



# County of San Diego

## Department of Environmental Health



### **GUIDELINES FOR FOOD OPERATIONS DURING AN INCREASE OF INFLUENZA ILLNESSES**

Pandemic flu is typically not passed through eating food items; however, the following checklist provides information for retail food facilities on food safety practices.

#### **WHAT CAN EMPLOYERS DO?**

- Review and update your health & safety plans to protect workers, including sick leave.
- Review employee health and hygiene in Article 3 of the California Retail Food Code (CalCode) or the Retail Food Facility Operator's Guide, 2nd Edition at [http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/deh/fhd/food/pdf/publications\\_opguide.pdf](http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/deh/fhd/food/pdf/publications_opguide.pdf)
- Provide employee training on flu risk reduction measures such as washing hands, covering your cough & sneeze and staying home when ill.
- Encourage your employees to get a flu shot.
- Post signs to inform employees about symptoms of the flu and flu preventive measures. Examples of these posters in English, Spanish, and other languages can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/resphygiene.htm>

#### **REVIEW EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND HYGIENE**

- Require employees to stay home or go home when they are sick. Employees should not return to work until least 24 hours after the fever has passed.
- If you need to cough or sneeze, cover your mouth with your sleeve or a tissue. Discard used tissues and wash your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 10 to 15 seconds.
- Use an alcohol based hand sanitizer with at least a 62% alcohol concentration in addition to handwashing, but not as a substitute.
- Keep your distance from people who are coughing and sneezing.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as eating/drinking utensils and towels.
- Avoid touching surfaces and then touching your nose or mouth.

#### **RECOMMENDED OPERATIONAL CHANGES IN THE CASE OF AN OUTBREAK**

- Maintain a social separation of 6 feet from customers and employees.
- Cross-train employees in critical areas in the event that key employees are sick.
- Consider modified menus and the use of single use utensils for customers.
- Increase outdoor air ventilation by opening windows, and increase the outdoor air supply rate in heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems.
- Increase the frequency of cleaning and sanitizing surfaces, including work stations, counter tops, door knobs, phones, drinking fountains, and restroom surfaces. For a list of products that are adequate for use against influenza, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/oppad001/influenza-a-product-list.pdf>
- Consider the use of drive thru as an alternative to indoor dining, if applicable.
- Consider closing self service areas like condiment dispensers and buffets.

For more information regarding influenza, you may contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at (800) 232-4636.