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CCL INFORMATION RELEASE NO. 2009-02

TO: CCLD STAFF

SUBJECT: **H1N1 (SWINE) AND SEASONAL INFLUENZA**

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Initiated by CCL

As we enter the traditional fall flu season, we are all aware of the publicity about the need to prepare for both the H1N1 (Swine) flu and the regular (seasonal) flu. This information release will address actions that all Community Care Licensing (CCL) offices can take to help prevent the spread of the flu in the workplace. It will also address actions that licensing program analysts (LPAs) can take to protect themselves and to help educate licensees and providers.

ALL CCL OFFICES AND EMPLOYEES

General Prevention Steps

All CCL offices are being asked to take the following steps:

- Emphasize the importance of flu-prevention activities at staff meetings. Consider asking a local public health worker to speak to employees, if possible.
- Practice the general flu-prevention tips outlined in the director’s memo of September 9, 2009 to all CDSS staff, including:
 - Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
 - Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
 - Stay home if you are sick with flu-like symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue), until you have been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. A temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.8 degrees Celsius) is a fever.

- Post signs in CCL offices and adjacent public areas that promote good hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette. (See below for more information and links to specific signs and other resources.)
- Ensure that your office has adequate handwashing supplies available at all times. In addition, the State will be supplying each CCL office with a portable hand sanitizer in a large dispenser; however, we do not have a time frame for delivery.
- Consider keeping a common household cleaner in the office that employees can use to periodically clean surfaces such as desks and telephones.
- For employees who become sick while at work and can't go home immediately, consider designating an area in the office—apart from other employees, to avoid spreading germs—where a sick employee can wait until able to go home.
- Consider designating a person in your office, perhaps one of the office emergency coordinators, to be responsible for your office's flu-prevention efforts.

Posting of Flu-Prevention Signs at CCL Offices

As noted, all CCL offices are being asked to post signs that reinforce the message of maintaining good hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette. The signs referenced below can be printed out on a color printer, or reproduced on white or color paper. Signs should be posted in the following areas:

- **Within the CCL office.** Please post signs within your office.
- **Public areas.** Please also post signs in lobbies, rooms where orientations are held, and other public areas adjacent to CCL offices, as appropriate. Some of the resources listed below are available in multiple languages.

Following are links to several commonly used signs and brochures:

- **Cover Your Cough sign (main resource).** *Please post copies of the Cover Your Cough sign specifically.* It was created by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and is commonly used in workplaces and community settings. It is short and simple. You will probably recognize it.
 - Direct link to Cover Your Cough sign in English and Spanish:
<http://www.dhss.mo.gov/PandemicInfluenza/CoverYourCoughPoster.pdf>
 - Link to Cover Your Cough sign in other languages:
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm>

- **“Take 3” Actions to Fight the Flu sign.** This is a fairly comprehensive CDC sign that may be useful to post on bulletin boards.
 - Direct link to “Take 3” Actions to Fight the Flu sign:
http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/2009-10/pdf/Take3_Poster.pdf
- **Other resources.** Following are links to other free flu materials, including signs, flyers and brochures:
 - Link to “Germstopper” signs, which are primarily for youth and may be appropriate for some children’s residential or child care facilities:
<http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/materials.htm>
 - Link to other free flu materials: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/flyers.htm>

ORIENTATIONS AND SITE VISITS

Orientations

At orientations, distribute copies of the handout [Tips for Licensees on H1N1 \(Swine\) and Seasonal Influenza](#) and discuss the Department’s flu-prevention efforts as appropriate.

General Precautions for LPAs

In addition to following and promoting good hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette, LPAs are encouraged to do the following in relation to site visits:

- Do not conduct site visits while sick with flu-like illness.
- Have individual hand sanitizers available, which the Department will provide.
- Per the CDC, try to maintain a distance of six feet or more from any person with flu-like illness and keep interactions with sick persons as brief as possible.
- Also per the CDC, if close contact with a sick person is unavoidable, consider wearing a facemask or respirator, if available and tolerable. For more information, please see the CDC’s [Interim Recommendations for Facemask and Respirator Use](#).

LPA Activities Related to H1N1 and Seasonal Flu

- **Disaster plan.** Encourage licensees to update their facility’s emergency disaster plan to include pandemic influenza.

- **Flu-Prevention Tips.** Distribute copies of the handout [Tips for Licensees on H1N1 \(Swine\) and Seasonal Influenza](#) to licensees who don't have a computer, for use by their facility as appropriate.
- **Signs.** Distribute copies of CDC's Cover Your Cough sign to licensees who don't have a computer. Copies of other signs may also be distributed as appropriate, if the LPA wishes.
- **Reporting requirements.** Remind licensees to report any suspected outbreaks to the local licensing office and the [local health department](#).

INTERNET RESOURCES

For continuously updated information on the H1N1 and seasonal flu, please see:

- California Department of Public Health (CDPH), at www.cdph.ca.gov; and
 - H1N1 flu:
www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/SwineInfluenza.aspx
 - Seasonal Flu:
[www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Influenza\(Flu\).aspx](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Influenza(Flu).aspx)
- CDC at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/
- U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, at www.flu.gov/

Thank you. We believe that following the simple steps outlined above will help keep us all healthier this flu season. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Gary Palmer at (916) 324-4312 or Gary.Palmer@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original signed by Jeffrey Hiratsuka

JEFFREY HIRATSUKA
Deputy Director
Community Care Licensing Division