



NOV 27 2019

DIRECTIVE: JOB CORPS INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 19-03

TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF
ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS
ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS
ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS, AND CTS CONTRACTORS

FROM: DEBRA CARR
Acting National Director
Office of Job Corps

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Debra Carr", is written over the typed name and title.

SUBJECT: Influenza Information Update for the 2019-2020 Season

1. Purpose. To inform Job Corps centers of influenza prevention, testing, and treatment, based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) most recent recommendations.
2. Background. Every flu season has the potential to cause significant illness, increased health care utilization, hospitalization, and death. Flu is caused by influenza viruses, and is spread mainly by coughing, sneezing, and close contact. Anyone can get flu. Flu strikes suddenly and can last several days. Symptoms vary, but can include fever, chills, sore throat, muscle aches, fatigue, cough, headache and runny or stuffy nose.

The CDC encourages vaccination against seasonal influenza as soon as vaccines become available. Flu vaccines are designed to protect against the influenza viruses that experts predict will be the most common during the upcoming season. Three kinds of influenza viruses commonly circulate among people today: influenza A (H1N1) viruses, influenza A (H3N2) viruses, and influenza B viruses. Each year, these viruses are used to produce seasonal flu vaccine.

3. Action.

a. Vaccination

Flu vaccine is needed every year. All students and staff are encouraged to receive a flu vaccine. There are several flu vaccine options for the 2019-2020 season. Health care providers are encouraged to learn more about this year's vaccine at: <https://www.ede.gov/flu/professionals/index.htm>.

It is especially important that people with certain health conditions and health care workers receive a flu vaccine. More information is available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/index.htm>.

One dose of seasonal flu vaccine should be administered as soon as it is available. Early administration of flu vaccine (September) is not associated with loss of protection, and late administration of flu vaccine (March) still affords protection as cases of seasonal influenza often peak in late winter. Ideally, vaccination should be completed by the end of October.

According to the CDC, people with egg allergies can receive any licensed, recommended age-appropriate flu vaccine that is otherwise appropriate. People who have a history of severe egg allergy (those who have had any symptom other than hives after exposure to egg) should be vaccinated in a medical setting, supervised by a health care provider who is able to recognize and manage severe allergic reactions.

Centers should first contact their state and/or local health departments to inquire if flu vaccine is available for administration on or off center. Some pharmacies have provided flu vaccine for Job Corps students at no cost to the center. If not available locally, flu vaccine can be purchased from the Health and Human Services Supply Service Center in Perry Point, MD, or from private vendors.

Centers may wish to offer flu vaccine administration to students in alternate locations, such as the cafeteria during lunch break to include nonresident students or the dormitories after hours to increase voluntary participation. Members of the Student Government Association should engage in promoting flu vaccination among their peers. Flu vaccine should remain available on center throughout the flu season for newly enrolled students and for students who may have initially declined to be immunized.

b. Education

Job Corps centers are encouraged to share with students and staff the following tips for controlling the spread of influenza on center:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleansers are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Encourage residential students to report to the Health and Wellness Center if they become ill. Sick nonresidential students and staff should be encouraged to stay home and limit contact with others.

c. Face masks

- A combination of infection prevention and control strategies are recommended to decrease transmission of flu on center, especially in the Health and Wellness Center. These include source control (immediately putting a surgical face mask on patients being evaluated for respiratory symptoms), promptly placing suspected influenza patients in private rooms, and having healthcare personnel wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when caring for patients with suspected influenza.
- Healthcare personnel should wear gloves, an isolation gown, and face protection (either a face shield, or eye protection and a mask) when entering an influenza patient isolation room.
- Infectious patients should wear a mask any time they leave the isolation room.
- Unvaccinated students and staff should consider wearing face masks during an outbreak of influenza on center.

d. Planning and response

Job Corps centers are encouraged to review their pandemic influenza plans to prepare for potential influenza outbreaks on center. For guidance on planning and preparation for pandemic influenza, refer to Job Corps Information Notice No. 06-08, "Pandemic Influenza Preparation for Job Corps" (September 11, 2007). A copy of the directive can be downloaded from the Job Corps Health and Wellness website. Center health staff members are also encouraged to contact their state and/or local health departments for the latest information on vaccine availability, and recommendations for testing, treatment and prophylaxis. Centers should continue to use the Significant Incident Report system to keep the National and Regional Offices of Job Corps informed about epidemic influenza on center. For reporting purposes, epidemic influenza will be defined by Job Corps as sequential cases affecting 10 percent or more of on-board strength.

Closing of Job Corps centers in response to flu is not anticipated, although new intakes might be restricted if cases reach the epidemic threshold on center. Non-residential students should stay home at onset of flu symptoms including fever, chills, sore throat, cough, and muscle pain. Residential students may be transported home or treated on center. Public transportation should not be used for students exhibiting symptoms of influenza. Patients can spread influenza virus 1 day before symptoms appear and up to 5 days after onset of illness. Students with influenza should not return to class or to work until fever has resolved for 24 hours without treatment and 5 days have passed since onset of symptoms. For Job Corps students, medical leave for influenza will not require third party verification.

e. Testing and Treatment

Centers should not stockpile diagnostic materials or antiviral medications for influenza, and should only conduct diagnostic testing and begin widespread antiviral treatment or prophylaxis based upon specific recommendations from their state or local health departments.

Antiviral medications are prescription drugs that can be used to treat or prevent influenza. People at high risk of serious flu complications and people who are very sick with influenza should get antiviral drugs. Other people can be treated with antivirals at their health care professional's discretion. Treatment with antivirals works best when begun within 48 hours of getting sick, but can still be beneficial when given later in the course of illness. Antiviral drugs are effective across all age and risk groups. This season, three FDA-approved influenza antiviral drugs are recommended for use in the United States: oral oseltamivir (Tamiflu), inhaled zanamivir (Relenza) and oral baloxavir marboxil (Xofluza). The influenza antiviral agents amantadine or rimantadine should not be used this season due to high levels of resistance (>99%) with influenza A and no effect on influenza B.

Addressees are to ensure this Information Notice is distributed to all appropriate staff.

4. Resources. For the most current information on influenza, visit the following CDC websites:

- a. Influenza overview: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>
- b. Information for health professionals:
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/index.htm>
- c. Free influenza resources to download:
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/index.htm>
- d. Updated influenza Vaccine Information Statements (VIS) dated 8/15/2019:
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/flu.html>

5. Expiration Date. Until superseded.

6. Inquiries. Inquiries should be directed to Cassandra Thomas at (202) 693-3933 or Thomas.Cassandra@dol.gov.