

HR Brief

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Flu Season is Here: Is Your Business Prepared?

The fall and winter months signal the arrival of peak flu season. While the seasonal flu viruses can be detected throughout the year in the United States, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that the majority of cases occur between December and February.

Each year, seasonal influenza has a marked impact on employers. Seasonal flu can cause increased absenteeism, decreased productivity and higher health care costs. As an employer, you are well-positioned to help keep your employees healthy and minimize the flu's impact on your business. The CDC recommends the following strategies for employers to help fight the flu.

Host a Flu Vaccination Clinic

One of the most important steps for preventing the flu is to get an annual flu vaccination. Hosting an on-site flu vaccination clinic can help educate employees about the importance of vaccination, and make it easier for them to get vaccinated.

Educate Your Employees

If you are unable to or choose not to provide an on-site flu vaccination clinic, you can still emphasize the importance of vaccination to your employees, and educate them about local opportunities to get vaccinated. In addition, educate employees about flu prevention strategies, including the following:

- Covering nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing
- Washing hands often with soap and water (or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer)
- Avoiding contact with sick people
- Staying home from work when sick, and limiting contact with others

By taking the appropriate steps, you can prepare your business for flu season. For more information, consult the CDC's seasonal flu business [website](#).

DID YOU KNOW?

In recent years, questions have been raised about the effectiveness of annual performance reviews, due to the time strain they pose on leadership and the outcomes achieved. In fact, according to Gallup News, only 14 percent of employees agree that the traditional, once-a-year performance reviews inspire them to improve.

Evaluate your current performance review process to identify areas for improvement and consider surveying employees to ask about their feedback preferences.

Don't Forget About Voluntary Benefits

The United States is experiencing an ever-tightening labor market, where the number of jobs available exceeds the number of qualified candidates. One way employers can recruit and retain top talent is by offering voluntary benefits and educating employees on how to use the voluntary benefits they offer.

According to Gallup, nearly 50 percent of employees report they would leave their employer for a company that offered benefits beyond medical insurance. Offering these benefits isn't all employers need to do, though. In order for employers and employees to get the most out of these benefits, employees must be made aware that they exist and be educated on how to use them.

Open enrollment is the perfect time to start talking to employees about the voluntary benefits that are offered at your organization. Contact Buursma Agency for customizable educational materials and communications.

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