

DRAFT

Template for the Food Processing Industry

Pandemic Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)



**ABC Processing Company
123 Main Street
Anywhere, USA 10001**

[Change to your Company/Facility Name]

Note: This template has been revised for the general food industry with the permission of the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) which prepared the original draft. The revised template was prepared by the Processor/Manufacturer Sub-Council (P/M Sub-Council) of the Food and Agriculture Sector Coordinating Committee (FASCC). IDFA, the FASCC, the P/M Subcouncil do not assume or accept any liability for any actions taken or omissions made in reliance of the contents of this template. Use of this document constitutes acceptance of sole and exclusive liability for the use by the user.

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How to Use This Document

1. Add text or modify any and all text to conform to your company's policies and procedures.
2. Remove example contact names and information when no longer needed to avoid confusion.
3. Insert text where indicated
4. Engage appropriate company personnel

Note: Substantial portions of text in this document are taken from the federal government's, *National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza: Implementation Plan* (Plan). This company/facility asserts no authorship or intellectual property ownership over text taken or derived from that Plan.

Section 1 - Characteristics of Influenza Transmission

Understanding the characteristics of influenza transmission is important in order to assess the threat pandemic influenza poses to personnel in the workplace, as well as the efficacy and practicality of potential protective measures.

Human influenza virus is transmitted from person-to-person primarily via virus-laden large droplets (particles $>5\ \mu\text{m}$ in diameter) that are generated when infected persons cough, sneeze, or speak. These large droplets can then be directly deposited onto the mucosal surfaces of the upper respiratory tract of susceptible persons who are near (i.e., typically within 3 feet of) the droplet source. Transmission also may occur through direct and indirect contact with infectious respiratory secretions.

Patients with influenza typically become infectious after a latent period of about 1 to 1.5 days and prior to becoming symptomatic. At about 2 days, most infected persons will develop symptoms of illness although some remain asymptomatic throughout their infection. This is important because even seemingly healthy asymptomatic individuals in early stages of influenza could be infectious to others.

Vaccine and Antiviral Medications

The primary strategies for preventing pandemic influenza are the same as those for seasonal influenza: (1) disinfection of surfaces that have come into contact with infected material, (2) the use of infection control measures to prevent transmission, (3) vaccination, and (4) early detection and treatment with antiviral medication. However, when a pandemic begins, only a limited stockpile of partially-matched pandemic vaccine may be available. Using current technologies, a virus-specific vaccine to protect personnel will not be available until 4 to 6 months after isolation of the pandemic virus. Finally, the supply of antiviral drugs will be limited throughout a pandemic. Until sufficient stockpiles of antiviral drugs have been established, these medications may be available for treatment of only some symptomatic individuals. Therefore, the appropriate and thorough application of infection control measures remains the key to limiting transmission, delaying the spread of a pandemic, and protecting personnel.

Infection Control Measures

A pandemic may come in waves, each lasting weeks or months. Not all susceptible individuals will be infected in the first wave of a pandemic. Therefore preventing transmission by limiting exposure during the first wave may offer several advantages. First, by limiting exposure, people who are not infected during the first wave may have an increased chance of receiving virus-specific vaccine as it becomes available. Second, limiting exposure and delaying transmission can change the shape of the epidemic curve and mitigate the social and economic impact of a pandemic by reducing the number of people who become ill at any given time.

Within the workplace, the systematic application of infection control and social distancing measures during a pandemic should reduce employee-to-employee disease transmission rates, increase employee safety and confidence, and possibly reduce absenteeism.

The government states that "Minimizing workplace exposure to pandemic influenza can be facilitated by: developing policies and strategies for isolating and excusing employees who become ill at work; allowing unscheduled and non-punitive leave for employees with ill household contacts; restricting business-related travel to affected geographic areas; and establishing guidelines for when employees who have become ill can return to work.

Edited Disinfectant Recommendations from the Univ. of MD Emergency Operations Plan

The Avian Influenza virus is very sensitive to detergents. Cleaning thoroughly with detergent cleaners and water is adequate for most non-healthcare locations.

Cleaning and disinfection cannot be relied on as the primary means to control the spread of influenza virus. Infection control practices must include hand hygiene (hand washing), respiratory etiquette, proper disposal of tissues and maintaining distance from sick individuals (at least three feet).

Transmission of influenza from contaminated hard surfaces is unlikely but cannot be ruled out. Hand hygiene is the most important method to prevent the transmission of the influenza virus.

Normal facility cleaning procedures for environmental surfaces should be followed using standard cleaning products. During a local outbreak, surfaces that are frequently touched with hands such as sinks, doorknobs, railings and counters may be added to cleaning schedule in place of floor care

Individual employees may want to consider regular cleaning of their phones and keyboards particularly if they are shared with others.

There is no evidence to support the efficacy of widespread disinfection of the environment or air. Widespread application or spraying of disinfectants is an unsafe practice and must be avoided. Gloves should be worn when handling waste or waste containers.

Section 2 - Coordination Team Members

Food companies should have a management structure in place to prepare for and oversee a pandemic, as well as a contingency plan intended for use in responding quickly and effectively in these situations. An appropriate management structure will help to minimize the impact of a pandemic while the plan is intended to be activated when the emergency occurs. In this way, companies may prevent, or substantially reduce, risk through effective risk management programs.

Specifically, your team should be composed of a wide variety of company personnel. Representatives from senior management, operations, distribution and logistics, legal counsel, quality control, engineering, sales and marketing, and public relations should be represented. A critical function of the team, which may warrant the creation of a subunit, is to ensure the

proper use of cleaning and disinfectants in a timely and effective manner. Misuse may greatly reduce effectiveness.

Name	Address	Contact Info
Firstname Lastname	123 Main Street Anywhere, USA	(###) ###-#### (Home) (###) ###-#### (Cell) person@anywhere.com

Section 3 - Critical Procurement Inputs – Materials

[Identify and List Materials and Acquisition Sources. **Multiple Sources for the Same Material Should be Considered**]

Materials and ingredients that are critical to the operation of the company should be reviewed. Specifically, your coordination team members should evaluate food products made at each facility and the equipment, ingredients and supplies necessary to produce them. Food products and services that are provided by only one vendor are of particular concern. For example, during a pandemic, an exclusive contract with a trucking company to ship ingredients from a critical source creates the potential for an emergency. Food companies may want to consider using more than one or alternate suppliers of goods and services, and coordinate with their suppliers so that more than one option is available to get the product from the supplier to your facility. Don't forget to provide for a good supply of cleaning and disinfecting chemical/agents.

Material	Source Company	Contact	Contact Info
Raw Ingredient	1. XYZ Coop Anywhere, USA 2. ABC, Inc. Thistown, USA	Firstname Lastname Or Firstname Lastname	(###) ###-#### (main) person@anywhere.com person2@anywhere.com (###) ###-#### person3@abc.com
Sweeteners			
HDPE Resin			

Packaging			

Section 4 - Critical Procurement Inputs (Services)

Essential vs. Non-critical/Non-essential Services

Services provided by personnel may be categorized as critical or essential in light of their importance to business continuity (i.e., from the perspective of a business or organization) or in light of their contribution to maintaining critical infrastructure (i.e., from a societal or national perspective). Managers must make determinations about which employees perform essential functions at the business or organization level.

Organizations should carefully assess how a company functions, both internally and externally, to determine which staff, materials, procedures and equipment are absolutely necessary to keep the business operating by location and function during a pandemic. Operations critical to survival and recovery should be identified. Organizations should identify the suppliers, shippers, resources and other businesses they must interact with on a daily basis. Professional relationships with more than one supplier may be necessary should a primary contractor be unable to provide the required service. A disaster that shuts down a key supplier could be devastating to a business. In addition, organization-related domestic and international travel may be affected by a pandemic (e.g., quarantine, border closures). The analysis required for pandemic preparedness planning is not fundamentally different from that required for all-hazard COOP planning.

[Identify and List Services and Acquisition Sources (examples of services to consider include pest control, vending services, trash removal, uniform suppliers). Multiple Sources May be Needed.]

Service	Source Company	Contact	Contact Info
Janitorial Service	Company	Firstname Lastname	(###) ###-#### (Main) (###) ###-#### (Cell) person@anywhere.com (email)
Trash Removal			
Pest Control			

Uniform Supplier			

Section 5 - Special Customer Requests/Marketing Considerations

A pandemic may result in a temporary change in the way you conduct business. For example, U.S Government studies indicate that school closures are an effective method to mitigate transmission of influenza. If your company is supplying food to schools or other institutions, how would school closures impact your business, and how would you prepare for that eventuality? Other production considerations should be contemplated. For example, a Canadian Government economic study suggests that transportation services could drop as much as 50 percent and arts, recreation, accommodation and food service sales could be reduced as much as 35 percent based on a scenario using the 1918 pandemic. Reductions such as these would significantly impact the food processing industry, however, food companies should also consider that consumers would be spending more time eating meals at home. Thus the food industry could see increased sales at retail outlets.

[Identify and describe any requests made by customers relating to operations during a pandemic flu situation. For example, identify company and point of contact of any customer that has requested to be kept abreast of production curtailments or delivery delays.]

Company	Contact Name	Contact Info	Nature of Request
XYZ Restaurants	Firstname Lastname	(###) ###-#### (main) (###) ###-#### (Cell) person@anywhere.com (email)	Wants 48 hours advance notice of any shortages in deliveries. Contact by cell anytime if needed.

Section 6 - Production Prioritization [Optional Consideration]

In the event that raw materials, ingredients or manpower are limited, some companies may wish to give certain products prioritization. If so, describe what products get preferential production treatment. For example, a beverage company may choose to produce multi-serve over single serve containers.

Section 7 - Delegation of Authority

Clearly pre-established delegations of authority are vital to ensuring that all organizational personnel know who has the authority to make key decisions in a COOP situation. Because absenteeism may reach a peak of 40 percent at the height of a pandemic wave, delegations of authority are critical.

[Identify and describe key areas of decision making authority.]

Function	Primary Contact Name/Information	Secondary Contact Name/Information
Receiving	Firstname Lastname Receiving Bay Manager Extension x4335 (###) ###-#### (Cell)	Firstname Lastname Dock Supervisor Extension x4336 (###) ###-#### (Cell)
Production		
Quality		
Distribution & Warehousing		
Sales		
Accounting		
Human Resources		

Section 8 - Management Succession

An order of succession is essential to an organization’s COOP plan to ensure personnel know who has authority and responsibility if the leadership is incapacitated or unavailable in a COOP situation. [Since an influenza pandemic may affect regions of the United States differently in

terms of timing, severity, and duration, businesses with geographically dispersed assets and personnel should consider dispersing their order of succession.]

Describe the order by which decision making authority is passed from various individuals.

For example Firstname Lastname , plant manager, is generally in charge of all matters. In his absence,

.....

Section 9 - Alternate Operating Facilities [Optional Consideration]

The identification and preparation of alternate operating facilities and the preparation of personnel for the possibility of an unannounced relocation of essential functions and COOP personnel to these facilities is part of COOP planning. Because a pandemic presents essentially simultaneous risk everywhere, the use of alternative operating facilities must be considered in a non-traditional way. COOP planning for pandemic influenza will involve alternatives to staff relocation/co-location such as social distancing in the workplace through telecommuting, or other means. In addition, relocation and redistribution of staff among alternative facilities may reduce the chance of infection impacting centralized critical operations staff simultaneously.

[This section can also include contacts at competitors operations that may be able to assist in fulfilling customers needs. If so, complete the table below. If not, delete table and this reference.]

Product	Source Company	Contact	Contact Info
Product X	Company X	Firstname Lastname	(###) ###-#### (Main) (###) ###-#### (Cell) person@anywhere.com (email)
Product Y	Company Y		
Product Z	Company Z		

Section 10 - Critical Business Records and Data

Businesses should identify, protect, and ensure the ready availability of electronic and hardcopy documents, references, records, and information systems needed to support essential functions. Pandemic influenza COOP planning must also identify and ensure the integrity of vital systems that require periodic maintenance or other direct physical intervention by employees.

[Describe or refer to any efforts or policies that will be used to satisfy this need.]

Section 11 - Prevention & Workforce Protection Measures & Policies

Each organization must develop, update, exercise, and be able to implement comprehensive plans to protect its workforce. Although an influenza pandemic will not directly affect the physical infrastructure of an organization, a pandemic will ultimately threaten all operations by its impact on an organization's human resources. The health threat to personnel is the primary threat to Within the workplace, the systematic application of infection control and social distancing measures during a pandemic should reduce employee-to-employee disease transmission rates, increase employee safety and confidence, and possibly reduce absenteeism.

Given the characteristics of influenza transmission, a few simple infection control measures may be effective in reducing the transmission of infection. Persons who are potentially infectious should: stay home if they are ill; cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, and use facial tissues to contain respiratory secretions and dispose of them in a waste container (respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette); and wash their hands (with soap and water, an alcohol-based hand rub, or antiseptic handwash) after having contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects/materials (hand hygiene). Persons who are around individuals with influenza-like symptoms should: maintain spatial separation of at least 3 feet from that individual; turn their head away from direct coughs or sneezes; and wash their hands (with soap and water, alcohol-based hand rub, or antiseptic handwash) after having contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects/materials.

WORKPLACE CONTROLS TO MINIMIZE TRANSMISSION

a) Attendance Policy [Optional - Modify as needed]

During a pandemic, persons who are diagnosed with influenza or who have a febrile respiratory illness should remain at home until the fever is resolved and the cough is resolving to avoid exposing others. If such symptomatic persons cannot stay home during the acute phase of their illness, consideration should be given to having them wear a surgical or procedure mask in public places when they may have close contact with other persons.

b) Hand washing & Sanitizers [Optional - Modify as needed]

Hand washing should be facilitated by making hand hygiene facilities and products readily available in workplaces. Antibacterial handwashing products may not have been tested or may not offer a significant advantage over soap and water in most settings for removing influenza virus from hands, however, employees that prefer to use these should not be discouraged. For the duration of a pandemic, the deployment of infection control measures requires the ready availability of soap and water, hand sanitizer, tissues and waste receptacles, and environmental cleaning supplies and EPA registered disinfectants.

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. It is best to wash hands with soap and clean running water for at least 20 seconds. However, if soap and clean water are not available, employees are

encouraged to use an alcohol-based product to clean their hands. Alcohol-based hand rubs can significantly reduce the number of germs on skin and are fast acting.

When washing hands with soap and water:

Wet hands with clean running water and apply soap. Use warm water if it is available.

Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all surfaces.

Continue rubbing hands for at least 20 seconds. (Need a timer? Imagine singing "Happy Birthday" twice through to a friend!)

Rinse hands well under running water

Dry hands using a paper towel or air dryer. If possible, use your paper towel to turn off the faucet and the door handle.

When using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer:

Apply product to the palm of one hand

Rub hands together

Rub the product over all surfaces of hands and fingers until hands are dry.

When should employees wash their hands?

Before starting work

Before preparing or eating food (e.g. breaks)

After going to the bathroom

Before and after tending to someone who is sick

After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing

After handling trash/garbage

Before and after treating a cut or wound

c) Social Distancing [Optional - Modify as needed]

Depending on the severity of a pandemic, and its anticipated effects on health care systems and the functioning of critical infrastructure, communities may recommend general measures to promote social distancing and the disaggregation of disease transmission networks. Within the workplace, social distancing measures could take the form of: guidelines modifying the frequency and type of face-to-face encounters that occur between employees (e.g., staggered breaks, posting of infection control guidelines in prominent locations, promotion of social distancing between employees and customers.)

Some social distancing measures, such as the recommendation to maintain 3 feet of spatial separation between individuals or to otherwise limit face-to-face contact, may be adaptable to certain work environments and in appropriate settings should be sustainable indefinitely at comparatively minimal cost. Other community public health interventions (e.g., closure of schools and public transit systems, implementation of "snow day" restrictions) may increase rates of absenteeism and result in disruption of workflows and productivity. Low-cost or sustainable social distancing measures should be introduced within the workplace immediately after a community outbreak begins, and businesses should prepare for the possibility of measures that have the potential to disrupt their business continuity. Decisions as to

how and when to implement community measures will be made on a case-by-case basis, with the Federal Government providing support and guidance to local officials.

d) Meetings [Optional - Modify as needed]

During times of proximate pandemic infection, teleconferences shall be used to the extent practical in lieu of face-to-face meetings.

e) Handshaking Policy [Optional - Modify as Needed]

During times of significant contagious transmissions, this company may invoke a moratorium on hand-shaking on company property or otherwise in the performance of one's duties. If such a moratorium is invoked, employees should to the extent possible honor the moratorium.

f) Masks [Optional - Modify as Needed]

The benefit of wearing disposable surgical or procedure masks at school or in the workplace has not been established. Mask use by the public should be based on risk, including the frequency of exposure and closeness of contact with potentially infectious persons. Routine mask use in public should be permitted, but not required. The Federal Government will develop policies and guidance on the use and efficacy of masks. Other, more advanced respiratory protection may be indicated in certain instances, depending on the degree of exposure risk.

Any mask must be disposed of if it becomes moist. Individuals should wash their hands after touching or discarding a used mask. For more detailed information related to the use of face masks, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has developed interim guidance on the use of masks to control influenza transmission, including the use of face masks and respirators in health care settings.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended that, the minimum requirement is a disposable particulate respirator (e.g. N95, N99 or N100) used in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.134 for respiratory protection programs. Workers must be fit tested for -the model and size respirator they wear and must be trained to fit-check for facepiece to face seal, when entering the room.

Government estimates suggest having 1500 masks per 100 employees to last for approximately 30 days depending on situation. Masks be changed when wet and hands should be properly washed after handling the old mask. Then apply new mask with clean hands.

Depending on a variety of factors masks have a useful life of approximately 2 hours.

g) Travel Policy [Optional - Modify as needed]

Company reserves the right to impose restrictions, limitations or moratoriums on business travel in the interests of the well-being and safety of all employees.

If travel is permitted, after employees return from travel, employees must monitor their own health for 10 days. If they become ill with a fever plus cough, sore throat, or trouble breathing during this 10 day period, have them consult a healthcare provider. When visiting the health care provider they should inform them of:

1. the symptoms
2. where the travel occurred
3. if they had direct contact or close contact with any severely ill person or persons

h) Driver Specific Measures [Optional - Describe Company Policy as Needed, consideration may want to be given to providing hand sanitizers to drivers or other workers]

i) Flu Shots - [Optional - Modify as needed]

This company and the Harvard Health Letter suggest employees and their families get a regular flu shot this fall. While it will not protect employees or their families from pandemic flu, it will reduce the risk of getting regular flu and getting pandemic and regular flu at the same time.

Note: Pandemic flu vaccine is under development but it cannot be finalized until the pandemic version of the virus appears. Further, it may take 6 months or longer to get the vaccine into use once it is initially developed.

j) Janitorial Considerations - [Optional - Modify as needed]

This company adheres to the policy that during times of pandemic flu transmission, special janitorial attention should be paid to areas where the pandemic virus could be transmitted. These areas include handrails and banisters, door knobs, light switches, time clocks, office and public phones counter and tabletops. Janitorial staff should be advised to pay special attention to these areas and use EPA-registered virucidal disinfectants to eliminate these areas as a source of transmission. Disinfectants should be used according to label directions.

k) Uniforms - [Optional - Modify as needed]

This company utilizes laundry/uniform services for its production staff and the professional cleaning techniques employed by these service providers is sufficient to eliminate concern that clean uniforms could be a source of transmission. Soiled uniforms do, however, need to be appropriately handled to prevent them from being a possible transmission source. Having visitors or other third parties reuse smocks, lab coats or other protective garments and equipment should be not appropriate. An EPA-registered laundry disinfectant or sanitizer may be used to further reduce the possibility of transmission from uniforms.

l) Foot Baths & Foams [Optional - Modify as needed] –

This company utilizes foot baths and/or foams to eliminate the spread of pathogens and spoilage organisms in a facility. As always, the foot baths or foams must be properly maintained during a pandemic event.

m) Visitors - [Optional - Modify as needed]

During times of pandemic flu this company requires outside contact with our employees be limited to the extent that such a limitation is reasonable and practical. Special consideration should be given to the risks versus the benefits associated with allowing third parties on company property. When appropriate, consideration should be given to postponing activities involving third parties except where, in particular, a delay may jeopardize, or otherwise increase risks associated with, worker safety.

Section 12 - Training & Table Top Exercises

Testing, training, and exercising this plan is essential to assessing, demonstrating, and improving the ability of our organizations to execute this plan and any related programs during an emergency situation. Pandemic contingency plans should be reviewed annually, similar to the facility evacuation plan or annual evacuation drill. Training on the contents of this plan is vital for key management staff in a decision making capacity. Also, awareness level training for all other personnel is strongly recommended. Such training should be pointed towards eliminating uncertainty and deflating rumors or potentially untrue or inaccurate information fueled by the media.

Likewise, it is suggested that an in-house “table top exercise” be coordinated biannually (every other year) to review and confirm understanding of the plan elements. Table top exercises can include things such as: social distancing techniques that reduce person-to-person interactions within the workplace; accuracy of emergency contact names and phone numbers; and, the chain of command to confirm knowledge of decision making authority. Other training activities that may be recommended could include interfacing and participating in table top or functional exercises that may coordinated by your Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) or State Emergency Response Committee (SERC) for your location.

Section 13 – Communications

While communication is an important component of everyday operations, communication would be critical during a pandemic. Information gathering and communications are two integral and closely tied parts of a plan. Your team should develop a plan to help control communications with Federal, State and local authorities, employees, media and customers, to convey important messages that should be delivered.

Section 14 - For further information:

Stay informed about pandemic influenza and be prepared to respond.

- Consult www.pandemicflu.gov frequently for updates on national and international information on pandemic influenza.
- Use national and local pandemic hotlines that will be established in the eventuality of a global influenza outbreak.
- Listen to radio and television and read media stories about pandemic flu.
- Contact and stay in touch with your state/local health department. It is important to maintain communication with and coordinate planning with state county and local public health agencies.

[Insert relevant state/local authority here, for example:]

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
 250 Washington Street, 2nd Floor
 Boston, MA 02108
 Phone: (617) 624-6000
 Fax: (617) 624-5206
 Web: <http://www.state.ma.us/dph/dphhome.htm>

- Contact and stay in touch with your trade association (Optional)

Your Association
 X Street, NW
 Washington, DC 20000
 (###) ###-#### Main Number
 (###) ###-#### Fax
 URL www.website

For information about this template and/or pandemic flu contact:

Name
 Title
 Address
 City, State Zip
 Direct Dial Phone Number
 Cell Phone Number
 Fax Number
 Email Address