

## Additional Qs and As on H1N1 Influenza – June 23, 2009

1. Have any NPS employees been diagnosed with confirmed H1N1 influenza?

We are aware of at least one such employee. In June 2009, the NPS Office of Public Health received confirmatory H1N1 test results for a WASO employee who works at the Eye Street building. The employee's illness was mild, and the employee has now fully recovered.

Please note that this confirmed H1N1 infection did not change the public health measures that were recommended for other WASO employees.

- According to the CDC, you can take the following everyday steps to protect your health:
    - o Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
    - o Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
    - o Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
    - o Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
    - o Stay home if you are sick for 7 days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer. This is to keep from infecting others and spreading the virus further.
2. How many confirmed H1N1 cases in a given NPS facility are necessary before special steps are taken?

With just one confirmed case of H1N1, the CDC does not recommend any special steps be taken.

If a large cluster of H1N1 cases is identified at a park or office, further interventions may be warranted (e.g. encouraging teleworking, limiting face-to-face meetings, implementing other social distancing measures). Such decisions would be made in consultation with NPS management and the local/state health departments, and would be communicated to all affected employees.

3. Even if there are not multiple cases in the work place, is there any reason why an employee could/should not wear gloves or a mask in the office if it makes her/him feel more comfortable?

CDC does not recommend the routine use of gloves or masks in the workplace to prevent the spread of influenza or other respiratory pathogens. The best prevention measures are the ones listed above.

4. Are there any special recommendations for parents with young children or who are frail or susceptible themselves or who have frail or susceptible relatives at home?

There are no special recommendations for parents with young children or for persons who have frail or susceptible relatives at home. If such persons become sick, they should stay at home and minimize contact with other household members.

For persons who themselves are at high risk for complications of influenza infection (for example, persons over 65 years of age, pregnant women, persons with chronic conditions, and persons with compromised immune systems), the CDC recommends that they notify their healthcare provider if they develop symptoms. A healthcare provider may schedule a clinic visit and/or make the decision to start anti-viral medications or perform additional testing.