



C A L I F O R N I A   D E P A R T M E N T   O F

# Mental Health

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## 2009 Flu Season - Guidance for DMH Employees

Health officials expect the flu to spread in the coming months. This year, both the seasonal flu and the 2009 H1N1 flu (swine flu) will affect our community and our workplace.

### *What we're doing*

The Governor formed a task force to recommend ways to protect State employees from the flu and ensure we keep essential State services going. We're working with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Department of Personnel Administration (DPA), and other State and federal agencies to keep you informed and safe this flu season.

DPA will post [updates on their website](#) as information develops.

### *Keep yourself and others healthy*

The California Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend these few very important and simple things that every individual can do:

- Stay home if you have influenza symptoms (fever and cough, sore throat, or runny nose) to avoid infecting others. If you have influenza, stay home until you've been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. Do not go back to work with a fever. A temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.8 degrees Celsius) is a fever.
- Seek medical care for severe respiratory symptoms such as difficulty breathing or for dehydration from vomiting and/or diarrhea. You may also need to seek early medical attention if you have a chronic health condition that puts you at risk for the complications of influenza.
- If you do need to seek medical care or go out in public, try to use a surgical face-mask when you go out, so that you do not infect others.
- Wash hands often with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes (cough or sneeze into an arm or shoulder or into a tissue). ([see "Why don't we do it in our sleeves" at www.coughsafe.com/media.html](http://www.coughsafe.com/media.html))
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Keep your distance from people who are coughing. Avoid sharing personal items such as eating/drinking utensils, toothbrushes, and towels, especially with ill persons.

If you have had very close contact (for example, live in the same household) with a person with active influenza symptoms, you should:

- Watch carefully for symptoms of cough, sore throat, or runny nose.
- Stay home if fever *and* cough, runny nose, or sore throat develop; go home as soon as possible if influenza-like symptoms occur at work.
- Talk to your health care provider about whether to take antiviral medication for influenza.

***For more information***

- [CDPH Interim Guidance for Employers and Employees on Novel Influenza A \(H1N1\) Virus \(PDF\)](#)
- [Novel Influenza A \(H1N1\) Virus \(Swine Flu\) - CDPH](#)
- [2009 H1N1 Flu \(Swine Flu\) - CDC, 1-800-CDC-INFO \(1-800-232-2636\)](#)
- [Know What to Do About the Flu - federal flu.gov website](#)

These additional recommendations apply to health care and custodial settings:

- [CDPH Interim Guidance for State of California Facilities on Novel Influenza A \(H1N1\) Virus \(PDF\)](#)

Look for [updates on DPA's website](#) as information develops.