

Buchanan County Public Health Department News Release

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Contact: Amy Marlow 319.332.0860
amarlow@bchealth.info

Balancing Sick Time & Work Time

Planning, cooperation benefit everyone

If you've ever worked in an office seated next to a coughing, sneezing co-worker, you can appreciate the request from public health officials to stay home from work when ill. It's easy to heed that message when you are well and you fear catching a virus from someone else. It's more difficult when you are the one who's sick and worried about taking time off from work.

"This is really a time for planning and cooperation," said Amy Marlow, Buchanan County Public Health Director "Employees need to be aware of their company's sick leave policy and employers should consider ways to be flexible so business can continue and workers can stay well."

Employees are a crucial resource at any business. By working together and understanding each other's needs, employers and employees can weather the flu season with minimal impact to the well-being of individuals or the business.

- Understand your employer's policies for sick time and their plan for dealing with H1N1.
- If you are unable to take sick leave to care for your ill children, consider other options, including family or friends who may be able to assist and care for your children.
- If your employer does not offer sick leave, they may be able to offer other options that will encourage a healthy work environment, including the opportunity to work from home or flexible work hours.
- Do not assume that because you do not have designated sick leave that your employer won't work with you.

A statewide toll-free hotline has been established for public questions about seasonal and H1N1 influenza at 1-800-447-1985. More information can also be found at www.idph.state.ia.us.

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