



A Union of Professionals

# COVID-19 Planning Checklist

## For Individuals and Families

The single best thing you can do to avoid getting any virus is to wash your hands. Wash frequently with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer until you can get to a place where you can wash your hands properly.

A pandemic may cause widespread social and economic disruption. Services provided by government agencies, public utilities, stores, the post office and other businesses may be limited. Transportation services may be disrupted, and schools may be closed.

It may be difficult or impossible to work during a pandemic. Find out if you can work from home, and ask your employer if it has a plan in place. You should plan for a possible reduction in income if you are unable to work or if your workplace closes.

A pandemic could overwhelm the healthcare system. High numbers of ill people during a severe pandemic will put enormous pressure on our healthcare system. Prepare to follow instructions from your healthcare provider and public health officials about how to obtain medical advice and receive care.

There are simple steps you can take to prepare for a pandemic. Here is a checklist for individuals and families.

### At Home:

- Store water, food, and other essentials. Prepare to get by for at least a week on what you have at home.
- Store medical and health supplies. Ask your healthcare provider for a prescription for an extra supply of your regular drugs. Keep health supplies and nonprescription drugs on hand.
- Make household emergency plans.
- Prepare for possible changes in healthcare. For example, medical advice and healthcare may be more difficult to obtain during a severe pandemic. There may not be enough medical supplies, healthcare provider, and hospital beds for all persons who are ill.
- Difficult decisions about who should receive medical care and how much treatment can be administered will be necessary. Talk about these possibilities with your family and loved ones.
- In a severe pandemic, you may be advised to stay away from others and from public places as much as possible. Plan to limit the number of trips you take to run errands.
- Think about how you would care for people in your family who have disabilities if support services are not available.

#### EXAMPLES OF NON-PERISHABLE FOOD

- Canned meats
- Canned beans, fruits, vegetables, soups
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Dried fruit
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Nuts and trail mix
- Crackers
- Comfort food, including cookies, candy, instant coffee, teabags
- Canned juices
- Bottled water
- Baby formula and baby food

Find these resources and more at [www.aft.org/coronavirus](http://www.aft.org/coronavirus)

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of 1.7 million professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

Randi Weingarten  
PRESIDENT

Loretta Johnson  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Evelyn DeJesus  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



- Decide who will take care of children if schools are closed.
- Plan for possible limited access to your money; banks may curtail hours or not replenish ATMs if their employees are out sick. Keep some cash at home.
- Plan home learning and recreational activities and exercises your children can do at home. Have materials and books on hand.

## At Work:

- Prepare to stay at home. Staying at home from work when you are sick is the most important thing you can do to protect others.
- Know policies. Ask your employer or union about sick leave and policies about absences, time off and telecommuting.
- Encourage planning. Every business, organization and agency should have a plan for making sure essential work can get done if large numbers of employees are absent for

many months. You may be asked to perform duties that are not typically part of your job.

- Explore other ways to get your work done. Find ways to reduce personal contact, such as increased use of emails or phone conferences. Plan to work from home whenever possible.

## In Your Community:

- We will need to pull together as communities during a pandemic. We will need to check on our neighbors and help people around us, especially if we experience major social and economic disruptions. This may be as simple as calling your neighbor from a “phone tree” list, or dropping off supplies on the doorstep of a homebound friend.
- Know your neighbors. Talk with family, friends and neighbors to make sure everyone is prepared. Be ready to help neighbors who are elderly or have special needs if services they depend on are not available.
- Know school policies. Become familiar with policies about illness and being absent. Be prepared for school closures.
- Volunteer with community groups. Assist with planning for emergency response to disasters and pandemics.

**Be sure to check out our COVID-19 toolkit for more information about the coronavirus and how to protect your workplaces and members. For additional information, contact Amy Bahruth with AFT Nurses and Health Professionals at 202-879-4731, [Abahruth@aft.org](mailto:Abahruth@aft.org).**

### EXAMPLES OF OTHER EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

- Pet food, cat litter
- Disposable diapers
- Feminine hygiene supplies
- Flashlight
- Portable radio
- Batteries
- Manual can opener
- Plastic garbage bags
- Tissues and toilet paper
- Entertainment—games, crafts, books, movies, etc.
- Supplies for persons with special needs
- Some extra cash

### EXAMPLES OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SUPPLIES

- Prescribed medicines and supplies, such as glucose meters and blood pressure monitoring equipment
- Soap and water
- Alcohol-based hand cleaner
- Medicines for fever and pain, such as acetaminophen and ibuprofen
- Diarrhea remedy, such as Pepto-Bismol or Kaopectate
- Throat lozenges
- Cough syrup containing dextromethorphan
- Thermometer(s)
- Vitamins
- Fluids with electrolytes, like Gatorade and Pedialyte