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Infectious Disease Preparedness and Emergency Response Plan

Introduction

Organizational operations may be adversely affected in the event of a pandemic and should have continuity plans in place to assist in the continuance of their core business. Continuing to operate is vital to an organization's ability to remain a viable entity during times of increased threats from all hazards, manmade or natural. Since the threat to an organization's continuity of operations is great during a pandemic outbreak, it is important for Linqm, to have an Infectious Disease Preparedness and Emergency Response Plan (IDPERP) (or annex) in place. While organizations may be forced to suspend some operations due to the severity of a pandemic outbreak, an effective IDPERP can assist an organization in its efforts to remain operational and strengthen the ability to resume operations.

Objective

Linqm is dedicated to the protection of its employees, facilities, and resources. We are committed to ensuring that our company can continue all aspects of its critical business processes during a pandemic and can safely resume normal operations as quickly as possible after a pandemic affects our facility(ies). We place a high priority on developing, validating, and, if necessary, implementing our company's Pandemic Plan.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this IDPERP is to provide procedures, guidance, and resources to protect our employees, customers, and the general public in the event of an outbreak of infectious disease. The plan is designed to prevent, prepare, and respond to outbreaks of infectious diseases, including meningitis, tuberculosis, influenza, COVID-19, and other diseases as they arise.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act General Duty Clause, Section 5(a)(1), requires employers to provide their employees with a workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm. This plan is designed as a good-faith effort to protect employees' health and safety and includes compliance with applicable and relevant Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) safety and health standards and regulations.

This plan and related procedures should be modified as needed based on the specific circumstances, especially in the case of a pandemic.

Concept of Operations

Linqm will monitor the severity of the pandemic and establish continuity activation triggers to address the unique nature of the pandemic threat. The IDPERP will be implemented as needed to support the continued performance of core functions.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Active Cases	Infectious disease that can spread from the infectious individual to others.
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Contaminated	Presence or the reasonably anticipated presence of infectious materials on an item or surface.
Decontamination	Use of physical or chemical means to remove, inactivate, or destroy infectious disease on a surface or item to the point where they are no longer capable of transmitting infectious particles; the surface or item is rendered safe for handling, use, or disposal.
Epidemic	Widespread occurrence of an infectious disease in a community at a particular time.
Handwashing Facilities	Facility providing an adequate supply of running potable water, soap, and single-use towels or hot airdrying machines.
Infectious Disease	Caused by pathogenic microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi; the diseases can be spread, directly or indirectly, from one person to another. Infectious diseases do not include tick or insect borne diseases.
Isolation	Separation of infected persons (or potentially infected persons) from persons who are not infected.
Pandemic	Widespread occurrence of an infectious disease prevalent over a whole country or the world.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Specialized clothing or equipment worn by an employee for protection against a hazard. General work clothes (e.g., uniforms, pants, shirts, or blouses) not intended to function as protection against a hazard are not considered to be PPE.
Quarantine	Separation and restriction of the activities of healthy persons that have been exposed to a communicable disease. The aim is to prevent transmission of the disease from potentially infected persons to healthy persons during the incubation period.
Risk Exposure Categories	Worker risk of occupational exposure to infectious disease during an outbreak may vary from high, medium, or low (caution) risk. **High exposure risk jobs** are those with high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of infectious disease. Employees in this category include: • Healthcare delivery and support staff (e.g., doctors, nurses, and other hospital staff who must enter patients' rooms) exposed to known or suspected infectious disease patients. (Note: when such employees perform aerosol-generating procedures, their exposure risk level becomes very high.)

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	• Medical transport employees (e.g., ambulance vehicle operators) moving known or suspected infectious disease patients in enclosed vehicles. • Mortuary employees involved in preparing (e.g., for burial or cremation) the bodies of people who are known to have, or suspected of having, infectious disease at the time of their death.
	Medium exposure risk jobs includes: • Frequent and/or close contact (i.e., within 6 feet) with people who may be infected with an infectious disease. • In areas without ongoing community transmission, workers in this risk group may have frequent contact with travelers who may return from international locations with widespread infectious disease transmission. • In areas where there is ongoing community transmission, workers in this category may have contact with the general public. **Low exposure risk (caution) jobs** are those that: • Do not require contact with people known to be, or suspected of being, infected with infectious disease nor frequent close contact (i.e., within 6 feet) with the general public. • Employees in this category have minimal occupational contact with the public and other employees.
Self-Monitoring	Process of monitoring oneself for fever by taking one's temperature twice a day and remaining alert for respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, sore throat).
Social Distancing	Self-defense action to protect individuals from contracting a contagious disease. This action includes maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet from other workers.

Responsibilities (Edit according to organizational structure)

Pandemic Plan Administrator/ Corporate Staff	1. Develop and maintain IDPERP and any supporting documents. 2. Communicate the IDPERP requirements to facilities via this plan. 3. Assist facilities in complying with this plan. 4. Determine when the facilities should activate the IDPERP. 5. Stay abreast of guidance from federal, state, and local health agencies, and consider how to incorporate those recommendations and resources into facility-specific plans. 6. Identify appropriate cleaning chemicals by consulting information on the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved disinfectant labels with claims against emerging viral pathogens. 7. Review the effectiveness of the IDPERP and ensure the program satisfies the requirements of all applicable federal, state, or local requirements.

	8. Develop emergency communications plan (such as postings, email distribution and/or facility-wide meetings) to update employees and answer their concerns as needed. 9. Develop and implement up-to-date education and training, based on the most current information provided by CDC or other health agencies, on the infectious disease risk factors and protective behaviors (e.g., respiratory etiquette and care of PPE), as needed, and the IDPERP.
Facility Manager/ Facility IDPERP Facilitator	1. Activate the IDPERP when directed by the CEO or designee. 2. Determine the employees' exposure risks for routine and non-routine tasks with higher exposure risks than normal and routine tasks covered by this procedure using a pre-job planning or job hazard / job safety analysis. 3. Provide new-hire, episodic, and annual training for employees. 4. Ensure employees receive the proper PPE and corresponding training. 5. Maintain training records. 6. Maintain appropriate amounts of hand sanitizer, PPE, etc. 7. Ensure regular housekeeping practices are implemented, including routine (daily or more frequent) cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, shared tools and equipment, and other elements of the work environment. Clean and disinfect the tools, equipment, and areas in accordance with relevant CDC guidelines. 8. Contact Pandemic Plan Administrator/Corporate Staff to provide suggestions for improvements to IDPERP.
Employee	1. Understand the requirements of the IDPERP. 2. Use controls and/or PPE provided by the company to minimize exposure. 3. Notify the facility management if showing symptoms of an infectious disease. If possible, make notifications remotely such as using a radio or a cell phone. 4. Stay home if showing symptoms related to the infectious disease or as directed by a health care provider. 5. Use proper respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes. 6. Maintain regular housekeeping practices, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other areas of the work environment. 7. Report all exposure / illness incidents following the requirements of incident / illness reporting procedure. 8. Contact Facility Manager/Facility IDPERP Facilitator to provide suggestions for improvements to IDPERP.

Each site you work at should have the following, if not let LINQM know:

Preventive Measures

- *Ensure heating, ventilation, and air conditioning filters are cleaned and/or changed regularly. This will ensure optimal air circulation and filtration.*
- *Encourage respiratory etiquette, including proper covering of coughs and sneezes.*
- *Encourage and train employees on good hygiene and infection control practices, as well as frequent and thorough handwashing. Provide employees and visitors with lavatories with hot and cold or tepid running water, hand soap or similar cleansing agents, and individual hand towels of cloth or paper (except mobile crews or normally unattended workstations). If soap and water are not*

immediately available, provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol to wash hands.

- *Encourage and train employees to self-monitor temperature and wellness.*
- *Encourage sick employees to stay home.*
- *Ensure that sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of these policies.*
- *Talk with companies that provide your business with contract or temporary employees about required training and the importance of sick employees staying home and encourage them to develop non-punitive leave policies.*
- *Do not require a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick with acute respiratory illness to validate their illness or to return to work, as healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely way.*
- *Maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member. Employers should be aware that there may be an increase in the number of employees that may need to stay home to care for sick children or other sick family members.*
- *Recognize that workers with ill family members may need to stay home to care for them. See CDC's* **Interim Guidance for Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in Homes and Residential Communities***: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html.*
- *Provide adequate, usable, and appropriate training, education, and informational material about business-essential job functions and worker health and safety, including proper hygiene practices and the use of any workplace controls (including PPE). Informed workers who feel safe at work are less likely to be unnecessarily absent.*
- *Be aware of workers' concerns about pay, leave, safety, health, and other issues that may arise during infectious disease outbreaks.*
- *Work with insurance companies (e.g., those providing employee health benefits) and state and local health agencies to provide information to workers and customers about medical care in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak.*

Implement Workplace Controls

Occupational safety and health professionals use a framework called the "hierarchy of controls" to select ways of controlling workplace hazards. The best way to control a hazard is to systematically remove it from the workplace, rather than relying on workers to reduce their exposure. During a COVID-19 outbreak, when it may not be possible to eliminate the hazard, the most effective protection measures are (listed from most effective to least effective):

- Engineering controls
- Administrative controls
- Safe work practices (a type of administrative control)
- PPE

In many cases, a combination of control measures will be necessary to protect workers from exposure to COVID-19.

Engineering Controls

Engineering controls involve isolating employees from work-related hazards. In workplaces where they are appropriate, these types of controls reduce exposure to hazards without relying on worker behavior and can be the most cost-effective solution to implement. Engineering controls for COVID-19 may include:

- *Isolate anyone who is feeling ill and require they stay home if they are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.*
- *Install high-efficiency air filters.*
- *Increase ventilation rates in the work environment.*
- *Install physical barriers, such as clear Plexiglas panels, or transparent curtains between equipment stations.*
- *Install a drive-through window or install hand-over boxes for delivery driver paperwork to eliminate exchange of paperwork (or otherwise minimize density or traffic through an area).*
- *Provide no-touch style trash cans in restrooms and lunchrooms.*
- *Provide no-touch style soap and hand sanitizer stations.*
- *Provide stylus pens for use on anything with buttons or touch screens.*
- *Devise hand-over/change-over stations for disinfecting of shared tooling or equipment.*
- *Require personnel to wear company-issued wristbands that notify personnel if someone is within 6 feet.*

Administrative Controls

Administrative controls require action by the worker or employer. Typically, administrative controls are changes in work policy or procedures to reduce or minimize exposure to a hazard. Examples of administrative controls for COVID-19 include:

- *Conduct a risk assessment for all on-site processes and field work (work performed away from the facility or office or at a client/customer site)*
- *Adjust manufacturing flow or staffing.*
- *Conduct PPE analysis to determine required PPE and appropriate training.*
- *Implement cleaning schedules in every work area.*
- *Delineate 6 feet of space between workstations or operator areas. Tape on floors, cones with rope, or appropriate signage can be used for delineation purposes.*
- *Maintain a one-month supply of personal hygiene, housekeeping supplies, PPE, and other cleaning and disinfecting materials.*
- *Encourage workers to self-monitor their temperature and wellness prior to arrival to work; require sick workers to stay at home.*
- *Minimize contact among workers, clients, and customers by replacing face-to-face meetings with virtual communications and implementing telework if feasible.*
- *Establish alternating days, shifts, clock-in/clock-out and lunch/break hours that reduce the total number of employees in a facility or area at a given time, allowing them to maintain distance from one another while maintaining a full on-site work week.*
- *Determine essential work performed by contractors or temporary staff and postpone non-essential work activities.*
- *Assign two-way radios.*
- *Assign vehicles and equipment, if possible.*

- *Evaluate contractor pandemic preparedness and response plans and associated protocols and JSAs.*
- *Encourage staff to bring packed lunches to minimize interaction with the general public.*
- *Implement risk review procedures for both routine and non-routine tasks and activities as risks are identified (may be done as job hazard, safety, or risk analysis and should include PPE hazard assessment).*
- *Limit the number of people allowed at any one time in meetings, work areas, elevators, bathrooms, etc. and post instructional signs (in all relevant languages).*
- *Discontinue nonessential travel to locations with ongoing COVID-19 outbreaks. Regularly check CDC travel warning levels at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html and evaluate travel risks.*
- *Ensure only one employee per work vehicle (forklifts, company trucks).*
- *Implement driving limitations for essential work (distance/time).*
- *Update job safety analyses for each work activity to include COVID-19 considerations.*
- *Conduct hazard identification assessment and inspections of facility and equipment prior to personnel reporting to work. (Examples would include: wildlife, cranes, forklifts, scaffolding, portable fire extinguishers, emergency eyewash/shower stations)*
- *Update visitor/contractor safety briefings to include new protocols pertaining to COVID-19.*
- *Update new hire orientations to include new protocols pertaining to COVID-19.*
- *Review substance abuse testing policy covering testing for personnel who have been off work for a specified amount of time.*
- *Designate isolation areas.*
- *Conduct respiratory protection training review for those who are required to wear respirators for work activities to eliminate confusion of respirator requirements and face covering requirements.*
- *Conduct cross-training of workers across different jobs.*
- *Develop emergency communications plans, including:*
  - *Provide a forum for answering workers' concerns and internet-based communications, if feasible.*
  - *Provide workers with remote/in-house up-to-date education and training on pathogen risk factors and protective behaviors (e.g., cough etiquette and care of PPE).*
  - *Train workers according to their job duties on proper hygiene, PPE, cleaning and disinfecting, telecommuting, travel safety, self-monitoring, etc. and the training requirements of this procedure. Training material should be easy to understand and available in the appropriate language and literacy level for all workers. Document all training.*

Safe Work Practices and Response Procedures

Safe work practices are types of administrative controls that include procedures for safe and proper work used to reduce the duration, frequency, or intensity of exposure to a hazard. Examples of safe work practices for COVID-19 include:

- *Develop a response team.*
- *Lock office doors.*

- *Provide resources and a work environment that promotes personal hygiene. For example, provide tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfectants, and disposable towels for workers to clean their work surfaces.*
- *Require regular handwashing or use of alcohol-based hand rubs. Workers should always wash hands when they are visibly soiled and after removing any PPE.*
- *Post handwashing signs in restrooms.*
- *Ensure regular **cleaning and disinfection of workspaces** in accordance with **CDC guidelines** and a written schedule for cleaning and method(s) of decontamination based on the tasks and activities being performed in the area.*
  - *Establish social distancing measures based upon site-specific details:*
    - *Prohibit hand shaking or hugging.*
    - *Prohibit or ensure the following are completed virtually*
      - *face-to-face meetings and gatherings.*
      - *socializing.*
      - *public events.*
      - *group trainings.*
    - *Provide area/room large enough for people to be spread out more than 6 feet apart.*
    - *Prohibit shared workstations and tools.*
    - *Arrange workplace layouts to prevent crowding.*
    - *Allow or require three staggered shifts to keep employees apart.*
    - *Prohibit employees from eating in lunchrooms, breakrooms, cafeterias, or restaurants.*
    - *Allow or require staggered lunch periods.*
    - *Prohibit carpools.*
    - *Allow or require flexible hours to avoid public transportation rush hours.*
    - *Allow or require telecommuting for appropriate job positions.*
    - *Implement a quarantine or isolation area for those who are or may be infected.*
    - *Suspend recreational activities on company-owned property, including camps and vacation properties, where gatherings occur. Temporarily suspend lunch celebrations and trainings with carry-in meals.*
    - *Temporarily suspend food vendors and delivery.*
    - *Other*

Personal Protective Equipment

During an outbreak of an infectious disease, such as COVID-19, recommendations for PPE specific to occupations or job tasks may change depending on geographic location, updated risk assessments for workers, and information on PPE effectiveness in preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Examples of personal protective equipment (PPE) to be provided include:
- Gloves,
- Face shields or goggles
- Dermal protection

- Respiratory protection, such as N95 filter respirator or full-face air purifying respirator or equivalent respiratory protection when appropriate and administered by qualified personnel in accordance with a Respiratory Protection Program (29 CFR 1910.134).

A face mask (also called a surgical mask, procedure mask, or other similar terms) on a sick person should not be confused with PPE for a worker; the mask acts to contain potentially infectious respiratory secretions at the source (i.e., the person's nose and mouth).

Check the OSHA and CDC websites regularly for updates about recommended PPE.

All types of PPE must be:
- Selected based upon the hazard to the worker.
- Properly fitted and periodically refitted, as applicable (e.g., respirators).
- Consistently and properly worn when required.
- Regularly inspected, maintained, and replaced, as necessary.
- Properly removed, cleaned, and stored or disposed of, as applicable, to avoid contamination of self, others, or the environment.

Training

Information and proper communication are at the heart of pandemic planning and containment. Our goal is to ensure employee comprehension and understanding of how employees may be exposed to the pandemic virus, what their responsibilities are, and what protective measures they can take. Due to the complexity of a pandemic and the continuity and recovery process, we will provide timely up-to-date training on this plan, with particular emphasis on the following elements:
- Pandemic fundamentals including explanation of the signs and symptoms and the modes of transmission of relevant infectious diseases.
- Methods for recognizing tasks and other activities that may involve exposure to potentially infectious personnel or materials.
    - Methods to prevent or reduce exposure, including appropriate engineering controls, work practices, and PPE and their limitations:
        - PPE: include when to use PPE; what PPE is necessary; how to properly don (put on), use, and doff (take off) PPE; and how to properly decontaminate or dispose of PPE.
        - Provide an explanation of the basis for selection of PPE.
- An explanation of the elements of this plan and employees assigned roles and responsibilities, including:
    - Information on the availability, efficacy, safety, method of administration, and benefits of available vaccines and treatments.
    - Social isolation practices.
    - All employees should be aware of themselves and surroundings and report any disease causing issues or if they have a disease before reporting to work.
    - The appropriate actions to take and persons to contact in an emergency involving potentially infectious materials.

- o An explanation of the procedure to follow if an exposure incident occurs, including the method of reporting the incident and the available medical follow-up actions.
  - o Information on the post-exposure evaluation and follow-up for the employee after an exposure incident.
  - o An explanation of the signs and labels used to convey hazards, cautions, and warnings associated with applicable disease(s).
- Hazards of the cleaning chemicals used in the workplace in accordance with OSHA's Hazard Communication standard (29 CFR 1910.1200).
- Illness reporting.
- Self-monitoring and wellness requirements.
- Risk assessment process for field work.
- Healthy living practices, e.g., getting proper rest and diet.
- Sick leave, time off, and vacation policies.
- Overtime/wage policies.
- Stay-at-home issues relating to school and childcare closings, and community quarantines.
- At-home care of ill employees and family members.
- Vaccinations, declinations, quarantines, and return-to work policies and resources.
- Notification procedures activated in a pandemic outbreak situation.
- Hotlines and websites for communicating to employees, vendors, suppliers, and customers.
- Emergency/information contacts.
- Community sources of timely/ accurate pandemic information (domestic and international).
- Employee assistance programs.
- Media relations.
- Getting to work when public transportation is shut down.
- *Other*.

Communication

Contact

For any questions, concerns, or information to notify Linqm of any disease, contact officemanager@linqm.com or hr@linqm.com