If the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread around the world, it could become a pandemic. Though global supply chains, and affect the daily operations of your business. A pandemic isn’t an isolated incident, but an ongoing issue that requires preparedness.

**M I S T A K E N I T E M S**

- **Communication Plan to Separate Sickness:** Identify employees who may be at risk for severe illness and ensure they are isolated until they can be evaluated by medical professionals.
- **Plan to Separate Sickness:** Establish procedures to separate asymptomatic employees from others and immediately send them home. Ensure that:
  - Employees who report the onset of symptoms are sent home or to a hospital immediately.
  - Employees who are unable to work due to illness are given sick leave or other accommodation.

**T H E  O U T L I N E**

- **Identify Plan Objectives:** Determine how you will relay information about the outbreak to customers and partners. You may need to cancel non-essential travel or temporarily close your business. Get copies of electronic health records from the doctor, hospital, or pharmacy.

**Prepare for Social Distancing**

- **Identify Health Risks Your Employees May Face:** Staff who have chronic conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, obesity, or kidney disease may be at greater risk.

**Plan to Separate Sickness**

- **Preparation for Employee Absences Resulting from Personal Illness:** Your business is only as healthy as your employees. Encourage employees to stay home when sick.

**Anticipate Absenteeism**

- **Plan for Restricted Travel:** Determine what people and resources are required for your business to continue operating during a pandemic. Cross-train employees to carry out essential functions so the workplace can operate when essential staff are out.

**Encourage Personal Preparedness**

- **Develop a Process for Activating Your Plan:** Define how you will activate your pandemic plan based on specific events or travel policies. Be ready to adapt your business practices to maintain critical operations.

**Implement**

- **Review Workplace Policies:** Check how your business can implement have face-to-face contact with large numbers of people? Ask employees to stay home when sick.

**I n v o l v e**

- **Establish a Communication Protocol:** Determine how you will communicate with employees, customers, and partners. Consider prioritizing customers with the greatest needs.

**Get Out From Your Workforce**

- **Stay Informed:** Make sure employees are aware of the latest public health recommendations and your response. Encourage employees to practice good hygiene and stay home if they are sick.

**Ideas from Other Businesses in Your Community**

- **Share Your Plan:** Invite your employees to help develop and review the plan. If it’s not possible to talk with every team member, try sampling a variety of positions in your company.

**Additional Resources**

- **CDC Coronavirus Website:** https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/
- **BCReady Site:** https://www.buncombecounty.org/countycenter/news-detail.aspx?id=18491
- **NC Public Health:** https://www.ncdhhs.gov/public-health