



Peninsula Detachment Crime Alert

5/1/09 – Influenza A(H1N1) Information

On 4/29/09, the World Health Organization (WHO) moved the pandemic alert to phase 5 due to the outbreak of a previously unidentified strain of swine influenza A(H1N1). Phase 5 occurs when human-to-human transfer of the virus occurs in at least two countries in one WHO region. WHO identifies this phase as a 'strong signal that a pandemic is imminent'. Phase 6 is declared when the virus occurs in at least one country in a different WHO region and when a global pandemic is occurring.

In one 24-hour period, the number of cases in this outbreak jumped from 148 cases in nine countries to 257 cases in 11 countries.

The swine influenza A(H1N1) is spread the same way a seasonal flu is spread - through coughing or sneezing. The symptoms are also similar to those of a seasonal flu - fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue, lack of appetite, runny nose, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

At this time there are no confirmed cases in Pierce County, but we would like to provide the following information in an effort to educate and inform residents.

Residents cannot be infected with the swine influenza A(H1N1) virus by eating well-cooked pork and pork products. The World Health Organization (WHO) advises no restriction of regular travel or closure of borders at this time.

If you are currently ill or become ill after traveling, it is recommended you limit your contact with others and you seek medical attention. If you do not have health insurance or a physician, the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD) requests you call 253-798-6500 for help. The TPCHD recommends self-isolation for 7 days after the onset of illness or at least 24 hours after the symptoms have resolved, whichever is longer.

Precautions you should take to avoid the spread of the virus are:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze; or cough into your elbow. Throw away the tissue after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick: **STAY HOME** and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Keep sick children at home.

To follow the status of the swine influenza A(H1N1) virus outbreak, visit the following websites:

World Health Organization Influenza A(H1N1) webpage

<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention H1N1 Flu webpage

<http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/index.htm>

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department website

<http://www.tpchd.org>

You may also use the following Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Checklists:



Pandemic Flu Planning Checklist for Individuals & Families

You can prepare for an influenza pandemic now. You should know both the magnitude of what can happen during a pandemic outbreak and what actions you can take to help lessen the impact of an influenza pandemic on you and your family. This checklist will help you gather the information and resources you may need in case of a flu pandemic.

1. To plan for a pandemic:

- Store a two week supply of water and food. During a pandemic, if you cannot get to a store, or if stores are out of supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand. This can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and disasters.
- Periodically check your regular prescription drugs to ensure a continuous supply in your home.
- Have nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins.
- Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home.
- Volunteer with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response.
- Get involved in your community as it works to prepare for an influenza pandemic.

2. To limit the spread of germs and prevent infection:

- Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water, and model the current behavior.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues, and be sure to model that behavior.
- Teach your children to stay away from others as much as possible if they are sick. Stay home from work and school if sick.



3. Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home:

Examples of food and non-perishables	Examples of medical, health, and emergency supplies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, and soups<input type="checkbox"/> Protein or fruit bars<input type="checkbox"/> Dry cereal or granola<input type="checkbox"/> Peanut butter or nuts<input type="checkbox"/> Dried Fruit<input type="checkbox"/> Crackers<input type="checkbox"/> Canned juices<input type="checkbox"/> Bottled water<input type="checkbox"/> Canned or jarred baby food and formula<input type="checkbox"/> Pet food<input type="checkbox"/> Other nonperishable foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment<input type="checkbox"/> Soap and water, or alcohol-based (60-95%) hand wash<input type="checkbox"/> Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen<input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer<input type="checkbox"/> Anti-diarrheal medication<input type="checkbox"/> Vitamins<input type="checkbox"/> Fluids with electrolytes<input type="checkbox"/> Cleansing agent/soap<input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight<input type="checkbox"/> Batteries<input type="checkbox"/> Portable radio<input type="checkbox"/> Manual can opener<input type="checkbox"/> Garbage bags<input type="checkbox"/> Tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers

PandemicFlu.gov



AvianFlu.gov

FAITH-BASED & COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST



The collaboration of Faith-Based and Community Organizations with public health agencies will be essential in protecting the public's health and safety if and when an influenza pandemic occurs. This checklist provides guidance for religious organizations (churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, etc.), social service agencies that are faith-based, and community organizations in developing and improving influenza pandemic response and preparedness plans. Many of the points suggested here can improve your organization's ability to protect your community during emergencies in general. You can find more information at www.pandemicflu.gov.

1. Plan for the impact of a pandemic on your organization and its mission:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Assign key staff with the authority to develop, maintain and act upon an influenza pandemic preparedness and response plan.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine the potential impact of a pandemic on your organization's usual activities and services. Plan for situations likely to require increasing, decreasing or altering the services your organization delivers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine the potential impact of a pandemic on outside resources that your organization depends on to deliver its services (e.g., supplies, travel, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outline what the organizational structure will be during an emergency and revise periodically. The outline should identify key contacts with multiple back-ups, role and responsibilities, and who is supposed to report to whom.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify and train essential staff (including full-time, part-time and unpaid or volunteer staff) needed to carry on your organization's work during a pandemic. Include back up plans, cross-train staff in other jobs so that if staff are sick, others are ready to come in to carry on the work.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Test your response and preparedness plan using an exercise or drill, and review and revise your plan as needed.

2. Communicate with and educate your staff, members, and persons in the communities that you serve:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Find up-to-date, reliable pandemic information and other public health advisories from state and local health departments, emergency management agencies, and CDC. Make this information available to your organization and others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Distribute materials with basic information about pandemic influenza: signs and symptoms, how it is spread, ways to protect yourself and your family (e.g., respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette), family preparedness plans, and how to care for ill persons at home.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	When appropriate, include basic information about pandemic influenza in public meetings (e.g. sermons, classes, trainings, small group meetings and announcements).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Share information about your pandemic preparedness and response plan with staff, members, and persons in the communities that you serve.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop tools to communicate information about pandemic status and your organization's actions. This might include websites, flyers, local newspaper announcements, pre-recorded widely distributed phone messages, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider your organization's unique contribution to addressing rumors, misinformation, fear and anxiety.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Advise staff, members, and persons in the communities you serve to follow information provided by public health authorities--state and local health departments, emergency management agencies, and CDC.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that what you communicate is appropriate for the cultures, languages and reading levels of your staff, members, and persons in the communities that you serve.

continued

3. Plan for the impact of a pandemic on your staff, members, and the communities that you serve:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan for staff absences during a pandemic due to personal and/or family illnesses, quarantines, and school, business, and public transportation closures. Staff may include full-time, part-time and volunteer personnel.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Work with local health authorities to encourage yearly influenza vaccination for staff, members, and persons in the communities that you serve.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evaluate access to mental health and social services during a pandemic for your staff, members, and persons in the communities that you serve; improve access to these services as needed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify persons with special needs (e.g. elderly, disabled, limited English speakers) and be sure to include their needs in your response and preparedness plan. Establish relationships with them in advance so they will expect and trust your presence during a crisis.

4. Set up policies to follow during a pandemic:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Set up policies for non-penalized staff leave for personal illness or care for sick family members during a pandemic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Set up mandatory sick-leave policies for staff suspected to be ill, or who become ill at the worksite. Employees should remain at home until their symptoms resolve and they are physically ready to return to duty (Know how to check up-to-date CDC recommendations).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Set up policies for flexible work hours and working from home.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evaluate your organization's usual activities and services (including rites and religious practices if applicable) to identify those that may facilitate virus spread from person to person. Set up policies to modify these activities to prevent the spread of pandemic influenza (e.g. guidance for respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, and instructions for persons with influenza symptoms to stay home rather than visit in person.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Follow CDC travel recommendations during an influenza pandemic. Recommendations may include restricting travel to affected domestic and international sites, recalling non-essential staff working in or near an affected site when an outbreak begins, and distributing health information to persons who are returning from affected areas.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Set procedures for activating your organization's response plan when an influenza pandemic is declared by public health authorities and altering your organization's operations accordingly.

5. Allocate resources to protect your staff, members, and persons in the communities that you serve during a pandemic:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine the amount of supplies needed to promote respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette and how they will be obtained.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider focusing your organization's efforts during a pandemic to providing services that are most needed during the emergency (e.g. mental/spiritual health or social services).

6. Coordinate with external organizations and help your community:

Completed	In Progress	Not Started	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Understand the roles of federal, state, and local public health agencies and emergency responders and what to expect and what not to expect from each in the event of a pandemic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Work with local and/or state public health agencies, emergency responders, local healthcare facilities and insurers to understand their plans and what they can provide, share about your preparedness and response plan and what your organization is able to contribute, and take part in their planning. Assign a point of contact to maximize communication between your organization and your state and local public health systems.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinate with emergency responders and local healthcare facilities to improve availability of medical advice and timely/urgent healthcare services and treatment for your staff, members, and persons in the communities that you serve.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Share what you've learned from developing your preparedness and response plan with other Faith-Based and Community Organizations to improve community response efforts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Work together with other Faith-Based and Community Organizations in your local area and through networks (e.g. denominations, associations, etc) to help your communities prepare for pandemic influenza.



When should people seek medical care?

So far most cases of swine flu in the United States have resulted in mild illness so it's important to make sure that our medical system is not overwhelmed by people seeking unnecessary medical care to make sure it is available for those who need care most. At this time, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department recommends people make decisions about when to seek medical care in the same way they would under normal circumstances.

If the following flu-like symptoms are mild, **medical attention is not typically required.**

- Runny nose or nasal stuffiness
- Low-grade fever for less than 3 days
- Mild headache
- Body aches
- Mild stomach upset

Consult with a health care provider promptly or seek medical care for the following flu-like symptoms:

- Fever (of at least 100.4 degrees F) for three days or more with no explanation
- Rapidly worsening illness
- Person is unresponsive and unable to get out of bed
- Bad sore throat
- Difficulty breathing
- Severe cough
- Chest pain

Unless you are severely ill, do not go to the Emergency Room. See your primary care provider, a walk-in clinic or urgent care facility. If you do not have a medical provider, call the Health Department at (253) 798-6500, or check our website for a list of clinics in Pierce County.