



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
Washington, D.C. 20240

May 18, 2009

## Memorandum

To: Solicitor  
Inspector General  
Bureau and Office Heads  
Attn: Bureau and Office Emergency Coordinators

From: Director, Office of Emergency Management  
/s/ Laurence I. Broun

Subject: 2009 H1N1 Flu – Memorandum #2

The ongoing outbreak of novel influenza A (H1N1) continues to expand in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is projecting the continuing spread of the flu with increasing cases and hospitalizations. It's uncertain at this time how severe this novel H1N1 outbreak will be in terms of illness and death compared with other influenza viruses. The CDC recommends continued vigilance because the population has little to no immunity against the virus. Over the next weeks and months, medical experts will keep a close eye on how this virus evolves and monitor it for changes as it continues to circulate around the U.S. and the world. CDC's response goals are to reduce spread and illness severity, and provide information to help health care providers, public health officials and the public address the challenges posed by this emergency.

The DOI Pandemic Response Plan is flexible and can be adapted to the varying severities that we may be faced with as our knowledge and understanding of this virus evolves over time. Planning should address requirements related to both the current wave of flu and potential recurrence of H1N1 during the flu season in the fall. In coordination with interagency planners and the DOI Emergency Management Council, the Office of Emergency Management will continue to provide guidance to assist bureaus and offices in implementing appropriate pandemic planning actions identified in Appendix F and other portions of the DOI Pandemic Influenza Plan:

- Bureaus and offices should promote a heightened level of employee awareness of infection control procedures (basic hygiene and hand-washing procedures.) GSA will display pandemic awareness posters in all building entrances, conference rooms, and cafeterias in all GSA-controlled common spaces in owned buildings and in GSA-serviced areas in leased buildings. Bureaus and offices should take similar measures in their controlled space.

- Acquisition should be underway to ensure that supplies are available to promote hand hygiene and infection control in the workplace, including disinfectant soap and/or hand sanitizers and supplies to disinfect frequently touched surfaces. GSA is taking action to provide hand sanitizers at building entrances, conference rooms, outside of bathrooms and cafeterias in GSA-controlled common spaces in GSA-owned buildings and in GSA-serviced areas in leased buildings. Bureaus and offices should take similar measures in their controlled space. GSA's Federal Acquisition Service (FAS) has pre-negotiated contracts for hand sanitizer that can be found on GSA Advantage [www.gsaadvantage.gov](http://www.gsaadvantage.gov).
- Decisions regarding large meetings and public gatherings should be made based on local influenza activity, evolving information about severity of illness from this virus, and identification of high risk groups, and other local considerations. Event organizers should communicate to attendees about the need to remain home if ill and to use good hygiene practices while at the event. In communities with several reported cases of novel influenza A (H1N1) virus infection, persons who are at risk of complications from influenza should consider staying away from public gatherings. Other measures should be considered by event organizers to help reduce the risk for the spread of H1N1 will vary depending on the type and setting of the event, but can include: making widely available at the event hand washing facilities with soap and running water, hand sanitizer, and tissues; provide on-site medical assessment and care for persons with influenza-like illness; and provide alternative options and venues for participation (e.g., remote Web-based viewing sites) and simultaneously reduce crowding.
- The Office of Occupational Health and Safety has created a H1N1 Flu reporting system on the Department's Safety Management Information System (SMIS) to track and record DOI employees with suspected and confirmed cases of H1N1 Flu (<http://www.smis.doi.gov>). Bureaus and offices are requested to implement H1N1 reporting on SMIS through their supervisors and managers. Implementing instructions and dissemination criteria are attached.
- Job tasks that require DOI employees to come in direct contact with persons known or suspected to be infected with H1N1 influenza (medium risk or higher) require the use of respiratory protection. Bureaus and offices should continue to provide a stockpile of equipment sufficient to meet initial response requirements and to implement respiratory protection programs. The DOI Office of Occupational Health and Safety developed a Respiratory Protection Program Primer that is located on the DOI H1N1 webpage (<http://www.doi.gov/emergency/h1n1/>) to assist work units which are not familiar with respiratory protection programs.
- The Emergency Management Council will continue to meet on an as-needed basis to coordinate preparedness and response activities across the Department.

As medical officials learn more about the characteristics of this flu, we should be prepared to adjust plans in accordance with enhanced guidance.

cc: Assistant Secretaries  
Deputy Secretary  
Chief of Staff

## Safety Management Information System (SMIS) H1N1 Flu Reporting Feature

The Office of Occupational Health and Safety has created a H1N1 Flu reporting system on the Department's Safety Management Information System (SMIS) to track and record DOI employees with suspected and confirmed cases of H1N1 Flu ([www.smis.doi.gov](http://www.smis.doi.gov)). This special SMIS H1N1 Flu reporting feature is embedded in the accident reporting portion of SMIS and is highlighted in red at the bottom of the screen.

Only DOI supervisors and managers will have access to input entries into the SMIS H1N1 reporting feature. When an employee has suspected or confirmed H1N1 Flu, it is the duty of the supervisor and manager to enter the SMIS H1N1 Flu reporting feature, utilizing their existing username and password, and electronically enter all relevant information about their ill employee following the instructions on the reporting page. The employee's ID number will be needed to identify the employee's background information. Once all the required information is inputted about the ill employee, SMIS will create a unique DOI H1N1 Case number.

As the ill employee's status changes, it is the duty of the supervisor and manager to reenter the SMIS H1N1 Flu reporting feature to provide this updated information. The unique DOI H1N1 case number that was created for the employee will be needed to reenter into the employee's record within this SMIS reporting feature.

The information entered, collected and maintained within the SMIS for the H1N1 Flu will be disseminated only in statistical format; no information and/or records will be released that can be utilize to identify any person. The exceptions to this dissemination are contained within the Department's System of Records Notice DOI-60 which may be found at the following two links:

[http://www.doi.gov/ocio/privacy/Privacy%20Notices%20for%20DOI/Interior%20Notice%20DOI-wide%20Systems/DOI\\_60\\_Safety%20Management%20Information.htm](http://www.doi.gov/ocio/privacy/Privacy%20Notices%20for%20DOI/Interior%20Notice%20DOI-wide%20Systems/DOI_60_Safety%20Management%20Information.htm)  
<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/E8-2584.htm>

The Office of Occupational Health and Safety and the Office of Emergency Management will aggregate numbers of DOI employees with suspected and confirmed cases of H1N1, as well as the numbers of employees who have recovered and returned to work. This data will be reported to the Department of Homeland Security.

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