

XVIII: Pandemic Threat Response Plan

Part 1: Overview

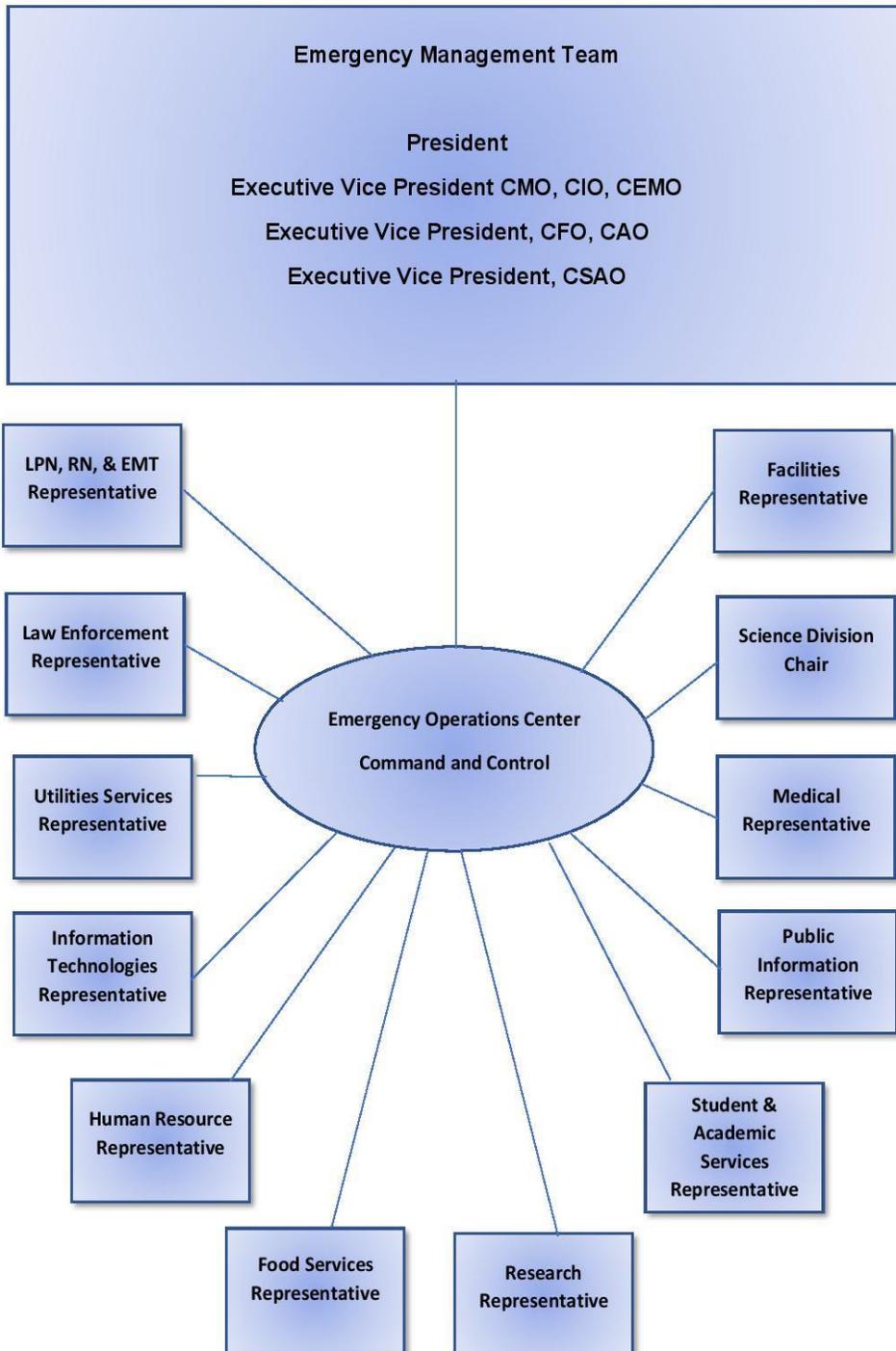
Pandemics happen when new (novel) viruses emerge, which can infect people easily and spread from person to person in an efficient and sustained way. Jones College is committed to preparing for such an event. A sub-plan of the college's Emergency Management Plan is the Pandemic Response Plan that addresses the specific guidelines and actions unique to a pandemic. The major goals of Jones's pandemic plan are to assure the following: (1) reduce illness and death; (2) minimize social and educational disruption; (3) ensure the college's ability to continue core and critical functions; and (4) minimize economic losses.

Upon notification via the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Jones County Health Department, the Jones County Emergency Operation Center, and/or the Mississippi Department of Health that a pandemic event is occurring or expected in the Jones County area, or other areas that affect the College, the president along with his designees will coordinate its plans and responses with appropriate agencies. The Plan intends to be in compliance with all state laws and regulations.

The president has designated the **Pandemic Response Team** to coordinate and respond to a crisis.

Pandemic Response Team Members:

President	EVP of Instructional Affairs/Business Affairs
EVP of Student Affairs	Food Services Representative
EVP of Marketing/Information Technology/Enrollment Services	Director of Off-Campus Sites
Dean of Students	Director of Emergency Medical Technology
Director of Clinic	Athletic Director
Director of Enrollment Services	Director of License Practical Nursing
Health Services Division Chair	Science Division Chair
Director of Housing	Director of Campus Operations
Director of Nursing	Ad-Hoc Members as needed
Director of Information Services	



The Pandemic Response Team will coordinate efforts to manage operations and policy. Triggers for actions at Jones College will be based on a combination of information collected by the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control, the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the Mississippi State Department of Health. Jones has opted to use “severity levels” of a pandemic to assist with planning and scenarios. These levels are uniquely defined for Jones College and are not to be confused with other nomenclatures for pandemic phases.

Jones Level	Illness Rate	Absenteeism Due to Illness	Suspensions, Closures, and Actions
Pre-level	Normal	Normal	Business and class as usual, continued surveillance, and possible communications to community.
Level 1	10%-25%	10% - 30% of work staff	Gatherings restricted; some public buildings may be closed, use of nonpharmaceutical Interventions (NPI), vigilant surveillance of possible need to move into level 2. Possible suspension of academic operations. Widespread communication to community.
Level 2	>25%	>30% of work staff	Classes suspended; most buildings closed, very active response in all departments. Widespread communication to community.
Level 3	>25%	>30% of work staff	Campus only open for critical services, only critical personnel on campus. Widespread communication to community. All actions at this level are dependent on availability of non-ill personnel and current recommendations from health entities.

The college’s “pre-level” phase occurs when a pandemic is non-existent or threatening but not causing any significant infrastructure disruptions on campus. No actions need to be taken at this level other than continued surveillance by the Pandemic Response Team (PRT) and community-wide communication about the pandemic threat.

Jones PRE-LEVEL

Jones will remain in a **PRE-LEVEL** based on some of the following criteria:

- Case Fatality Ratios < 0.05%
- Seasonal illnesses within the normal range
- No public closures mandated by Dept. of Health
- No infrastructure disruption locally or in the U.S.
- No national travel restrictions
- Possibility of some international travel restrictions
- Recommendations from health entities to use Nonpharmaceutical Interventions (NPI)* when appropriate

Jones LEVEL 1

Once there is efficient human-to-human transmission internationally, when verified cases are occurring in the United States, and when one or more other triggering events (listed below) occur, the college enters Jones **Level 1** and will begin to implement social distancing measures, cancel large gatherings, prepare for class suspension, and look at the possible immediate evacuation of students. Applications for emergency room and board are likely to begin. Triggering events for **Level 1** could include the following:

- Case Fatality Ratio 0.5% to 1.0%
- Illness rate of 10% to 25%
- 10% to 30% rate of absenteeism
- Increasing national and international travel restrictions
- Recommendations from CDC and MDOH to use NPI's
- Possible public closures mandated by MDOH
- Possible infrastructure disruption
- Possible public panic and elective absenteeism (without illness)

Jones LEVEL 2

As local pandemic levels increase, Jones College will enter **Level 2**. **Level 2** could likely begin within hours to several days after declaration of **Level 1**, depending on national and local conditions. During **Level 2**, the college will suspend academic and ancillary operations. It is anticipated that many students will already have departed from campus, employee absenteeism will rise, and other regional school systems will have closed. At this time, evacuation of students who have not already left will begin and temporary emergency room and board, in designated residence halls, will be utilized for a limited number of students who cannot return home and have no alternative options for shelter. Triggering events for **Level 2** could include the following:

- Case Fatality Ratio 1.0% to 2.0%
- Illness rate > 25%
- >30% rate of absenteeism
- Severe national and international travel restrictions
- Increases in public closures
- Increasing infrastructure disruptions
- Possible public panic and elective absenteeism (without illness)

Jones LEVEL 3

Level 3 occurs when local pandemic severity and incidence continues to rise. During **Level 3**, an emergency is declared. All facilities are closed except skeletal services for students unable to leave campus and critical building operations. Access to campus is limited only to critical personnel, who will be issued name badges and vehicle placards that identify them as "critical." All actions will be dependent on the availability of non-ill personnel and mandates declared by the local health authorities. The Case Fatality Rate at this time will likely be >2% and there will be widespread public closures and travel restrictions, serious infrastructure breakdown, and a severely overtaxed health care system. These levels are designed to work in conjunction with the recommendations from international, national, and local health entities. The levels and triggers for action could be adjusted at any time to adapt to the individual characteristics

of the pandemic at hand. These levels are not fixed or rigid – they are a template to guide decision-making. The most important part of Jones’ response to a pandemic will be for the PRT to continue to meet regularly at the onset of a pandemic threat and make decisions for the community based on the thorough, thoughtful, and critical analysis of all available information.

PART 2: DEPARTMENT PANDEMIC PLANNING GUIDELINES

The goals of the Jones College Pandemic Response Plan are to reduce illness and death, to minimize social and educational disruption, to assist the college’s ability to continue the core and critical functions of each department in the event of a pandemic event, and to minimize economic losses. The safety of the entire community is of paramount importance. The following information summarizes the key considerations that specific college departments need to address as part of pre-event planning. Although only some of the key departments are listed below, The Pandemic Response Team will determine which departments need to develop individual plans.

A. Communications Department

The college is responsible for communicating information and direction regarding the Pandemic Response Plan to students, employees, and other members of the college community. Jones will also maintain communication with the public media, local health and emergency entities, and relevant government agencies.

B. Technology Services

Technology Services is the central organization responsible for the voice, computer network, data and video services at Jones College. In the event of an emergency, Technology Services will collaborate with internal and external entities, as relevant and needed, to ensure that Jones has the means to continue operating by sustaining communication services within and external to Jones.

C. Instructional Affairs

The Office of Instructional Affairs (IA) will develop guidelines for academic continuation. This will include developing a policy or guidelines to address academic concerns of students or instructors who are absent from classes due to illness or quarantine if academic operations continue. IA will also make decisions about the completion of or truncation of classes should the college close completely. These decisions will vary depending on the point in the semester the college has closed and/or how much of a class has already been completed. Alternative dates for attendance and/or modes of deliver will also be considered.

D. Physical Plant Services

Physical Plant Services “core” response team of managers and supervisors will implement plans and provide backup for multiple operations during a pandemic event, depending on the needs of the campus. The Emergency Operations

Group will be located in the Physical Plant building. A few highlights of the Physical Plant's plans include the following:

1. The Critical Building List – In the Critical Building List, the college buildings are separated into three levels responding to closure levels described earlier in this document.
 - **Level 1** buildings are public gathering types that would be closed first.
 - **Level 2** buildings are classroom and administrative buildings that would be closed if classes are suspended.
 - **Level 3** buildings are critical buildings that need to remain open with services for utilities, maintenance, and custodial services. These buildings are typically buildings used for critical services such as security, health care delivery, and technology. The levels assigned to each building require approval from the Office of the President and the EMT. It could also be the case that the local community may need to use some of the campus facilities to address their mission to service the greater community of Jones County. Furthermore, designated residence life buildings or dining facilities may become **Level 3** buildings in the event that Jones is providing emergency room and board for some students.
2. Critical Services – Physical Plant Services has identified what type of critical services would be necessary to keep **Level 3** buildings open and functional during a campus closure. These critical services can be maintained around the clock with the reassignment of staff.
3. Critical Supplies List – Physical Plant Services has identified certain supplies, quantities, and associated costs necessary for the Physical Plant staff to operate the campus at a **Level 3** for 6-12 weeks. Many of the items are personal protection equipment and custodial supplies as well as food and water for the Physical Plant staff.
4. Critical Staff – Critical staff has been identified by the Director of the Physical Plant. These include staff members that are trained in the maintenance of critical equipment and operations. It is important to emphasize the critical nature of the college, city, and state utility systems. Consistent delivery of water, sewer, electricity, and natural gas cannot be assumed. Some services may be disrupted due to the absenteeism of utility employees. Communicating relevant information to the Emergency Management Team and Communications' official crucial.

E. Campus Security

The Campus Police Chief shall:

- a. Develop procedures for securing buildings, protecting stored supplies, and restricting access to campus.
- b. Establish ongoing communication with local police, fire, and emergency response personnel in order to coordinate efforts for managing safety issues.
- c. Establish protocols for evaluation and dispatch of all incoming high priority (emergency) calls for service from the campus community during a pandemic. Calls for service that are of a non-emergency nature and do not require the immediate presence of a police officer shall be designated for call back response.

- d. Develop triage protocols, in conjunction with the Health Center, for responding to students in distress either due to illness or illness of others or requesting transport for medical care, including a system of tracking these transports.
- e. Participate in training regarding the illness.
- f. Encourage all staff to receive appropriate vaccinations.
- g. Develop a plan in case campus police will be involved in student transport because other emergency transportation is not available:
 - o Acquiring protective equipment for staff.
 - o Training staff in use of personal protective equipment.
 - o Equipping cars with disinfectants, surgical masks for persons being transported, gloves, and hazard waste bags.
- h. Communicate relevant information to the Pandemic Response Team and the Communications official.

F. Residence Life

Public fears related to pandemic illness may result in students returning home to their families, independent of any determination by the College to cancel classes or close residence halls. Once the college decides to suspend academic operations, actions to evacuate students will be prompt. Part of evacuating students efficiently and safely requires pre-event preparation. However, if the College is closed, except for critical services, not all students may be able to return home rapidly. Some students may need to live on campus for some period even if classes were cancelled or the residence halls were “closed”. These include international students who are unable to return home during a pandemic and have no alternative shelters (that live over 300 miles from campus). Students who cannot leave campus and must remain in residence halls can apply for emergency room and board. The Housing office staff will review requests for emergency room and board and will coordinate with Dining Services about these needs. However, because space and resources will be extremely limited during a pandemic, efforts will be made to find family members or friends who can provide shelter to these students for the duration of the emergency. If no suitable alternatives for sheltering can be found, Jones will make every effort to provide adequate care to the greatest extent possible.

G. Food Service

Sodexo Food Services will work closely with the Housing Office to determine the level of and method of food service for individuals who must remain on campus. Sodexo has a pandemic plan in place and will be notified by the Vice President of Student Affairs to implement their Pandemic Operating Procedures. The Pandemic Response Team will communicate with the manager regarding delivery of meals to students who may be quarantined.

H. Human Resources

The director of Human Resources will be expected to complete the following:

- a. Assist the Pandemic Planning Team with the identification of critical personnel and ensure that departments are depth charted.
- b. Obtain staff and faculty updated emergency contact information
- c. Use an on-line Data Base to track employees.
- d. Prepare plans for when to advise employees to stay home from work and review vacation/ sick leave guidelines for applicability in a pandemic event.
 - o Employees who have been exposed, are suspected of having the illness or who are caring for an ill family member should not come to work. Therefore, liberal, non-punitive policies should be established in order to ensure compliance with public health recommendations.
- e. Establish guidelines for the continuation of payroll and benefits in conjunction with the Business Office.
- f. Work with the Pandemic Planning Team to develop a hierarchy of critical positions that are essential to maintain core college operations. A 'back up' of 2 additional employees for each critical position should be developed. Cross training is a viable method for achieving this depth.
- g. Establish return-to-work guidelines consistent with the case definition.
- h. Assist in the recruitment of a volunteer work force

I. Business Office

The EVP of Instructional/Business will be expected to prepare for the potential financial ramifications of a pandemic and estimate the impact and identify emergency funding to cover purchases and business continuation.

- a. Information should be collected from departments (i.e., Health Center, Housing and Dining Services, Physical Plant Services) related to costs for stockpiling supplies.
- b. Procedures should be developed for the rapid procurement and payment of supplies, equipment, and services.
- c. A plan should be developed for ensuring the continuation of payroll and accounting operations in the face of high employee absenteeism or school closure.
- d. The financial costs to the college should be analyzed if the college closes as well as the costs and plans for the re-emergence of the college as a financially healthy and secure operation.