



In the event of an influenza pandemic, Richland College has partnered with Dallas County Health and Human Services Department (DCHHS), and the DCCCD Risk Management Office to establish plans and procedures to respond to a pandemic.

A pandemic is a widespread illness caused by a specific virus identified through medical tests which are administered and the results reported to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

During a pandemic event, Richland College will operate its response in accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) so that coordination with local, state and Federal agencies can occur in a timely manner.

The initial response may include, but is not limited to:

- ❖ Classroom announcements, door posters advising students and staff of the symptoms and precautions to guard against transmission on the illness.
- ❖ Availability of special items to guard against illness transmission (i.e. hand sanitizer, face masks, etc.)
- ❖ Initiation of “social distancing” or a “Don’t Bring It To College” policy where students and staff may complete work and classroom assignments at home.

If the illness has become more widespread in the City/County, the next level of response may include, but is not limited to:

- ❖ The provisions above plus,
- ❖ Aggressive cleaning of all surface areas of the college.
- ❖ Follow DCHHS advisories which may include: identification, isolation and transportation of suspected cases.
- ❖ Communicate with family and parents of suspected cases and offer appropriate advisories.



In the event that Dallas County has been placed under a “special” or an “emergency” order from the DCHHS the following actions may include, but is not limited to:

The initial and secondary provisions listed above.

- ❖ Suspension of classes, and closure of college facilities for an indeterminate amount of time.

It is important to realize that while a personal illness of influenza may last up to two weeks, a pandemic event may last up to two months, or may come in waves. It may be necessary to increase and decrease the levels of response based upon the number of cases being reported to the DCHHS. The DCHHS may change the response profile several times over a period of weeks or months during a pandemic.

The general guidelines during any period of time where colds and other illnesses are being spread are:

- ❖ Wash your hands frequently.
- ❖ Cover your cough.
- ❖ Avoid persons who are coughing and sneezing.
- ❖ If advised by your physician, take the annual flu shot.
- ❖ If you are ill, avoid exposing other members of the public.
- ❖ Avoid travel if possible.
- ❖ Avoid going to areas where large groups of people congregate, (e.g. sports venues, shopping malls, etc.).
- ❖ If you exhibit symptoms of illness, visit your physician, the effects of some illnesses can be lessened if treated early.