Dear Student Employer or Campus Colleague,

This student has developed symptoms consistent with influenza. For the student’s health and the health of others on campus, the UW-Madison campus is complying with recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) by requiring that the student not return to class and/or work until s/he has been completely free of fever (without fever-reducing medication) for at least 24 hours. The CDC reports that this takes 3 to 5 days for most people. The period of fever coincides with the period of greatest infectiousness, when a sick person is shedding the most flu virus.

To support isolation of ill people, the campus has adopted the policy that we will not require medical excuses for student, faculty or staff absences from flu-like symptoms. Requiring such excuses makes compliance with isolation recommendations difficult and utilizes finite medical resources which are best directed to providing medical care.

This expectation was outlined in the Provost’s email of August 31 to all faculty, staff, and students. It is hoped these precautions will limit the number of students infected at any given time and avoid major disruption on campus activities.

The student is aware that, as with any illness in any other school year, s/he is responsible for getting the notes for any classes missed and for making up assignments after s/he is fully recovered.

Although most students are recovering from this illness well on their own without medical treatment, H1N1 influenza virus has proven very contagious, particularly in young adults. All members of the campus community are urged to continue with sensible hand washing precautions and shielding others from coughs and sneezes.

We appreciate your understanding and assistance as we all strive to get through this unusual semester. If you have questions or concerns about this policy, please feel free to email me through the pandemicinfo@mhub.uwmpd.wisc.edu, or contact the Office of the Provost: 608/262-1304. Additional information regarding campus actions on H1N1 is available at http://flu.wisc.edu/.

Sincerely,

Sarah Yan Orman, MD
Executive Director, University Health Services
Chair, Campus Health Issues Planning Committee
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