

# SOUTHWESTERN

LAW SCHOOL  
Los Angeles, CA

## Infectious Respiratory Disease Pandemic Response Plan

**Administrative protocols approved February 7, 2025.**

**Revision history:** Formerly Influenza Pandemic Response Plan; edits made in April 2026 to expand policy scope to other respiratory diseases.

**Related policies:** Attendance Policy; Attendance section of SCALE Program Policies

**Scheduled Review Date:** April 2028 (Health & Safety Manager)

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**A. Overview and Scope**

Pandemics are typically triggered by the emergence of a novel infectious pathogen that spreads efficiently among humans and causes widespread illness. Infectious Respiratory Diseases (defined below) have historically posed the greatest risk of rapid global transmission and significant institutional disruption.

Southwestern Law School has adopted this Infectious Respiratory Disease Pandemic Response Plan (Plan) to provide a structured framework for preparing for and responding to a Pandemic that poses a substantial risk to the campus community or materially disrupts operations.

This Plan applies only to extraordinary public health events. It does not apply to routine or seasonal respiratory illnesses or localized outbreaks that can be managed through standard health, safety, or human resources policies and procedures.

**1. Objectives**

The objectives of this Plan are to:

- Protect the health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and visitors;
- Limit transmission within the campus community;
- Reduce serious illness, hospitalizations, and deaths;
- Sustain essential academic and operational functions;
- Maintain compliance with applicable public health orders; and
- Reduce disruption to Southwestern’s educational mission and community.

This Plan focuses on Infectious Respiratory Diseases due to their potential for rapid person-to-person transmission and widespread community impact. Other public health emergencies may be addressed through separate institutional policies or emergency response protocols.

**2. Activation**

This Plan will be activated upon a determination by the President & Dean (or designee), in consultation with the Health and Safety Team, that a Pandemic or declared public health emergency involving an Infectious

Respiratory Disease warrants implementation of the measures described in this Plan.

Southwestern will coordinate its response with local, county, state, and federal public health authorities, as appropriate.

## **B. Definitions**

Infectious Respiratory Disease means a communicable disease primarily transmitted through respiratory droplets, aerosols, or close contact, including but not limited to influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), COVID-19, and other similar viral respiratory pathogens.

A pandemic means the widespread transmission of a novel infectious respiratory pathogen across multiple regions or countries, resulting in sustained community spread and a population with little or no preexisting immunity.

The existence of seasonal or endemic respiratory disease, without more, does not constitute a Pandemic or trigger activation of this Plan.

## **C. Health and Safety Team**

The Health and Safety Team enhances campus-wide emergency planning through collaboration, coordination, and the development of specific emergency procedures and processes. The Team identifies areas within the campus' emergency operations that need improvement or lack coordination.

## **D. Health and Safety Team Members**

- President and Dean (“Dean”)
- Vice Deans
- Chief Operating Officer
- General Counsel
- Associate Dean for SCALE
- Associate Dean, Student Services
- Associate Dean, Student Affairs
- Associate Dean, Admissions
- Director of Administrative Services
- Director of Campus Safety and Security
- Director of Facilities
- Health and Safety Manager

## **E. Dean's Office and Department Call Trees**

The Dean will issue directives regarding campus operations, including transitions to remote modalities and business continuity measures.

The Dean will also monitor emergency changes to accreditation standards.

The Dean may delegate responsibilities and authority under this policy as needed.

Department Heads must maintain call trees for their respective departments.

## **F. Surveillance, Investigation, Protective Health Measures**

The Health and Safety Manager will monitor the latest developments and updates from federal, state, and local governments, and established national and world health organizations. The Health and Safety manager will provide regular updates to the Health and Safety Team and, when appropriate, to the community on Infectious Respiratory Diseases, including treatment protocols, infection control procedures, and the status of antiviral and vaccine development.

The community is encouraged to stay up to date with seasonal respiratory-related vaccinations as they become available.

Students, employees, and vendor representatives who work on campus (e.g., Security, Bookstore, Printshop, Spotted Hen) should report Infectious Respiratory Diseases to [health@swlaw.edu](mailto:health@swlaw.edu) and contact their medical provider.

Students and employees are encouraged to develop and practice personal emergency preparedness plans with their families.

## **G. Levels of Alert and Appropriate Responses**

(Public Health Orders will supersede any planned internal responses.)

The campus alert levels, as shown in Appendix A: Factors Balanced to Determine Alert Level, define the magnitude of a campus incident, allowing an assessment of its impact on the campus facility, its services, and students, faculty, and staff.

### **1. Alert Level 1: Alert Period**

No current hazard. Alert Level 1 describes localized campus incidents that can typically be resolved quickly with internal resources. The incident may affect only a single, localized area of the campus, with minimal disruption to most normal campus operations.

## **2. Alert Level 2: Elevated Risk**

The campus remains operational. Alert Level 2 indicates a situation that presents a greater potential threat than Level 1 but poses no immediate threat to life or property. This Plan is activated, and the Health and Safety Team will discuss implementation measures, including masking guidance. Operations continue with heightened infection control efforts.

## **3. Alert Level 3: High Risk**

On-campus class continuation will be evaluated daily, with a high likelihood of shifting to online. Southwestern-sponsored or hosted off-campus events and activities will be curtailed. Once classes are shifted online, administrative, academic, and support operations will be scaled back to pre-determined essential functions only. The facilities will be secured for access by essential personnel only.

Essential personnel remaining on campus will receive instructions on infection control methods. Ventilation systems, food, and supply deliveries, as well as the use of common bathroom and kitchen areas, will be monitored to minimize exposure. The Health and Safety Team will coordinate with external agencies as needed.

## **4. Alert Level 4: Campus Closure**

Most on-campus operations will be suspended and shifted online, where possible. Only critical functions and essential personnel will remain on-site.

# **H. Protocols by Alert Levels of Plan**

The Health and Safety Team will oversee the implementation of the following protocols, which are aligned with alert levels, while this Plan is in effect.

## **1. Prevention/mitigation**

- a.** Update and maintain this Plan.
- b.** Promote seasonal Infectious Respiratory Disease vaccinations, when available.
- c.** Promote protective measures such as hand hygiene, social distancing, improving airflow, masking guidance, and staying home when sick.

## **2. Preparedness**

- a.** Educate the community about ongoing personal protection.

- b. Utilize Infectious Respiratory Disease surveillance and testing through the CDC's [Weekly US Influenza Surveillance Report](#), [Respiratory Illnesses Data Channel](#), and [L.A. Public Health's Respiratory Illness Surveillance System](#) or another reliable resource.
- c. Advise individuals experiencing Infectious Respiratory Disease symptoms to stay home and consult their medical provider.
- d. Educate the community on symptom recognition and mitigation measures.
- e. Establish and maintain a communication system throughout a Pandemic response.
- f. Review attendance policies and procedures.

### **3. Response**

- a. The Dean's Office will convene the Health and Safety Team as needed and will serve as the overall response coordinator. The Dean should be kept informed of all response activities.
- b. The Health and Safety Team will continue to enhance communication and surveillance activities and educate the community about personal protective strategies and mitigation measures.
- c. The Health and Safety Manager will continue to monitor indoor air quality at Southwestern and, in collaboration with the Health and Safety Team and Facilities, adjust the air exchange rate as needed. This process may involve actions such as setting HEPA scrubbers to their highest setting, opening doors to ventilate rooms, increasing wipe-down and disinfecting practices, and reducing room occupancy until CO2 levels or virus risk return to safe levels.
- d. Reduce on-campus operations by shifting online.
- e. Coordinate with local law enforcement entities to assist in Pandemic control measures and maintenance of social order.

The Health and Safety Team will meet more frequently to coordinate the next steps for planning and response activities and develop recommendations for the Pandemic emergency.

## **I. Students in The Residences @ 7<sup>th</sup>**

In addition to following the protocols in Section H above, students who live in The Residences may be instructed to take specific safety precautions, especially if they have a roommate. The Health & Safety Manager will work with residents on these safety precautions.

## **J. Suspended Campus Operations**

All decisions should be guided by federal, state, and local recommendations and mandates, and best practices from other institutions. These decisions may include issuing travel advisories, suspending in-person mass gatherings (including classes), suspending normal campus operations, transitioning to remote operations, and determining when to resume on-campus activities.

The following decision points are a guide to the decision-making process and may not be the only considerations. As the Pandemic unfolds, new information may provide alternative choices.

- Transmissibility
- Morbidity
- Mortality
- Geographic spread
- Proximity of confirmed cases
- Los Angeles Public Health Department, California Department of Public Health, and the CDC's recommendations
- Closing of K-12 public schools
- Closing of Los Angeles area colleges, universities, and post-grad schools
- Rising absenteeism of Staff, Students, and Faculty

If on-campus operations are suspended, the Health and Safety Team will assist in preparing facilities and equipment as necessary, close down non-essential areas, and provide a list of on-campus facilities that will remain accessible. The Health and Safety Team will also ensure that Southwestern has procured and provided sufficient infection-prevention supplies and established protocols to prevent the exposure and spread of disease, including intensifying sanitation efforts as needed.

## **K. Police and Security**

The Director of Campus Safety and Security will serve as the primary liaison with local, regional, and federal law enforcement agencies and will have authority over matters of public safety, including facility security, parking and vehicle management, and coordinating with external law enforcement officials. When

appropriate, the Director of Campus Safety and Security will coordinate with the Dean's Office on evacuation measures.

## **L. Media Inquiries**

All media inquiries should be directed to the Chief Communications & Marketing Officer or the Dean's Office. If the situation escalates and a holding statement for Southwestern is required, the Chief Communications & Marketing Officer and Dean will collaborate with Southwestern's Crisis Communication Consultant. The Dean or the Chief Communications & Marketing Officer will be Southwestern's designated spokespersons.

The Communications & Marketing Office will actively monitor media coverage and track developments in real time.

## **M. Prevention Measures**

Southwestern will implement the following prevention measures to ensure the safety and well-being of the campus community.

### **1. Staying at home if experiencing Infectious Respiratory Disease symptoms**

Southwestern may use various communication methods, such as email, posters, flyers, SW-Alerts, and media coverage, to discourage individuals with Infectious Respiratory Disease symptoms from visiting the campus until they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without taking fever-reducing medication.

Individuals experiencing Infectious Respiratory Disease or other contagious illnesses should stay home and avoid accessing campus, even if wearing a high-quality mask or using personal air purifiers. They should only return after being fever-free for at least 24 hours without using fever-reducing medications, and after their symptoms have improved.

If symptoms worsen, the individual should remain home and contact their healthcare provider.

### **2. HEPA filters**

The Director of Facilities will set HEPA filters to their maximum setting throughout the day.

### **3. Frequently wipe down commonly touched surfaces**

The Director of Facilities will ensure that the following areas and items are cleaned frequently:

- Including doorknobs, handrails, elevator buttons, desks, tables, chairs, sofas, counters, and surfaces in cafeterias, meeting rooms, and offices.
- Keyboards, telephone receivers, and touchtone pads in common areas.

Regular schedules for frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces (e.g., bathrooms, doorknobs, elevator buttons, and tables) will be established.

Disposable wipes will be made available.

### **4. Review sick leave and attendance policies**

The Health and Safety Team may evaluate and revise sick leave and attendance policies to help keep the Southwestern community safe.

### **5. Encourage hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette**

The fundamental Infectious Respiratory Disease prevention practices will be emphasized: stay home when you are sick, wash your hands frequently with soap and water whenever possible, and cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.

### **6. Postponing large events**

Postpone mass gatherings and similar events or shift them online.

## **N. Resuming Normal Operations and Reopening Campus**

Resuming normal operations should be guided by recommendations from federal, state, and local health authorities. Additional factors to consider for reopening the campus include:

- A decreased morbidity or mortality rate.
- A reduced rate or speed of disease spread.
- The reopening of transportation systems and an increase in interstate travel.
- The availability of sufficient faculty and staff to support the resumption of classes and on-campus operations.

## **O. Recovery**

During the recovery phase of this Plan, Southwestern's Health and Safety Team will coordinate to complete the following:

- Obtain all written orders issued by the L.A. Public Health Officer pertaining to a Pandemic.
- Prepare and submit documentation for any emergency or disaster assistance requests to the local jurisdiction, state, FEMA, or other appropriate entities.
- Develop an After-Action Report to evaluate responses and outcomes to the initial waves of the Pandemic and identify best practices.
- Prepare a follow-up Health and Safety Team meeting to identify strengths and areas for improvement in planning, response, and recovery.
- Prepare for additional Pandemic waves.

## **P. Questions**

For questions not addressed in this Plan, please contact Southwestern's Health and Safety Manager at [health@swlaw.edu](mailto:health@swlaw.edu).

## **Q. Plan Revisions**

Southwestern expressly reserves the right to change or modify any aspect of this Plan at any time, with or without prior notice.

## Appendix A: Factors Balanced to Determine Alert Level

Alert Level	Factors
<b>1: Alert Period</b>	No current hazard. The incident may impact a small, localized area with minimal disruption to campus operations.
<b>2: Elevated Risk</b>	The campus remains operational. The Plan is activated, and the Health and Safety Team will consider measures, such as issuing masking guidance. Operations proceed with enhanced infection control efforts.
<b>3: High Risk</b>	On-campus class continuation will be evaluated daily, with a strong likelihood of transitioning to online instruction. External operations will be reduced, and once classes move online, only essential administrative, academic, and support functions will continue.
<b>4: Campus Closure</b>	Most on-campus operations will shift online, with only critical functions and essential personnel remaining on-site.