



**Facilitators Guide to
*Preparing for a Pandemic Flu:
What First Responders Need to Know***

A Shift-Based Training Program

The pages that follow contain a reproducible facilitator's guide for shift leaders, safety officers and infectious disease trainers.



*International Association
of Fire Fighters*

*Preparing for a Pandemic Flu:
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Facilitators Guide to

Preparing for a Pandemic Flu: What First Responders Need to Know

A Shift-Based Training Program

Overview

Many health experts believe that the next outbreak of a pandemic flu isn't a question of if, but when. This training program is for first responders who play a vital role in outbreak response. It is crucial that rank and file fire fighters learn basic information about the pandemic flu to protect themselves, their families, their departments and their communities.

This program provides hands-on activities and discussion questions to teach first responders to prepare for a major emergency, such as a pandemic flu outbreak.

Learning Objectives

After completing this program, first responders will be able to:

- Predict and summarize the effects of a pandemic flu on the individual, family, the department, the community and nation
- Identify proper personal protective equipment and when to don it
- Create a personal family plan for a major response and implement it

Recommended Participants

- Rank and file fire fighters, EMTs and other first responders
- Members of same shift

Recommended Facilitator

- Training coordinators/officers
- Infection control personnel
- Safety officers

Agenda

This program is divided into three lessons, which could be completed in one workshop or individually, based on time.

Module 1: In My Fire House (30 minutes)

Examines the bigger picture of how first responders and their jobs are affected

Module 2: Making a Plan (1 hour)

Participants break into pairs or small groups to create a plan for their families

Module 3: Protecting Myself (30 minutes)

Remembering what PPE to wear and when to don it is addressed in this hands-on activity



Module 1: In My Fire House *(Recommended time 30 minutes)*

Summary

This lesson focuses on understanding questions behind the bigger picture by answering the question: What will the effects of a pandemic flu outbreak be?

Learning objectives

- Predict and summarize effects of a pandemic flu on the individual, family, the department, the community and nation.
- Recognize the chain reaction of events in the case of a pandemic flu.

Materials needed

White board, easel w/ pad or white paper taped to wall, markers

Facilitator Instructions

1. Guided Discussion on Pandemic Flu (10 minutes)

To understand bigger picture of a pandemic flu outbreak, start with basic facts about pandemic flu. Ask participants: What do you already know about pandemic flu?

*Facilitator's note: Italicized and bold is direct language for teaching.

Suggested responses:*

- A widespread, usually global spread of a disease, to which the human population has no immunity, resulting in epidemics worldwide and enormous numbers of deaths/illness.
- An effective vaccine could thwart an epidemic before it becomes a pandemic, however, once the pandemic strain is identified, it takes several months for the vaccine to be developed and mass produced.
- New strains of Influenza A viruses resulted in three pandemics in the 20th century:
 - Hong Kong Flu (1968-1969) started in Hong Kong and spread to the U.S. - 34,000 deaths
 - Spanish Flu (1918-1919) caused an estimated 20-50 million deaths worldwide - 675,000 deaths in the U.S.
 - Asian Flu (1957-58) started in China in February 1957; by June 1957 it spread to United States - 70,000 deaths
 - H1N1 flu virus (human swine flu) is a respiratory illness that causes symptoms similar to those of regular human seasonal flu; the pandemic threat of swine flu is at the highest levels, which reflects its geographic spread, not its severity.

*See page 10 for more resources on pandemic flu information.

2. Guided Discussion with Writing Activity (20 minutes)

The facilitator will draw an illustration of the fire house where they work in the center of the board. Around it, the facilitator will draw a fire fighter, a family, a fire department and a town. Ask participants to predict the effects of a pandemic outbreak on these items. (Write answers near or under the drawing, or have students go up to the board and write responses.) *Suggested responses are on the next page.*



Module 1: In My Fire House continued...

Start with the fire house. ***What would happen to this fire station if a pandemic outbreak were to happen?*** *Suggested responses:*

- More calls because so many people are sick
- One third of workforce would be out sick, as predicted by experts
- Continuous restocking of equipment, or limited supplies
- Death of coworker
- Quarantine or isolation

Next, ask them to step into the shoes of the fire chief. ***What would happen to the department?*** *Suggested responses:*

- Staffing issues, such as mandatory staffing, overtime and recall
- Administrative duties such as budgeting, payroll
- Call volume affects dispatch
- Equipment stocking
- Need for CISM and Family Assistance Support Teams

What would happen to your family? *Suggested responses:*

- Family sick
- Shift changes
- Child care unavailable
- Deaths of elderly or young members of family
- Quarantine or isolation

(Ask to name a few; the next modules cover this in-depth.)

What might happen in the community? *Suggested responses:*

- Schools close
- Grocery or other stores understaffed, limited supplies available
- Banks close
- Transportation system running slow
- Lack of available medical care
- Quarantine or isolation

Can you name other areas that might be affected across the nation? (Write these answers around the outside of the others.) *Suggested responses:*

- Banking/financial system and economy
- Transportation system (airlines, subways, buses, roads)
- Communications system (telephones, cell phones, Internet)
- Quarantine or isolation

Is the department ready?

This would be an opportunity to review the department's plan for Swine Flu/Pandemic Flu response, if it is available. Review the department's planning checklist and/or SOPs for flu or outbreak response.



Module 2: Making a Plan *(Recommended time 1 hour)*

While it may not seem like a concern of the department, the preparedness of every family is crucial in maintaining a working emergency response system. It is important that first responders have a plan for their families so that, with the peace of mind that their own families are prepared, they can do their job in the event of pandemic flu or any major emergency that may occur.

Summary

This lesson is focused on creating a family plan in case of a major emergency.

Learning objectives

- Decide what work/family issues need to be addressed in an emergency.
- Develop alternative plans for family during a major emergency.

Materials needed for each student

- Pen or pencil
- Handout "Emergency Plan for First Responder Families" worksheet

Facilitator Instructions

1. Guided Discussion (5 minutes) Introduce activity and refresh major points. ***What are major effects of a pandemic influenza on:***
 - ***Home?*** (Caring for sick family member, unavailability of doctor or pediatrician)
 - ***Work?*** (Limited PPE, one third workforce is sick, increased calls)
 - ***Community?*** (Limited food and water, businesses and schools closed)

Let's consider those factors when thinking about a family's situation.

2. Scenario (20 minutes)

Read the scenario below aloud (or have a student read) about a family under a major emergency. Ask students: ***What are some factors that the family must consider in this emergency?***

The Martins family lives in Kansas. The mother is a nurse and the father is a fire fighter. They have two children, ages six and twelve. The six-year old has asthma. They just moved to Kansas two weeks ago, leaving behind relatives in another state. They also have a dog.

A serious flu pandemic outbreak has hit their town. There are so many sick people the schools have closed. The mother has been called to work at the hospital and the father is being required to stay on shift. On a normal day, the kids are in school. The family does not have any supplies on hand or an emergency plan.



Module 2: Making a Plan continued...

Lead a discussion with the following questions:

- *What are some of the challenges this family needs to take care of?*
- *What could they have done before hand?*
- *What might an emergency plan for this family look like?*

Ask other discussion questions:

- *What will they do if their cell phones don't work?*
- *What will this family do if the subway, bus system or roads are closed?*
- *Will they have enough food and water?*
- *What will they do if their children's pediatrician is not available?*
- *What will they do if they get sick?*

3. Group Activity (25 minutes)

Have students develop a plan for their families based on predicted factors. Hand out worksheet "Emergency Plan for First Responder Families" for participants to fill out during the activity. (You may also hand out optional readiness plans available at www.ready.gov). Divide students into groups of two or three. Ask students to develop a backup plan based on childcare, transportation, communication and health and welfare.

Groups should discuss the issues they might face with their own families and assist others with solutions to challenges they might face. They should brainstorm potential problems and solutions on scrap paper. They should help each other complete the worksheet, which includes coming up with alternative plans.

Write the bulleted list below on an easel pad or chalkboard to remind students of the factors behind an emergency family plan:

- Child care
- Transportation
- Communication
- Health and welfare

Encourage students to fill out the form to the best of their ability and acknowledge they will have to consult their spouses/partners to get more information, and finish it later if time is limited.

4. Debrief (10 minutes). After students have completed the form, ask the following evaluation questions:

- *What are some of the challenges they encountered while making their plans?*
- *What information were they unable to complete?*
- *What plan do they feel most sure about?*
- *What will they do to practice this plan?*
- *How will they share it with their families?*
- *Where will they keep the form?*
- *Who else outside their immediate families need to know about their plans?*
- *What else might they add to the form?*



Module 3: Protecting Myself *(Recommended time 25 minutes)*

Summary

This lesson is focused on the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE) while responding to potential flu patients.

Learning objectives

After completing this lesson, students will be better able to:

- Explain four key pieces of equipment for protection
- Assess appropriate time to put on PPE
- Summarize proper disposal and decontamination procedures
- Identify further steps in personal protection, such as restocking equipment

Materials needed for each student

- Sleeves
- Gloves
- Eye protection
- Face mask

Adaptation

Students can work in pairs if equipment is limited. Encourage discussion between pairs as to when to use equipment.

Facilitator Instructions

1. Introduce the activity: ***This activity is a refresher for first responders to identify the correct PPE and how to use it effectively. We will focus on the proper timing of use of PPE. The flu is transferred through bodily liquids through the eyes, nose and mouth. These areas are most vulnerable to infection and you need to protect them.***
2. Read the scenario on page 9 slowly aloud. Students should do what they consider the appropriate PPE at the point in the scenario they consider appropriate. Note when they donned the PPE. After the scenario has been read, discuss the appropriate PPE and the correct time to don it.
3. Remind students of key facts while they put on equipment:
 - Not every first responder on the scene needs to risk infection by handling the patient
 - Universal precautions
 - Decontamination procedures

Note the appropriate PPE is listed after the scenario and the correct timing is indicated by three asterisks (***)



Module 3: Protecting Myself continued...

Scenario

Your unit has been dispatched to an unknown sickness at a local bus stop. Although there have not been any cases of pandemic flu or swine flu reported in your town, you have heard on the news that there are cases around the world. You arrive to find a family of three with flu-like symptoms:

- Fever
- Headache
- Cough
- Exhaustion
- Vomiting

You suspect these patients have influenza based on their presentation. [***] You obtain vital signs and history. You learn that the family has just returned from a vacation in Mexico. You request additional units. You treat the patients and transport them to the nearest hospital.

***It is at this point students put on their PPE for the activity.

- Exam gloves
- Mask
- Eye protection
- Gown/sleeve protection

4. Debrief

- *When did you put on your gear?*
- *When was the correct time?*
- *What were the clues you heard to put on your PPE?*
- *Why is each piece of equipment necessary? (Hold up equipment and ask for each one).*
- *What is the next step in this scenario? (Sample responses: filing a report, calling the health department immediately)*



Materials Checklist

Module 1: In My Fire House

- White board, chalk board, easel w/ pad or white paper taped to wall
- Markers, if using paper

Module 2: Making a Plan

- Pen or pencil
- Emergency Plan for First Responder Families Worksheet

Module 3: Protecting Myself

For each participant or pair:

- Sleeves
- Gloves
- Eye protection
- Face mask

Additional Resources

IAFF Pandemic Flu Home Page

www.iaff.org/pandemicflu

IAFF Online Education Program on the Pandemic Flu

www.iaff.org/ET/Modules/swineflu/

United States Official U.S. Government website on pandemic and swine influenzas

www.pandemicflu.gov

United States Government Emergency Preparedness

www.ready.gov

United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/

Public Health Agency of Canada

www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/index-eng.php

World Health Organization

www.who.int



Handout: Emergency Plan for First Responder Families Worksheet



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Emergency Plan for First Responder Families Worksheet

Be sure your family has a plan in case of a major emergency. Make sure each family member knows about the plan. Check out www.ready.gov and www.pandemicflu.gov for more planning checklists and information. This worksheet is divided into four sections:

-  Safety, Health and Home
-  Communication
-  Transportation
-  Child and Animal Care

Safety, Health and Home

Supplies

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days (for drinking and sanitation)
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)
- Local maps

Respiratory Protection


Have appropriate face masks on hand for your family in case you have to travel or care for someone who is sick. Appropriate face masks should be made of dense-weave cotton material that snugly covers the nose and mouth and be specifically fit for each member of the family.

Isolation/Quarantine

In the event of a community-wide quarantine, you will be ordered to stay at home to avoid becoming sick. Be sure to have supplies on hand for everyone, including your pets, for several weeks.

Note any other safety and health concerns that your family needs to know:



 **Communication**

Family Member Name	Cell/Pager #	Work/School #	Home #
Family Physician Dr. _____			
Pediatrician Dr. _____			

Emergency Meeting Places

It's important to have locations where you know your family can meet in case of a fire, flood or other emergency. Work with your family to decide on local and regional locations.

	Address	Phone Number	Key Contact Person	Other Information
Neighborhood				
Regional				
Evacuation Location				
Out of Town Relative				



➔ **Transportation**

List your current routes and methods to get to and from work and school. List a Plan B on the right side in case your first route/method of transportation is unavailable. Be sure to note alternative routes and drivers (neighbor, cab) if applicable. Have a map on hand for evacuation, or if you have to walk.

Usual Routes/Methods	Phone Number



Child and Animal Care

Describe your current plan for child care and a Plan B.

Current Plan	Plan B

Describe your current plan for taking care of the pets and a Plan B for them.

Current Plan	Plan B

Child and Animal Care Checklist

- Have supplies, water and medication on hand for your children.
- Have supplies, water and medication on hand for your pets.
- Discuss a plan for children staying at home for extended periods of time, as school closings may occur along with restrictions on public gatherings.
- Plan entertainment, educational activities and recreation for your children to do at home. Have materials, such as reading books, coloring books and games on hand for your children to use.

Medications

List any prescriptions or required medication for children and pets.

Child or Pet Name	Medication



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