

PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE PLANNING



FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS



Public Health Preparedness
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PLANNING WORKBOOK
Child Care Centers

Safeguarding our community's health

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The objective of this workbook on pandemic planning and response is to assist Child Care Centers and preschools in preparing to manage a variety of pandemic events and other unforeseen disasters such as public health emergencies and bio-terrorism. Planning can help to reduce transmission or limit the spread of a pandemic disease, thereby decreasing hospitalizations and deaths, while helping to maintain essential services, and reduce the economic and social impact of a pandemic.

The impact of a pandemic on child care center operations would likely include unprecedented demands on pediatric health services, possible relocation of childcare services or perhaps the establishment of quarantine sites within child care facilities. Widespread sickness among staff could result in significant reductions in the work force, and community-wide, we would see essential services hampered – perhaps unavailable. A pandemic could create financial havoc due to significant loss of tuition revenues from closure of the business for a period of time, or due to the number of children who, for a variety of reasons, do not return to your location.

Child Care Centers and preschools are not only business operations, but also service providers that allow parents to join the workforce. A pandemic event is likely to impede the business of childcare services, and such service interruption will create conflicts for parents, who may not be able to go to work if they have no back up plan for childcare.

Children play a significant role in transmission of infections. They infect their family members, classmates, and the community at large (including the elderly and other high risk populations). Healthy children will be impacted by pandemics, just as they succumb to seasonal flu outbreaks. Proactive steps toward protecting the health and safety of children, staff, and families are essential to surviving the physical, economic, and social effects of a pandemic.

Because a pandemic reaches far beyond your center's boundaries, cooperation and partnership with local authorities and community stakeholders is extremely important. Further, it is advisable that any existing emergency preparedness and business continuity plans are reviewed for relevance and as a means to save time before starting to develop a new plan that may already have many similarities.

Now is the time to begin constructing a plan in the instance that a pandemic occurs in your area. These activities are to encourage thoughts that will aid in developing a plan and ensuring that you, your staff, and the children in your care are prepared, and that your response is in harmony with those of your community.

This workbook contains three sections that may be used for the planning process, including a discussion guide, a checklist, an outline for the actual Pandemic Preparedness and Response Plan itself.

Should you have any questions about the content, please do not hesitate to contact Tarrant County Public Health at 817-321-4700 or visit our website at www.tarrantcounty.com/eHealth

PLANNING WORKBOOK
Child Care Centers

Safeguarding our community's health

Pandemic Preparedness and Response 'PPR'

Part A. PPR Planning Guide

- First Considerations & Planning Steps 1
- Student Learning & Program Operations 4
- Communications 4
- Infection Control Policies & Procedures 5
- Testing the Plan..... 6

Part B. PIPR Checklist

Part C. PPR Plan Outline

- Purpose Statement 7
- Operations..... 7
- Communications..... 9
- Infection Control Practices.....11
- Employees..... 12
- Children..... 14
- Exercise.....14
- Appendices
 - A. Pandemic Team
 - B. Critical Contacts
 - C. Emergency Resources
 - D. Internal Contact Listing
 - E. Cross Training Chart
 - F. Remote Work Locations

First Considerations & Planning Steps

Steps	Planning Notes
<p>Identify the person who will have the authority to officially activate the Child Care Center's pandemic PPR response plan, and ALSO identify someone who will serve as an alternate, in case the designated person is/becomes unable to perform these duties.</p>	<p><i>Ideally, this person will also be directly involved in the development of the PPR Plan, and also be familiar with the Center's overall Emergency Response Plans. Designating a person who will act in the first person's stead is strongly recommended, since a pandemic can occur suddenly and without warning, and cause severe illness.</i></p>
<p>Establish a committee who will develop the Pandemic PPR Preparedness & Response 'PPR' Plan. Eventually, these people will fulfill narrowly-defined (but specific) leadership roles within your PPR plan.</p> <p><i>Another function of this committee may be to oversee the development of the center's continuity of operations plan, if it does not already exist.</i></p>	<p><i>To assure your Plan & Response are thorough, this committee should include owners and key personnel. Also consider inviting representatives from parent groups, local public health, and others who may offer local perspectives beyond the Center. The list of these committee members will become the Appendix A of the PPR plan.</i></p>
<p>Determine what impact a pandemic would have on your center's usual activities (business).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Will daily operations continue as usual? ● Will the Center modify its business operations or limit/expand services to the community? ● If so, which services will be affected? <i>This may vary depending on the severity of the pandemic. Since it could result in widespread death, you must consider personnel issues such as attendance requirements, mental health counseling for staff, etc.</i> 	<p><i>These points will help outline and limit your PPR plan. This part does not necessarily need to refer to personnel as much as it should delineate the scope of operations and services your center delivers.</i></p>
<p>Determine the facility's capability to meet the needs of the community for surge capacity of healthcare and other services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Buildings designated as contingency hospitals ● Facilities used for feeding vulnerable populations 	<p><i>Do you anticipate your facility being used differently than usual? Partnership Agreements or Mutual Aid Agreements can be negotiated within the community and will serve to protect both parties, as well as consumers.</i></p> <p><i>Does your facility have certain resources that the community might view as a "safe haven"?</i></p>

PLANNING WORKBOOK
Child Care Centers

Steps	Planning Notes
<p>Think about your Supply Chain. In a pandemic, transport and delivery services may be interrupted in order to limit spread of the disease.</p>	<p><i>What resources does your center rely on to ensure daily operations? These may be <u>items</u> such as supplies, food, publications, etc.</i></p> <p><i>What resources does your center PROVIDE for the children, and to the local community? These may also be the <u>services</u> that are used by your staff or the children (maintenance, vendors, meals, transportation, etc.)</i></p>
<p>Develop an Organizational Chart that names (by title) all personnel who will be utilized during a pandemic.</p> <p>Designate replacement or back-up personnel (by title or position) who will step in for the First Level, in the event of illness, incapacity, or death.</p> <p>Designate duties and authority limitations</p>	<p><i>This chart will be referred to throughout the pandemic event, so we suggest designating First, Second, and Third Levels to provide depth of personnel.</i></p> <p><i>Should the pandemic extend into months, then perhaps some personnel could be rotated.</i></p> <p><i>Once the Chart is established, determine the role and scope of authority and the responsibilities for each position.</i></p>
<p>In order for the business to continue its daily routine during a pandemic, consider cross-training your staff or using volunteers as replacements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train full/part time employees • Train volunteers • Cross-train staff to do the work of ill staff members 	<p><i>Which positions to cross-train will become apparent after the Organizational Chart is assembled.</i></p>
<p>For many organizations, it may be beneficial to receive professional training in the Incident Command Structure ('ICS'). This training enables better interface with first responders in any type of disaster.</p>	<p><i>ICS training is available on-line at the Federal Emergency Management web-site www.FEMA.gov</i></p>
<p>Work with your state education agency and licensing authority to coordinate with their pandemic response plans.</p>	<p><i>Smaller or independent centers might consider joining together in this planning process to formulate a unified, perhaps community-wide response. Such collaboration may also include the pooling or sharing of resources.</i></p> <p><i>This activity may also encourage families to</i></p>

PLANNING WORKBOOK
Child Care Centers

	<i>cooperate and participate.</i>
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Steps	Planning Notes
<p>Ensure that your pandemic planning is coordinated with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Public Health Department/Emergency Management Coordinator • Community • State health department • State department of education 	<p><i>Collaborating with other child care centers, neighboring businesses, schools, and churches will assure that your plan works within your community.</i></p> <p><i>Developing a working relationship with your local health authority or Public Health Department will enhance your planning efforts.</i></p>
<p>The PPR Plan should offer well thought out suggestions for parents to consider as alternatives for child care if your center closes during a pandemic event.</p>	<p><i>Encourage parents to develop personal plans for themselves, but also to have a “Plan B” for their child care needs. This planning will help alleviate some stress during a pandemic event.</i></p>
<p>The PPR Plan must also Incorporate the requirements of students with special needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children with mobility issues • Language or communication differences 	<p><i>Effort should be made to address the needs of children who have disabilities, or who do not speak English at home.</i></p>
<p>Psychosocial support services should be available during and after a pandemic for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Staff families • Children • Children’s families 	<p><i>Because demand for these services may be significant, arranging for them in advance –perhaps by written agreement or in conjunction with existing services – is necessary and advised.</i></p>
<p>Once you have completed your PPR Plan, invite all members of the Planning Committee and volunteers among your patrons and the local community to participate in a mock event (drill) to evaluate the plan’s functionality.</p> <p><i>Your Tarrant County Public Health Representative can assist you with organizing and performing this task.</i></p>	<p><i>Announcement & invitations should be mailed or distributed 2-4 weeks in advance of the drill date.</i></p> <p><i>Schedule the drill at a time when you will have optimum participation.</i></p> <p><i>Participants’ seating arrangements should encourage discussion and exchange of ideas and suggestions.</i></p>

Student Learning & Program Operations

Steps	Planning Notes
<p>Develop response strategies that address the impact of a pandemic on your center, using various levels of illness among staff and children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● absenteeism ● supply line interruptions ● closings ● other 	<p><i>Responses outlined in your PPR Plan could accelerate as the geographic threat and phase of the Pandemic increases. In other words, the PPR Plan should be written so that when activated, the level of response is appropriate to the threat posed by the pandemic.</i></p>
<p>Develop a continuity of operations plan (COOP) so that essential aspects of business will continue during the emergency, or until criteria for closing the center are met.</p>	<p><i>If your COOP already exists, reviewing it may simplify part of the process of developing the PPR Plan. Likewise, when the PPR Plan is completed, it may be necessary to revise the COOP, especially with regard to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● payroll policies ● ongoing communication with staff and parents ● shelter-in-place or evacuate ● other

Communications Planning

Steps	Planning Notes
<p>Develop a written protocol for staff to use when answering parents' questions about the pandemic.</p>	<p><i>This effort will reduce rumors and help alleviate misinformation.</i></p>
<p>Communications plans will have an internal component (info for employees) and an external component (info for parents, children, and community).</p> <p>A consistent message is key to helping control panic</p>	<p><i>Regularly review, test, and update all aspects of your communication plans to meet communication needs of employees, parents, and your community.</i></p>
<p>Appropriate communications plans should consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Audience's reading level ● Language & cultural differences ● Authority or source of information 	<p><i>Make sure your messages are expressed clearly and accurately. During a pandemic event, it will be necessary to provide ONLY information from reliable sources, such as your local public health department.</i></p>
<p>Use multiple types of media to assure that your message is received by the widest range of audience (who may have access to only one of several means during a pandemic)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● hotline(s) ● telephone trees ● dedicated websites ● local radio stations ● local TV stations ● other

PLANNING WORKBOOK
Child Care Centers

<p>Advise staff, children and families where to find up-to-date and reliable pandemic information.</p>	<p><i>To simplify this effort, develop and maintain up-to-date communications contacts of key public health and education stakeholders</i></p>
<p>Disseminate information about your center’s PPR Plan relative to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● continuity of instruction ● community containment measures ● other 	<p><i>Your PPR Plan will state the “triggers” for each level of response, but the timing for sharing this information should be pre-determined.</i></p>
<p>Disseminate information about pandemic PPR fundamentals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● signs and symptoms of PPR ● modes of transmission ● personal/family protection & response strategies ● guidance for the at-home care of ill children & family members ● other 	<p><i>At its onset, options for controlling the pandemic will be few; therefore, it will be necessary for reputable, reliable sources to help provide guidance and information across the entire community.</i></p> <p><i>Child Care Centers should consider providing “how to” information to employees, families, and the community at large.</i></p>

Infection Control Policies & Procedures

Steps	Planning Notes
<p>Designate a person who will be responsible for keeping your staff informed of the status of the pandemic. This individual may also be charged with managing infection control practices on your premises.</p>	<p><i>This person should also foster working relationships with the local Public Health Department and first-responder teams, and other child care center workers who may have similar responsibilities.</i></p>
<p>Implement effective disease prevention and infection control policies & procedures that help limit the spread of diseases <u>on your premises</u>, (for example: influenza).</p> <p>Promote good hygiene and promote other healthy habits <u>now</u> in order to help protect children from many infectious diseases such as flu.</p> <p>These steps may escalate as the pandemic develops into a local threat.</p>	<p>(See www.fyiahec.org)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● hand hygiene ● cough/sneeze etiquette ● proper nutrition ● exercise ● relaxation / stress management ● proper rest ● encourage annual PPR vaccinations for all staff and for children ● www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/preventing.htm

PLANNING WORKBOOK
Child Care Centers

Provide sufficient and accessible infection control & prevention supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • soap • alcohol-based/waterless hand hygiene products • tissues & proper waste receptacles
Establish policies & procedures for staff and children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extended absences unique to a pandemic • address payroll issues with regard to sick leave and accrued vacation time 	<i>Consider liberal leave policies (include those who cannot work because they must stay home to care for sick family members).</i> <i>Pre-determine attendance requirements and communicate these to staff and parents.</i>
Establish policies and address possible transportation issues for staff and children who are present but <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suspected to be ill • who become ill at day care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • should not attend day care • should not remain at day care • isolation procedures • return to school only after their symptoms resolve and they are physically able

Testing the PPR Plan

Steps	Planning Notes
Periodically review, test and revise the PPR Plan.	<i>In the absence of outbreaks, establish a schedule that calls for reviewing, testing and revising the PPR Plan. For example, annually, or at the beginning of each semester, etc.</i>
Designate the person who is responsible for arranging and conducting the test (“Drill”).	<i>Name the person by title in the PPR Plan. This person may delegate various aspects do the Drill planning, such as contacting all those outside the center who will be participating, including Tarrant County Public Health.</i>
The test or DRILL will be conducted based on meeting specific and measurable Objectives. These Objectives will determine the extent and length of the Drill.	<i>Objectives should be established based upon several factors, including</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What part(s) of the PPR Plan need to be evaluated initially?</i> • <i>What process(es) do we want to prove?</i> • <i>How will we communicate most effectively?</i> • <i>What will be the process for closing our premises?</i>

Develop scenarios that include variations in the	<i>Some ideas for scenarios:</i>
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PLANNING WORKBOOK
Child Care Centers

<p>phases of pandemic, number of absent children and staff, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reports of illness at nearby school</i> • <i>Widespread illness in the community</i>
<p>Once the Drill has been completed, devise a process for reviewing the Drill, noting what was successful and what was not, and revising the PPR Plan.</p>	<p><i>The process could be handled various ways. For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have a meeting immediately following the drill, including all participants and discuss their impressions</i> • <i>Use a written form to be completed by participants and/or observers</i>
<p>Participate in local Pandemic Response Drills</p>	<p><i>Utilize your on-going relationship with Tarrant County Public Health to keep abreast of the local drills.</i></p>

Adapted from the US Department of State Health Services Pandemic PPR Preparedness Checklists
(expanded versions available online at www.pandemicflu.gov)
by the Pandemic PPR Planning team, Tarrant County Public Health.

PLANNING WORKBOOK
Child Care Centers

CHILD CARE AND PRESCHOOL PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PLANNING CHECKLIST



A pandemic is a global disease outbreak. A flu pandemic occurs when a new influenza virus emerges that people have little or no immunity to and for which there may be no vaccine. The disease spreads easily person-to-person and causes serious illness. It can sweep across the country and around the world very quickly. It is hard to predict when the next flu pandemic will occur or how bad it will be.

Child care and preschool programs can help protect the health of their staff and the children and families they serve. Interruptions in child care services during an influenza (flu) pandemic may cause conflicts for working parents that could result in high absenteeism in workplaces. Some of that absenteeism could be expected to affect personnel and workplaces that are critical to the emergency response system. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offer this checklist to help programs prepare for the effects of a flu pandemic. Many of these steps can also help in other types of emergencies. More information on pandemic flu is available at www.pandemicflu.gov.

1. Planning and Coordination:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Form a committee of staff members and parents to produce a plan for dealing with a flu pandemic. Include members from all different groups your program serves. Include parents who do not speak English who can help contact other non-English speakers in the community. Staff of very small programs might consider joining together with other similar programs for planning.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Assign one person to identify reliable sources of information and watch for public health warnings about flu, school closings, and other actions taken to prevent the spread of flu.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn who in your area has legal authority to close child care programs if there is a flu emergency.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn whether the local/state health departments and agencies that regulate child care have plans. Be sure your flu plan is in line with their plans. Tell them if you can help support your community's plan.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify all the ways a flu pandemic might affect your program and develop a plan of action. (For example, you might have problems with food service, transportation, or staffing.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Encourage parents to have a "Plan B" for finding care for their children if the program is closed during a flu pandemic. Give them ideas about where they might seek help based on your knowledge of the local child care community.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Work with those in charge of your community's plan to find other sources of meals for low-income children who receive subsidized meals while in your care. (For example, locate food pantries and meals on wheels.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn about services in your area that can help your staff, children, and their families deal with stress and other problems caused by a flu pandemic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stage a drill to test your plan and then improve it as needed. Repeat the drill from time to time. Consider volunteering to help in tests of community plans.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Talk to other child care and preschool programs in your area to share information that could make your plan better. Discuss ways programs could work together to produce a stronger plan and pool resources.

2. Student Learning and Program Operations:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan how you would deal with program closings, staff absences, and gaps in student learning that could occur during a flu pandemic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan ways to help families continue their child's learning if your child care program or preschool is closed. (For example, give parents things they can teach at home. Tell them how to find ideas on the internet. Talk with child care resource referral agencies or other groups that could help parents continue their children's learning at home.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan ways to continue basic functions if your program is closed. (For example, continue meeting payroll and keeping in touch with staff and student's families.)

PLANNING WORKBOOK
Child Care Centers

3. Infection Control Policies and Actions:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Give special attention to teaching staff, children, and their parents on how to limit the spread of infection. (For example, use good hand washing; cover the mouth when coughing or sneezing; clean toys frequently.) Programs should already be teaching these things to build habits that protect children from disease. (See www.cdc.gov/flu/school/ and www.healthykids.us/cleanliness.htm .)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep a good supply of things you will need to help control the spread of infection. (For example, keep on hand plenty of soap, paper towels, and tissues.) Store the supplies in easy-to-find places.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tell families that experts recommend yearly flu shots for all children 6 months to 5 years old and for anyone who cares of children in that age range. (See www.cdc.gov/od/oc/media/pressrel/r060223.htm .)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Encourage staff to get flu shots each year. (See www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/preventing.htm .)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tell parents to let your program know if their children are sick. Keep accurate records of when children or staff are absent. Include a record of the kind of illness that caused the absence (e.g., diarrhea/vomiting, coughing/breathing problems, rash, or other). (See http://nrc.uchsc.edu/CFOC/XMLVersion/Chapter_3.xml .)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teach staff a standard set of steps for checking children and adults each day as they arrive to see if they are sick. Make it clear that any child or adult who is ill will not be admitted. (See www.healthykids.us/chapters/sick_main.htm .)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Have a plan for keeping children who become sick at your program away from other children until the family arrives, such as a fixed place for a sick room. (See http://nrc.uchsc.edu/CFOC/XMLVersion/Chapter_3.xml .)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Require staff members to stay home if they think they might be sick. If they become sick while at the program, require them to go home and stay home. Give staff paid sick leave so they can stay home without losing wages.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Require ill staff and students to stay at home until their flu symptoms are gone and they feel ready to come back to work.

4. Communications Planning:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Have a plan for keeping in touch with staff members and students' families. Include several different methods of contacting them. (For example, you might use hotlines, telephone trees, text messaging, special Websites, local radio and/or TV stations.) Test the contact methods often to be sure they work.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make sure staff and families have seen and understand your flu pandemic plan. Explain why you need to have a plan. Give them a chance to ask questions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Give staff and students' families reliable information on the issues listed below in their languages and at their reading levels. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> How to help control the spread of flu by hand washing/cleansing and covering the mouth when coughing or sneezing. (See www.cdc.gov/flu/school/.) <input type="checkbox"/> How to recognize a person that may have the flu, and what to do if they think they have the flu. (See www.pandemicflu.gov.) <input type="checkbox"/> How to care for ill family members. (See www.hhs.gov/pandemicflu/plan/sup5.html#box4.) <input type="checkbox"/> How to develop a family plan for dealing with a flu pandemic. (See www.pandemicflu.gov/planguide/.)

March 20, 2006
Version 3.1



APPENDIX A

Pandemic Team

Name

Phone

Address

Email

APPENDIX B

Emergency Contact Numbers

Neighbors:

This section may include churches, stores, and other businesses that are adjacent to your property. If an isolation order is issued during a pandemic, it may become necessary to control traffic flow. Be sure to include the local police and sheriff's department phone numbers!

Suppliers:

These are the people with whom you deal with regularly, including office supply, food supply, delivery, etc. It would be wise to include the local information as well as the national number, if applicable.

Contractors:

These are the people whom you may have coming into your facility as workers, such as an outside maintenance or grounds-keeping service, food catering services, laundry service, water delivery, etc. Again, use the local numbers but if there are national numbers, be sure to include them, as well, in case their local employees are not available or able to receive your messages.

Transportation:

This section should include all bus and taxi service numbers that are normally used by staff and clientele. In a pandemic, these vehicles may be re-assigned to perform other duties, so it may be necessary to verify that their services are still available to assist your staff and clientele on an on-going basis. Also, if an isolation order should come, then these services may be terminated without much advance notice.

APPENDIX C

Trusted Resource List

This list should (at the minimum) include the following information:

817- 321-4700 Tarrant County Public Health
1101 S. Main Street
Fort Worth, TX 76104

211 Local 211 Community Information telephone hotline

Phone & Email of a practicing physician who may office nearby

Phone contact at Local 24-hour news Radio Station

Phone contact at Local TV News Channel

Phone contact at Local newspaper

APPENDIX D

Critical Call List

This is the list of everyone in authority at your location and in your corporate organization, if applicable. You may also wish to include anyone who may regularly arrive on the premises without notice (daily visitors such as grandparents, relatives, “helping hands”, etc.)

Information should include name and phone numbers, but also may extend to family members’ contact information in the event there is no cell phone number provided.

APPENDIX E

Cross Training Chart

Position

Duties

**Training
Completed by**

Names of staff who
have been trained
to fulfill this role

APPENDIX F

Remote Work Location

This list includes the POSITION and PLACE where those duties will be performed, along with all communications means (telephone, cell phone, email, fax, etc.)