

Template Letter or E-Mail: Get Ready for Flu Season Now!

- *This template can be customized and used as an announcement via e-mail, website, newsletter, or other media to reach members and staff.*
- *Consider customizing this letter by using your organization's letterhead, inserting a name and contact information of someone members can reach for flu questions, adding a signature line, etc.*

Get Ready for Flu Season Now!

- ***The flu season*** lasts through the fall and winter. More than one kind of flu virus will be spreading this season. If you get the flu, you can spread the flu to others at home, at work, and in the community.
- ***Symptoms of flu*** can include all or some of the following: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, tiredness, and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting. It's important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.
- ***Plan to stay home if you are sick*** until at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit) or signs of a fever (have chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating). This should be determined after fever-reducing medicines are no longer needed.
- ***Be prepared.***
 - Get the vaccine for seasonal flu as recommended.
 - Make plans to care for sick household members.
- ***Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home.*** To help avoid the need to make trips out in public while you are sick, have the following items on hand: a supply of fever-reducing medicines that contain acetaminophen or ibuprofen, alcohol-based hand rubs, and tissues.
 - ***Remember to cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue.*** Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
 - ***Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.*** Germs spread this way.
 - ***Wash your hands often with soap and water,*** especially after you cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand rub can be used.

If a severe flu outbreak hits our community, we will take additional steps to avoid spreading the flu virus.

Template Letter or E-Mail: Staying Healthy

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Staying Healthy

Follow these tips to prevent seasonal flu and stop the spread of germs:

- ***Get vaccinated for seasonal flu as recommended.*** This is the single best way to prevent seasonal flu.
- ***Avoid close contact with people who are sick.*** When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
- ***Stay home when you are sick.*** You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- ***Cover your mouth and nose*** with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
- ***Clean your hands.*** Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- ***Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.*** Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
- ***Practice other good health habits.*** Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

Template Letter or E-Mail: If You Are Not Feeling Well

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If You Are Not Feeling Well

If you or a family member is not feeling well...

- **Watch carefully for signs and symptoms of flu.** Some children may not be able to tell you about their symptoms, which can delay your response to their illness. Symptoms of flu can include all or some of the following: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting. Not everyone with flu will have a fever.
 - **Watch for emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention.** These warning signs include one or more of the following:
 - In children
 - Fast breathing or trouble breathing
 - Bluish or gray skin color
 - Not drinking enough fluids (not going to the bathroom or making as much urine as they normally do)
 - Severe or persistent vomiting
 - Not waking up or not interacting
 - Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
 - Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
 - Has other conditions (like heart or lung disease, diabetes, or asthma) and develops flu symptoms, including a fever and/or cough
 - In adults
 - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
 - Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
 - Sudden dizziness
 - Confusion
 - Severe or persistent vomiting
- Stay home. **The person sick with the flu should stay home** until at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever or signs of a fever without the need for fever-reducing medicine. Children and teenagers should not be given aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid); this can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye's syndrome.

- **Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks clear fluids**, such as water, broth, or sports drinks, to prevent dehydration. For infants, use an oral rehydration solution, such as Pedialyte®.
- **If the sick person is in a high risk group, contact your healthcare provider to discuss the need for antiviral medicines.** This is important because treatment with antiviral medicines that fight the flu should be started as early as possible. They work best when started within the first 2 days of getting sick.
- **Keep the sick person in a separate room** (a sick room) in the house as much as possible to limit contact with household members who are not sick. Consider designating a single person as the main caregiver for the sick person. This person should not be at high risk for complications from the flu.

To protect other family members...

- **Get your family vaccinated** for seasonal flu according to CDC recommendations.
- **Cough and sneeze into a tissue** or into your elbow or shoulder if a tissue is not available. Throw tissues away right after use.
- **Make sure hands are washed often**, especially after you cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand rub can be used. Help young children wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap and water (long enough to sing “The Happy Birthday Song” twice).
- **Clean surfaces and objects that are frequently touched.** Wipe these surfaces with a household disinfectant, following the directions on the product label. Additional disinfection of these surfaces beyond routine cleaning is not recommended.