Administrative controls are those that modify workers’ work schedules and tasks in ways that minimize their exposure to workplace hazards.

Examples include:
- Developing policies that encourage ill workers to stay at home without fear of any reprisals.
- Discontinuing nonessential travel to locations having high prevalence of illness.
- Developing practices to minimize face-to-face contact between workers such as extended use of e-mail, websites and teleconferences. Where possible, encourage flexible work arrangements such as telecommuting or flexible work hours to reduce the number of workers who must be at the work site at one time or in one specific location.
- Relying on home delivery of goods and services to reduce the number of clients or customers who must visit your workplace.
- Developing emergency communications plans. Maintain a forum for answering workers’ concerns. Develop Internet-based communications, if feasible.

Work practices are procedures for safe and proper work that are used to reduce the duration, frequency or intensity of exposure to a hazard. When defining safe work practice controls, it is a good idea to ask your workers for their suggestions, since they have first-hand experience with the tasks. These controls need to be understood and followed by managers, supervisors and workers.

Examples include:
- Providing resources and a work environment that promotes personal hygiene. For example, provide tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, hand sanitizer, disinfectants and disposable towels for workers to clean their work surfaces.
• Encouraging workers to obtain a seasonal influenza vaccine (this helps to prevent illness from seasonal influenza strains that may continue to circulate).
• Providing workers with up-to-date education and training on influenza risk factors, protective behaviors, and instruction on proper behaviors (for example, cough etiquette; avoiding touching eyes, nose and mouth; and proper care of PPE).
• Providing education and training materials in an easy to understand format and in the appropriate language and literacy level for all employees.
• Developing procedures to minimize contacts between workers and between workers and clients or customers.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is protective gear needed to keep workers safe while performing their jobs. Examples of PPE include respirators (for example, N95), face shields, goggles and disposable gloves. While engineering and administrative controls and proper work practices are considered to be more effective in minimizing exposure to the influenza virus, the use of PPE may also be indicated during certain exposure situations and during emergencies. The appropriate types of PPE for use during a pandemic will be based on the risk of contracting influenza while working and the availability of PPE. Check the www.pandemicflu.gov website for the latest guidance.

It is important that PPE be:
• Selected based upon the hazard to the worker;
• Properly fitted and some need to be periodically refitted (e.g., respirators);
• Conscientiously and properly worn;
• Regularly maintained and replaced in accordance with manufacturer’s specifications;
• Properly removed and disposed of to avoid contamination of self, others or the environment; and
• If reusable, properly removed, cleaned, disinfected and stored.

If used correctly, PPE can help prevent some exposures; however, they should not take the place of other prevention interventions, such as engineering controls, cough etiquette and hand hygiene (see www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/stopgerms.htm).

For additional information on what employers can do to protect their workers, please refer to OSHA Publication No. 3327, entitled Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for an Influenza Pandemic, which can be accessed at: www.osha.gov. Also consult www.pandemicflu.gov to obtain current and additional detailed information about all aspects of pandemic influenza.

This is one in a series of informational fact sheets highlighting OSHA programs, policies or standards. It does not impose any new compliance requirements. For a comprehensive list of compliance requirements of OSHA standards or regulations, refer to Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations. This information will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. The voice phone is (202) 693-1999; teletypewriter (TTY) number: (877) 889-5627.

For more complete information:

U.S. Department of Labor
www.osha.gov
(800) 321-OSHA

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