

PRESS RELEASE

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FIVE CASES OF SWINE FLU (H1N1) CONFIRMED IN LONG BEACH – HEALTH DEPARTMENT MEETS WITH LOCAL SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES

The State of California Department of Public Health Laboratory has determined that the City of Long Beach now has five (5) confirmed cases of swine flu (H1N1), which includes the California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) student confirmed to have this strain of the flu late Saturday. In addition, over the weekend, four more cases of swine flu were confirmed by the State Public Health Laboratory. Three of the four newly confirmed cases are school aged individuals, none have reported any recent travel to Mexico, nor do they have any known contacts with ill individuals who have had recent travel to Mexico. The Health Department is conducting an epidemiological investigation of all of these cases and has advised the individuals to stay home for at least 7 days. All of the individuals identified are recovering, and none are hospitalized.

Today, Health Department staff met with representatives from CSULB, Long Beach City College, and Long Beach Unified School District. Dr. Helene Calvet, City Health Officer, discussed new guidance from the State Department of Public Health on school closures, and discussed the circumstances in which a school closure would occur locally. At this time, there are no school closures in Long Beach. However, should there be a rise in absenteeism, particularly for influenza like illness (ILI), then a closure would be considered. For this reason, it is extremely important for anyone exhibiting ILI, especially fever, that they stay home from school for at least seven (7) days to ensure they will not transmit the illness to others. Calling into your school site with the specific nature of your illness is requested to allow the school districts to better monitor the status of illness in each individual school location. Parents should plan for childcare in the event a school closure takes place.

Dr. Calvet continues to advise residents that it is important for people to prevent the spread of this and any strain of influenza by remembering to practice healthy habits to prevent catching or spreading the flu by:

- Wash hands with soap and water or a hand sanitizer frequently,
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick,
- Stay home from work or school if you are sick,
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or cough or sneeze into clothing (sleeves),

- Avoid touching your mouth, eyes, or nose if you have not recently washed your hands, and
- Eat healthy food, drink plenty of water, exercise, get plenty of rest, do not smoke and avoid alcoholic beverages.

Remember if you are sick please see your physician, stay home from work or school and always maintain good hand hygiene washing your hands at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap.

To learn more about swine flu or more information please visit our website www.longbeach.gov/health or the CDC website www.cdc.gov/swineflu.