

Communicable infectious disease – Pandemic preparedness at AT&T

Summary statement

For AT&T, planning for and responding to contingencies is a way of life. We have a team of experienced business continuity experts and extensive experience in planning for and responding to a wide variety of situations, from hurricanes to floods to power outages. While it's impossible to precisely predict what would happen in a global health pandemic, we expect it to have limited impact on our critical operations.

As a company with operations on every continent, AT&T is closely monitoring health outbreak developments via local staff and health authorities, and we have plans in place to take the appropriate steps to continue to provide service, while considering and addressing the needs of our company, employees, and their families.

- No one can be certain of the extent and effects of a pandemic, but AT&T is in a strong position for preparedness.
- We have extensive experience in planning for and responding to a wide variety of situations, from hurricanes to floods to power outages.
- AT&T has a cross-functional team in place to allow the company to remain operational during a health pandemic.
- We maintain close links with Federal, State, and Local health authorities for medical expert advice and guidance.
- AT&T is committed to service quality. We offer a wide array of business continuity services designed to help facilitate the continuous operation and availability of customers' critical business processes, applications, data, work centers, and networks.
- A variety of strategies and contingencies are planned, depending on type of function, location, and customer requirements.
- Telecommuting for our employees is a key component of our preparedness, with substantial capability already in place.
- Appropriate preventive measures are in place, including personal protective equipment requirements.

AT&T has run and managed some of the world's largest and most complex networks for over 144 years. We understand network reliability and disaster planning. All AT&T organizations have documented Business Continuity Plans that are exercised every year. Maintaining our network is a highly automated function with the capability for remote management. We also maintain an inventory of spare components, so we're less reliant on suppliers.

- Each Business Unit maintains an impact assessment considering employee absenteeism rates of 25%, 40%, and >25% across regions, as well as an operations strategy that prioritizes and sustains essential activities.
- Most of our call centers and operations centers have the capability to shift work between locations, even cities and countries, to maintain continuity of customer service.
- We have a largely centralized, automated monitoring and maintenance function that can be performed in virtual office environments.
- If a pandemic were to occur, we would provide flexible options in order to maximize the efficient use of available, healthy employees, including redirecting employees to work on critical functions, and utilizing virtual office arrangements.
- On a national level, AT&T conducts Network Disaster Recovery (NDR) exercises several times a year that are designed to test, refine, and strengthen its business continuity and disaster-response services in order to minimize network downtime.