Business Preparation for SARS and Other Communicable Outbreaks

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Below is a list of questions to use to determine how prepared your organization is to prevent the spread of a communicable disease within your business environment.

**Prevention:**
What preventative measures already exist to prevent communicable diseases from spreading?

Evaluate these risks:

- Food delivery – Who handles it? How do you ensure it has not been tampered with?
- Cleaning service – Where do they have their supplies? If they are brought from the external environment, how will you determine if they are contaminated?
- Other deliveries (packages, etc.) – How are they inspected? Is there a common delivery point? How do you ensure that they do not bring in contaminants?
- Other tenants in building – what access do they have to common areas where your employees may be exposed?

**Employee Health:**

- Daily Transportation – Are employees exposed through use of public transportation? If so, how will you detect it?
- Extra sanitary precautions – Do you have masks, gloves, and other protective gear for employees to use with possible contaminants?
What kind of education program do you have in place to address the need to wash hands, and take other precautionary measures to reduce the chance of exposure?

Travel policy – Does your organization have a policy? Does it include conditions for:

- Business travel restrictions to World Health Organization (WHO) identified localities.
- Personal travel - enforcing a self-imposed quarantine for the employee to remain at home for 10 days.
- On return to work, a way to check for fever.

Business Continuation:

- Determine and document critical functions that must continue.
- Identify who are the alternates, if the primary team can’t perform.
- Separate performance of critical functions into different days or shifts - Will this work for your company? Will authorities let the second shift continue to work if a case is found?
- Make sure you can notify employees at home (current phone lists and addresses).
- Do you need to isolate vital records?

If Building Access is Denied:

- Determine right now an alternate location where critical functions can be performed.
- Get written instructions or other materials needed to the secondary location now. (Assume nothing can be removed after quarantine.)