



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



U.S. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL  
MANAGEMENT

Friday, September 8, 2017

**MEMORANDUM FOR: Heads Of Executive Departments And Agencies**

FROM: Thomas E. Price, M.D. Secretary U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Kathleen McGettigan, Acting Director U.S. Office of Personnel Management

Subject: Email to All Federal Employees regarding Flu Season

Flu season is around the corner. Please help us ensure all federal employees take action to reduce the spread of influenza in the workplace, among our families, and in our communities. The best way to do this is to encourage everyone to get the annual flu vaccine. For this step, we're providing the attached email template for widest distribution within your agency. The email discusses five important reasons our Federal employees should get their flu vaccine as well as reminding them to check that they are up to date on other vaccine-preventable diseases.

Immunizations are at the core of building a healthier workforce, healthier families, and healthier communities. Thank you for supporting this effort.

ATTACHMENT: Email template for *Five Important Reasons to Get Your Flu Vaccine!*

***Subject Line: Five Important Reasons to Get Your Flu Vaccine!***

Flu season is around the corner. The flu vaccine is your best shot at preventing influenza. Here are five important reasons you should get a flu vaccine:

1. **Flu is dangerous.** The flu is different from the everyday cold. It can last 2 weeks or more and cause serious complications such as pneumonia. Every year, flu affects millions of people. It causes between 140,000 – 710,000 hospitalizations, 12,000 – 56,000 deaths, and costs billions to the economy. Although proper etiquette for coughs and sneezes, frequent hand-washing, and *other good health behaviors* can help, experts agree a flu vaccine is the best way to protect against the flu.
2. **It's very safe.** Millions of flu vaccines have been given safely for more than 50 years. Your body's natural response to vaccination may result in common things like a little redness at the injection site or a slight fever, but these are usually mild and pass quickly.
3. **Getting a flu vaccine can prevent flu or may make illness milder. Those who get the flu vaccine are less likely to get the flu. But, if you do get sick,** being vaccinated may make your illness milder.
4. **Flu vaccine is available through health insurance and most workplaces.** Federal employees and their family members can receive the flu vaccine through their Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) plan. Most FEHB plans cover flu shots at pharmacies and retail stores, in addition to doctor's offices and clinics, with no co-pays when in-network. Many federal agencies also offer flu shots onsite at no or low cost. Ask your agency to see if this option is available to you or use the [vaccine finder](#) to see what is available in your community.
5. **Getting vaccinated could protect your family and save someone from getting dangerously ill.** Babies and young children, pregnant women, people 65 and older, and people with certain medical conditions are all at *increased risk of serious complications from influenza*. Getting vaccinated reduces the spread of flu from you to them, which can protect your family members, co-workers, and all those around you.

A yearly seasonal flu vaccine is recommended for everyone aged 6 months and older. In addition to the flu, adults are at risk for a number of vaccine-preventable diseases such as pneumonia, whooping cough, and shingles. Ask your health care professional about other vaccines you may need. To learn more visit [vaccines.gov](#) or take the [adult vaccination quiz](#). You can also join us on social media as we work together to #FightFlu.

Please get your flu vaccine this year and join us in our effort to achieve a healthier workplace and a healthier population!