



## CLIENT ADVISORY

### Risk Management Update

April 28, 2009

## Swine Flu Outbreak: Be Prepared

### *Emerging Health Concern Could Have Major Impact on Business*

As details regarding the current Swine Flu situation emerge, two things are clear: 1) any pandemic will have an immediate and severe impact on business operations; and 2) the only way to deal with a pandemic is to be prepared for one.

#### **ACTION:**

Review and update existing business continuity plans to address potential pandemic situations.

If the current swine flu escalates into a true pandemic as predicted by some sources, is your business prepared to respond? Have you considered how such an event would affect your workforce? Your suppliers? Your customers? If schools close for extended periods, do you have work-from-home contingency plans for employees with school age children? If local and/or foreign governments impose mandatory shutdowns, will your business be able to adapt?

In any disaster, pandemic or otherwise, communication is everything. Consider:

- Creating clear procedures for communicating with your employees
- Identifying where/how employees are to report in
- Providing emergency status information regarding your company
- Availability of home or cell telephone numbers of employees
- Availability of emergency contact information for employees

Various communication tools can be harnessed for reaching your employees in mass, but each requires advance planning and delegation of responsibility:

- Voice mail – create a centralized dial in # for internal messages
- Hotline – set up a dedicated toll-free number and specific team to handle incoming calls
- Call trees – organize by department or by location. Update and test regularly

- E-mail – create email groups for both office and home addresses
- Website – create general announcement/update page for employees on your company’s public website
- Public news media – create an email, fax and telephone list for local radio and television stations

For those companies that have already developed disaster response plans, review procedures to see if existing plans apply to a pandemic situation.

For those companies that have yet to develop disaster response plans, now is a good time to consider creating one. Below are some useful resources for building your plans. If you need assistance developing or reviewing your business continuity plans, Seacrest is ready to help.

- [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)  
*Up-to-date and objective information regarding swine flu situation.*
- [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)  
*Up-to-date and objective information regarding swine flu situation from an international perspective.*
- [ACT Now \(CNA Insurance Company\)](#)  
*Helpful information for creating disaster response procedures and business continuity plans.*
- [Pandemic Flu Information](#)  
*Useful consolidator site of government-issued information regarding pandemic flu issues.*
- [CIGNA International Expatriate Benefits \(CIEB\) Podcast Library](#)  
*Informative recorded podcast on Pandemic Preparedness and other ex-pat healthcare issues you can download.*
- [The Swine Flu - Protecting Your Business](#)  
*Interesting article with several useful resource recommendations.*
- [Ready.gov](#)  
*Emergency preparedness resources from CDC and Homeland Security Agency*

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