

H1N1 VIRUS and PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION



May 7, 2009

Although Vermont has been largely untouched by the H1N1 flu virus to date, the Vermont Department of Health expects to see more human cases here, and most authorities agree that the U.S. is likely to experience a significant increase in the coming fall/winter flu season. VLCT has compiled a list of resources for our members to keep apprised of up-to-date information and help them plan for a potential crisis. It includes links to state, local, and federal sources of information about the virus and pandemic mobilization.

Please visit these websites periodically for updates.

VERMONT

- The **Vermont Department of Health** website, healthvermont.gov/index.aspx, is the best source for information on the current status of the H1N1 virus in Vermont.
- For general questions about swine flu or other health concerns related to the outbreak, contact **Vermont 211** by dialing 2-1-1 or going online to www.vermont211.org
- If you feel ill or are concerned about your health, call your health care provider.
- For links to an H1N1 informational poster as well as HR policies and pandemic planning devised by HRSentry, a Colchester-based HR company, go to www.vlct.org/d/advocacy/hrsentry.pdf
- **Community-level response if a pandemic is declared.** Vermont Emergency Management (VEM, a division of the State of Vermont Department of Public Safety) is a good resource for information on community response. The VEM website, www.dps.state.vt.us/vem/, lists community response information and hosts the Local Emergency Planning Committee* and Community Emergency Response Team* websites. In the event of a pandemic outbreak in your area, consult the VEM website and contact Vermont Emergency Management with any remaining questions you have on community- or county-level preparedness.
- **Workplace Planning**
 1. **Pandemic Flu Government Website.** www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/tab4.html/#checklist has a Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist for businesses, employer preparedness information, workplace questions relating to pandemics, and more.
 2. **Workplace Guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor and OSHA.** Prepare workplaces for an influenza pandemic: www.osha.gov/Publications/influenza_pandemic.html Prepare by stockpiling masks: www.osha.gov/dsg/guidance/stockpiling-facemasks-respirators.html

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- **Centers for Disease Control (CDC)**

Main H1N1 flu web link: www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/ has many levels of information, including general information, guidance for specific groups, press updates, and more.
General influenza pandemic resources: www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic/
Telephone information line: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)

- **Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)**
Public health emergency declaration: www.hhs.gov/secretary/phe_swh1n1.html
Pandemic flu: www.pandemicflu.gov/
Use of pneumococcal vaccine: www.pandemicflu.gov/vaccine/pneumococcal.html
Federal response stages: www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/federal/fedresponsestages.html
State pandemic planning and status: www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/states/index.html#stateplans
- **Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for HR and U.S. Government personnel issues**
OPM's main H1N1 flu web link: www.opm.gov/pandemic/
A June 2008 memo (www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2008/2008-09.asp) discusses HR approaches to being flexible in time of emergency.
An April 2009 memo (www.chcoc.gov/Transmittals/TransmittalDetails.aspx?TransmittalId=2227) advises federal employees and agencies how to prevent the spread of the current flu and maintain readiness to use HR flexibilities if necessary.
- **Federal Emergency Management Agency.** FEMA policy on pandemic flu outbreaks: www.fema.gov/government/grant/pa/9523_17.shtm
- **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**
FDA's main website: www.fda.gov/default.htm
Flu information page: www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/flu.html has information on seasonal flu, industry R&D, vaccinations, FDA's pandemic preparedness, and more.
The FDA Newsroom has links to FDA press releases. Use the Search Press Releases field to find a specific topic of interest: www.accessdata.fda.gov/news/.
Statement warning the public of fraudulent 2009 H1N1 influenza products: www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2009/NEW02007.html
First respirators cleared for use in public health medical emergencies: www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2007/NEW01630.html

INTERNATIONAL

- **FluTracker Map.** Scalable world map showing the locations of H1N1 with statistical information: flutracker.rhizalabs.com
- **Pan American Health Organization (PHO).** Main site: new.paho.org/hq/index.php?lang=en. Flu page: new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=805&Itemid=569
- **World Health Organization (WHO)**
WHO's H1N1 flu page: www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html
List of confirmed human H1N1 cases worldwide: www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/country/en/
Definitions of pandemic alert system levels: www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/phase/en/index.html
- **Mexican Department of Health.** portal.salud.gob.mx/

* The governor of Vermont appoints the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC). SERC has divided the state into 13 local emergency planning districts and has appointed a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) for each district. LEPCs consists of representatives from businesses, local government, emergency responders, and citizens groups in the community. Each LEPC has a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) which is activated whenever there is a large-scale emergency.