable of recovery and reestablishment of its education, research, and advisory service functions. As essential individuals recover, the expectation is that they will return to the workforce to replace newly ill or absent employees.
- The Institute’s senior administration in consultation with appropriate offices at the College will determine the best method of continuing or resuming academic work and completing degrees during closure.
- As the pandemic unfolds, new information on transmissibility, morbidity, mortality, employee absenteeism, and other variables, as well as possible direction by State or Federal authorities may affect or alter this plan.

PANDEMIC EVENT ACTION STAGES.

Federal/State Stages	Action
0. No Apparent hazard	Pre-event assessment and planning.

1. Suspected human to human isolated outbreaks overseas.	Review COOP Pandemic Flu plans & begin preparations. Communicate with all stakeholders.
2. Confirmed human outbreak overseas.	Intense planning and preparation; begin active preparation for suspension of operations and closure of campus. Maintain communication.
3. Widespread outbreaks overseas.	Begin phased suspension operations. Make active preparations for closing campus. Activate social distancing among staff. Maintain communication.
4. First case in North America. (VIMS will follow the lead of William & Mary)	Suspend operations. Begin “soft” closure of campus. Reduce staff to minimum. Maintain communication.
5. Spread throughout U.S.	Maintain VIMS in closed status. Maintain communication.
6. Recovery	Increase staff presence; begin opening preparations.

Actions may be accelerated based on any or some combination of the following:

- World Health Organization declaration of Phase 6 – Pandemic period.
- Evidence of a high rate of infectivity, morbidity, or mortality.
- State/Federal guidance or direction.
- Accelerating employee absenteeism.
- Actions by other College or Universities.
- Transportation systems closing/curtailment.
- Time of year, weather, other events.

ALTERNATE WORK SCHEDULES:

If and when the Institute closes for an extended time due to pandemic flu or a similar event, the actual timing and duration of closure will be set based on this plan and current

available information. Personnel not needed will be sent home in standby status. Faculty will quickly suspend their research. Departments will make work arrangements using available COOP designated essential personnel. Infrastructure and facilities will be closed down or maintained as necessary to support residual staff and function. Vacancies will be filled only on an exception basis. Remaining staff will be consolidated as is consistent with social distancing requirements essential to mitigation of the flu. Both non-essential and essential personnel may be required to:

- Report to a workplace other than their usual duty station; or
- Work at home; or
- Stay at home.

Great flexibility will be required of all parties to minimize exposure risk, while ensuring the Institute can recover after the pandemic as efficiently as possible.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS.

When the decision to close the Institute is made, it will be crucial to execute the decision immediately. Research, academic, support, and service departments will adjust their implementation plans to reflect actual events as the pandemic unfolds. Even with the Institute's educational, research and advisory service missions suspended or temporarily shut down, some staff will be necessary to protect and maintain the Institute's physical assets, to prepare for recovery or reopening, and to support staff protecting the physical plant and preparing for recovery. Some of these functions follow; others will be developed as pandemic specifics become known.

- Coordination of healthcare to include provision of flu immunizations, teaching of social distancing details and flu mitigation practices. (Safety and Environmental Programs)
- Provide utilities support to the campus. (Facilities Management)
- Provide technical guidance to affected departments and the storage and removal of biological, chemical and radioactive waste. (Safety and Environmental Programs)
- Provide housekeeping services for facilities still in use. Provide maintenance and repair for facilities still in use. Secure facilities not in use. (Facilities Management)
- Provide staffing support for essential departments and maintain communication with all employees. (Dean/Director's Office, Human Resources, Communications,)
- Maintain technology and communication services. (Information Technology)

- Provide acquisition of goods, operate storerooms and provide remuneration to vendors. (Procurement, Financial Services)
- Provide accounting services, university receivables and payroll management. (Financial Services)
- Provide security and safety for College students, faculty and staff remaining on campus as well as Institute facilities and infrastructure. (Facilities Management)
- Provide safe and effective reduction of research activities including consideration of laboratory animals and stand-by maintenance of sensitive equipment. (Director for Research and Advisory Services)
- Provide continuing contact and communications with students (Dean of Graduate Studies)
- Provide support and communications to members of the VIMS community who are abroad (Dean/Director)
- Provide communication to all internal and external publics. (Director of Communications)

VENDORS:

The Institute relies upon other parts of the College of William & Mary, agencies, outside vendors, and contractors for everything from mail and package delivery to chemicals, cleaning materials, building repair parts, and building repairs.

- Vendors and contractors critical for essential functions will be identified, understanding that the same pandemic influenza that strikes the department might strike vendors and contractors equally.
- Determine possible alternate vendors and contractors.
- Determine the degree of interdependency between and among the various entities with respect to data, information, or support to, and those who provide data and support functions. An analysis of how critical that interdependency should become part of continuing operations and stated in the “Concept of Operations.”
- Adjust vendor and contractor details in COOP and Emergency Management Plans as necessary.

HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT:

Successful management of human capital during a communicable disease event or pandemic threat will require VIMS to function with reduced staff. Flexibility, cross-training, and cross performance will be keys to success as the disease moves through employee ranks and those able to work vary from day to day. Operation with staffs of continuously changing individuals who have varying degrees of knowledge of the functions to be performed must be anticipated. The Institute will adjust its COOP Plan as necessary to reflect the actual situation.

MONITORING PANDEMIC STATUS.

The Director of Operations, Support Services, and Special Projects will maintain communications with the Emergency Management Team of the College. The Director of Operations, Support Services, and Special Projects will advise the Dean/Director as appropriate. Departments and centers will implement and expand their implementation plans as the pandemic threat becomes better defined and progresses.

WORKFORCE PROTECTION.

Protection of those able to work to mitigate the impact of a pandemic is one of the most important aspects of human capital management. To date, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has issued pandemic influenza personal protective equipment (PPE) guidance only for patient care. The CDC is not likely to issue additional pandemic influenza PPE guidance until the threat becomes imminent. When CDC does issue guidance, the Institute will follow it to provide the specified PPE (*e.g.*, masks, gloves) to employees in CDC-identified high risk job classifications, and to employees who perform high risk duties identified by CDC.

To maintain the health of those employees who either do not become ill during the initial wave of pandemic influenza, or who return to work after recovering from influenza, each department must protect its workforce. The Institute will need to assess their employees' risk based on job function and make decisions regarding which steps employees will need to take to help protect their workforce. The list below is for consideration:

- Provide employees and customers with easy access to soap and warm water, hand sanitizers, tissues, sanitizing wipes, and other office cleaning supplies. Consider stockpiling these supplies.
- Facilitate the voluntary use of N-95 or better respirators and gloves by providing training in the use thereof and making them freely available. OSHA requires training and "fit testing" prior to the use of respirators.
- Install hand sanitizer dispensing units throughout facilities.
- Use no-touch trash containers.

- Educate employees on proper hand washing techniques. Hands should be washed frequently using soap and warm water. Rub hands together for at least 30 seconds with soap on them and rinse under warm water. Do not touch potentially contaminated/dirty surfaces with clean hands.
- Educate employees on cough etiquette. Cough into a sleeve, shirt, or a tissue and not into hands. Hands should be washed immediately if they have been coughed into.
- Employees should regularly clean frequently touched work surfaces such as telephones, computer equipment, and vehicle steering wheels.
- Require employees to stay at home if they are ill or at the first symptom of illness.
- Ensure proper cleaning of common areas such as bathrooms.

Prior to or as the pandemic threat develops, the Institute's Emergency Management Team will provide further direction including direction with respect to stockpiling personal protective equipment.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The Institute will establish brief implementation plans consistent with the COOP Plan to support closure of the Institute, cessation of teaching, suspension of research, temporary downsizing of the minimum necessary to allow the Institute to protect its physical assets, maintain communication with stakeholders, and recover and re-establish itself at the end of the pandemic, or possibly between waves of flu. The implementation plan should reflect planned actions by "Pandemic Event Action Stages." In preparing implementation plans, departments should:

- Review all planned functions in light of a potential 40% reduction in work force for the duration of the pandemic.
- Prioritize functions to ensure that resources are applied to essential functions.
- Ensure essential personnel are so designated and are informed of that designation.
- Cross-train personnel to ensure critical functions can be accomplished.
- Identify back-up strategies to ensure leadership and professional responsibilities can be met; include multiple orders of succession.
- Identify functions which can be performed off-site, on back shifts, on alternate work schedules, or by other means that support social distancing.

- The Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan must identify research projects and activities that require time to reduce to a maintenance level and plan for that circumstance. These projects most likely are those involving living organisms.

RECOVERY.

Continuity of research, instruction, and advisory service is the responsibility of the Office of the Dean/Director. The Dean/Director, the Director of Research and Advisory Services, the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Director for Planning and Budget, and the Director for Operations, Support Services and Special Projects are responsible for planning for and initiating operations and recovery operations with the advice and assistance of the Emergency Management Team and consistent with the Institute's Continuity of Operations Plan.