

University of Southern Mississippi

INFECTIOUS DISEASE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

1. PURPOSE

This plan defines the steps that may be taken by key departments on all of the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) campuses in the event of an infectious disease outbreak, pandemic, or biological attack, causing a significant public health emergency. This plan is designed as an overall infectious disease protocol, which requires it to be flexible and easily modified to accommodate contingencies of various scope and magnitude. This document is not a comprehensive campus plan but one that serves as an overview with specific departments having comprehensive plans for individual operation. The University's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) will be the authoritative guide for the University's response during such emergencies.

Definition: **Public Health Emergency** is an emergency need for health care [medical] services to respond to a disaster, significant outbreak of an infectious disease, bioterrorist attack or other significant or catastrophic event.

Definition: **Infectious disease outbreak** is the occurrence of cases of infectious disease in excess of what would normally be expected in a defined community, geographical area or season. The disease spreads easily person-to-person, causes serious illness or fatality, and can be spread easily in a very short period of time. Examples include Influenza, Measles, Mumps, Meningitis ACYW or B, etc.

Definition: **Pandemic** is described as a global infectious disease outbreak that will affect an undetermined number of individuals worldwide.

Definition: **Bioterrorism**, biological attack, is the intentional release of viruses, bacteria, or other germs that can sicken or kill people, livestock, or crops.

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2. SCOPE

This plan applies to all personnel, buildings, and grounds either owned, operated or under the control of USM. It may, by necessity, include peripheral areas immediately adjacent to or adjoining University properties. This plan, in whole or in part, will be activated for any public health emergency affecting the University community regardless of whether other sections of the EOP are activated.

The USM infectious disease emergency response plan is designed to counter problems likely to be experienced on university properties during a significant public health emergency. A public health emergency may occur with little or no warning, irrespective of time of day, night, weekends, or holidays. The succession of events in a public health emergency will not be entirely predictable; therefore, operational plans should serve as guides with the understanding that they may require modifications to meet the demands of the emergency. A public health emergency may affect residents in geographical areas well beyond the borders of USM properties.

3. FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS

A. Command Posts

If a public health emergency results in the University President, or his/her designee, declaring a University State of Emergency, the University EOP in part or in whole should be activated. In the case of a public health emergency that is not a University emergency, the University President will appoint an Incident Commander who will be responsible for establishing and maintaining a central command center as needed. The Executive Director of Student Health Services will serve as a critical operation leader for the incident response team and liaison with the Mississippi Department of Health (MSDH) and Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

B. Equipment

University Police Department will establish and maintain emergency communications equipment and other materials deemed necessary for the operation of a command post during a public health

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emergency. Student Health Services will be responsible for obtaining and maintaining appropriate emergency medical equipment and supplies in a state of readiness in anticipation of an epidemic or pandemic.

C. Vaccines

During a public health emergency, the Executive Director of Student Health Services will maintain contact with the Mississippi State Department of Health to assist in the coordination and distribution of available vaccines. The University Police Department will provide assistance in the transportation, distribution, and safekeeping of any vaccines when required. Staff that are in contact with infected or potentially infected individuals on campus and all key campus emergency management staff will receive vaccinations.

D. Closed Point of Dispensing (POD)

The Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) is a national supply of medications and medical supplies to be used for emergency situations such as a bioterrorism attack, disease outbreak, or natural disaster. Within 12 to 24 hours, the CDC will deploy a large shipment from the SNS known as a 'push-pack,' anywhere in the United States or its territories, to supplement and re-supply state and local health and medical resources. The University of Southern Mississippi is a CLOSED Point of Dispensing (POD) site under the direction of the Executive Director of Student Health Services. The Executive Director of SHS works with the Mississippi Department of Health in the event of a bioterrorism attack, disease outbreak or natural disaster to provide emergency medications to the entire University population. The USM CLOSED POD site will have medical personnel available who can legally dispense medications per Mississippi regulations.

4. PLAN

- A. The areas affected are not in a particular order within the plan. Each area is expected to address their needs and report to their department head.
- B. Each area will try and follow the plan but circumstances may require a different approach and response. If this occurs, the area will report the change in plans to the department head and will be

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noted when the public health emergency is over.

- C. There are three stages that will require some action from the University. All steps in preceding stages, plus steps in the next stage, will be taken if the situation moves from one stage to a higher stage.

Stage 1 – Confirmed case(s) on a USM campus or in the surrounding area.

Stage 2 – Multiple confirmed cases on a USM campus with rapid progression of human-to-human transmission.

Stage 3 – Escalation of human-to- human transmission with multiple confirmed cases on a USM campus & surrounding areas now impeding University operations. A pandemic in the United States may be declared or the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) / Point of Dispensing (POD) sites may be activated by the CDC / Mississippi Department of Health (MSDH).

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	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
University President	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assemble Incident Response Team. 2. Review content of internal and external public information bulletins and announcements. The University spokesperson for media reporting will be the Chief Communication Officer or their designee. 3. Consider restricting movement on and off campus for activities/athletic events. 4. Based on U.S. State Department recommendations, University recommends campus community not to travel to any affected countries. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activate Emergency Operations Center which will be located in the University Police Department Operations Center. 2. Work with the Incident Commander and Incident Response Team, along with recommendations from US and State Departments of Health and other governmental agencies, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate information on institutional effects of the incident and set response priorities as appropriate. • Advise Executive Cabinet on response options. • Reach a decision regarding cancellation of all traditional classes, the probable length of this cancellation, and the closure of campus housing. 3. Consult with IHL Board concerning suspension or closure plans. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Authorize temporary suspension of classes or closure. 2. Inform IHL Board of suspension or closure plans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide oversight for student, staff, faculty, & family notifications if appropriate.

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	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
<p>Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inform faculty of the pending situation and explain possible options regarding the interruption of courses. 2. Work with Registrar, Information Technology and other records offices to make plans to modify the academic calendar to accommodate the pending scenario (e.g., to eliminate an intersession, change admissions or grade submission deadlines, etc.). 3. Work with the Incident Response Team to identify and cancel non-essential academic events. 4. Inform all academic support offices, including departments, deans' offices, and research laboratories, to determine essential personnel who must come to work in case of a general 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with the Incident Commander and Incident Response Team, along with recommendations from US and State Departments of Health and other governmental agencies, to reach a decision regarding cancellation of all traditional classes, the probable length of this cancellation, and the closure of campus housing. 2. If there is a decision to cancel classes, inform faculty and students of the decision via the University Emergency Notification System, Eagle Alert, email, websites, etc.. 3. If there is a decision to cancel classes, utilize Eagle Alert and/or email to inform academic departments and academic support offices to remain at home except for essential personnel. 4. Inform faculty, who are teaching 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Periodically inform faculty, staff and students about the severity of the situation and the prognosis for re-opening. 2. Provide guidance for academic administration questions. 3. Close research laboratories and inform research faculty and staff to remain at home. 4. Allow only essential personnel to enter buildings to care for lab animals and tend to sensitive materials and equipment. 5. Plan for re-opening of the University and continuing classes. 6. Work with the VP for Finance & Administration to determine salary consequences of the closure for faculty and academic support staff. 7. Inform other higher education institutions and state / federal

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	closure. Also, have all units make a plan for maintaining animals, materials, and equipment during a closure of the University.	courses that can be continued through alternate delivery modes, that they may continue to engage students and complete the course, if possible.	agencies about the closure and tentative re-opening dates.
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	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
<p>Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish communication with Executive Cabinet regarding status of preparedness. 2. In conjunction with the Office of University Communications issue communication(s) to campus community regarding status of disease spread, self-protection and university response. 3. Identify division personnel available for telephone and other support work. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing communications with campus community regarding signs/symptoms, protocol for referral of suspected cases. 2. Work with University Communications to initiate poster, e-mail, social media campaign on self- protection. 3. Work with the Incident Response Team, along with recommendations from US and State Departments of Health and other governmental agencies, to reach a decision regarding cancellation of all traditional classes, the probable length of this cancellation, and the closure of campus housing. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recommend temporary closure of building(s) and suspension of student and academic activities to Incident Response Team. 2. Implement Emergency Preparedness Plan & Incident Response Team. 3. Ensure that each Operations Group function is covered.

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	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
Incident Response Team	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Team should consist of but not limited to the Provost, VPSA, Vice Provost for Gulf Park Campus, Executive Director of Student Health Services (SHS), Executive Director of Residence Life, Chief of Police, AVP / DOS, AVP for SA, Chief Communications Officer, & AVP of Human Resources. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain contact and coordination among the Incident Response Team. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain contact and coordination among the Incident Response Team.

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	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
Student Health Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate with the county health departments and MS Department of Health regarding planning and surveillance. 2. Develop a triage and treatment protocol that can be easily adapted once a case definition is established. 3. Develop clinic signage and voice messages that will give ill students directions about how to access services. 4. Post signage indicating clinic to go for routine care versus signs/symptoms of the infectious disease illness. 5. Send out e-mail telling about phone and e-mail triage. 6. All persons at the clinic who are ill with signs/symptoms of the infectious disease must wear surgical mask to avoid spread of the illness. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notify the county health departments and MS Department of Health. 2. Notify the local emergency management district. 3. Notify Incident Commander and Crises team of confirmed patient cases of the infectious disease. 4. Notify Executive Director of Housing & Res Life on number of potential contacts that may require isolation. 5. If school has not been closed by the time we have multiple confirmed cases of the infectious disease, then it may be recommended that school be closed and students be sent home. 6. Follow all protocols established with previous Emergency Response level. 7. Provide reports as needed at least daily to Incident Commander. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue all protocols established with previous Emergency Response Level. 2. Arrange transfer for any patient with high fever and /or signs and symptoms of infectious disease to the Hospital. 3. Information Coordinator will track status of close contact, new cases diagnosed.

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Maintain and observe infection control measures. 8. Adopt a triage system for patients with fever (encourage phone or e-mail for all patients) have them go to appropriate clinic. 9. Maintain a running record of patients seen with signs/symptoms of the infectious disease for assessing the trend and additional testing. 10. Monitor any outbreaks of respiratory infection on campus. 11. Influenza vaccination for high risk groups or all members of the University who wish to be vaccinated. 12. Talks on infectious disease outbreak. 13. Awareness and Preventive Measures to students and staff groups. 14. All units and departments will report sick employees who take leave to HR. All of those with febrile illness will be reported to SHS. Telephone monitoring until employee well will be done by SHS 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. See that information is disseminated to staff and students regarding need for infection control. 9. Use phone and e-mail to assist with triage. 	
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	<p>personnel.</p> <p>15. Common areas, bathroom, and examination rooms will be disinfected twice a day.</p> <p>16. Protocol for laboratory testing as set up by the State Board of Health will be followed.</p> <p>17. Discontinue all medical procedures which may cause droplet transmission (such as throat swab taking, and spirometry).</p> <p>18. Arrange ambulance transfer for patients suspected of have serious symptoms of the infectious disease.</p> <p>19. Full Personal Protective Equipment with goggles, gown and masks for all medical, laboratory/x-ray, and nursing staff if indicated.</p> <p>20. Arrange continuation of basic medical service at SHS on long holidays.</p>		
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	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
Communications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft internal and external bulletins and announcements, with the Incident Response Team. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write and post bulletins and updates to the University’s emergency website, SouthernMiss.info. 2. Draft talking points for key points of contact across USM in coordination with the Incident Response Team. 3. Request to campus that students, faculty and staff and their families to report all cases to Incident Commander. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a Media Relations Center: coordinate press releases, and manage news teams and interviews, etc.
University Police	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alert Student Health Center if encountering individual(s) with symptoms. 2. Essential personnel receive training on respiratory protection from Health Service. 3. Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be located in UPD Operations Center. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Same as Stage 1. 2. Establish contact with the local emergency management district. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secure buildings & post signage.

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	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
Housing & Residence Life	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage student to travel home with help of parent or guardian traveling to campus, retrieving ill student, and transporting student home for period of illness. 2. If traveling home, H&RL housekeeping staff will perform cleaning of the private bathroom. Cleaning includes pulling/emptying wastepaper baskets/trash cans in bathroom and bedroom, disinfecting all surfaces in bathroom and vanity if outside bathroom but within confines of bedroom. 3. If travel home is not possible or practical, enact planning for 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Same as Stage 1. 2. Set up Housing and Residence Life command center and recall essential personnel. 3. Enact emergency phone contact tree. 4. Identify meal delivery need and method for quarantined students. Identify roles of essential staff: leadership, communications, maintenance and housekeeping. 5. Arrange for monitoring/delivery of medications, other goods and services to isolated cases. 6. Assist with relocation of students for quarantine. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activate plan from stage 2 to quarantine students in conjunction with the guidance from the country health departments. 2. Housing and Residence Life staff assists Moffitt Health Center staff.

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	<p>quarantine of students by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Identifying potential rooms and/or buildings to be used for quarantined students. Update by semester based on current occupancy. ii. Notifying current occupants in spaces that will be needed of the potential or need for them to temporarily move from initial housing assignment. There will be no change in housing rate if non-infected roommate of ill student moves to a higher priced housing area. <p>4. Common areas and community bathrooms will be disinfected twice a day.</p> <p>5. If resident of campus housing self isolates or is quarantined in place, private bathroom will be</p>		
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	<p>cleaned daily by H&RL housekeeping staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Cleaning includes pulling/emptying wastepaper baskets/trash cans in bathroom and bedroom, disinfecting all surfaces in bathroom and vanity if outside bathroom but within confines of bedroom. <p>6. Meal delivery preparations will be made in order to limit infected student visiting campus dining locations.</p> <p>7. Professional staff member/Residence Life Coordinator (RLC) will serve as point of contact with ill student to retrieve Standard Illness Food Package/SIFP from Eagle Dining and deliver SIFP to student-resident.</p> <p>8. All public areas of campus housing, to include lounges, laundry rooms, hallways, stairwells, elevator cars, student-</p>		
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	kitchen lounges, study rooms will receive daily disinfecting by H&RL housekeeping personnel. Bedroom door knobs/latches/handles, cross-corridor door knobs/latches/handles, elevator buttons, chair/hand/stair rails will receive disinfecting.		
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	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
Human Resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify essential personnel. 2. Identify personnel available for telephone support work. 3. AVP of HR or designee will be a member of the Incident Response Team. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Same as Stage 1. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Same as Stage 1.
International Programs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain an updated list of international students and visiting scholars. (HR should maintain an updated list of international faculty and staff.) 2. Keep international community and University Command Post updated on ongoing developments and advisories, including but not limited to issues relating to travel and medical. 3. Develop critical supplies, including gloves, masks, hand sanitizer, Lysol spray or other approved 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist international students with arrangements for food, water, and medicine, to include office assistance as well as help from the international student community. 2. Affected students should not embark on any international travel. 3. Assist international students with communicating with family members in home country. 4. Assist Housing and Health Clinic with making on-campus arrangements for sick students. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OIP staff volunteers to assist as needed to implement University-wide pandemic plan.

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	<p>disinfectant, along with water and non-perishable foods for staff working with ill students.</p> <p>4. Work closely with Residence Life to develop a plan for international students since they cannot generally go home.</p>	<p>5. In event of campus closure, assist international students with seeking off-campus housing arrangements with friends and family members residing in the immediate area or in other regions of the US.</p>	
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	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
Information Technology (iTech)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare current listings of all faculty, staff, and students. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor computer needs of EOC and respond. Most IT systems are accessible from outside of the USM network, either directly or via the Virtual Private Network (VPN). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor the needs for computers and access to files. 2. Have personnel available to provide support in the Data Center.
Eagle Dining / Aramark	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact the Eagle Dining Director to advise of status of the outbreak. 2. Common areas and community bathrooms will be disinfected twice a day. 3. Adopt use of a Standard Illness Food Package/SIFP to include prepackaged items such as crackers, cereal bars, muffins, dry cereals, bottled beverages. Food items will be distributed with the assistance of Housing & Residence Life staff for use by isolated/quarantined 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Same as Stage 1 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Same as Stage 1

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	campus housing residents to limit illness exposure of healthy students in campus dining units. 4. Work with Housing & Residence Life to fill Standard Illness Food Package(s)/SIFP as needed.		
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	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
Physical Plant	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify building ventilations systems. 2. Determine if staff can assist other areas on campus. Enlist volunteers to help if needed. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Same as Stage 1. 2. Develop signage for buildings as specified by the Office of Communications. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stand by to shut off utilities as directed by Incident Commander, if necessary.
Parking Management	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clear designated parking lots for medical staging area.

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5. RECOVERY

- a. The University will use every available resource to facilitate the recovery from the effects of a pandemic regardless of the timeframe.
- b. Recovery may span an extended period of time and will depend on how much assistance is available from outside sources.
- c. Work with Registrar and IHL Office to finalize the plans for an academic calendar upon re-opening.
- d. Assess capacity and develop plan to restore academic and business functions (financial, courses, personnel, returning students).
- e. Communicate status to faculty, staff, and students.
- f. Prepare for possible next wave of pandemic illness.
- g. Clean up of quarantine and isolation facilities and materials.
- h. Inform external institutions and agencies, as appropriate.
- i. Schedule a debriefing of incident