

State of Alaska

2009 H1N1 influenza Mass Immunization Toolkit

School Located Vaccinations

What is 2009 H1N1 (swine) influenza?

H1N1 influenza is a novel influenza (flu) virus. Novel means that it is a new virus—one to which there is no immunity. This is why H1N1 is spreading so rapidly and has been declared not only a pandemic but also a public health emergency. The symptoms of H1N1 flu are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu—cough, sore throat, fever, headache, muscle aches, and runny or stuffy nose. In some persons, mostly children, with 2009 H1N1, there may be vomiting and diarrhea. Luckily, the H1N1 influenza is a relatively mild influenza from which most persons recover fully. However, for persons at high risk for complications from influenza, 2009 H1N1 can be fatal.

Preventing the spread of 2009 H1N1 influenza:

Several simple steps can help to prevent the spread of this disease. Cough etiquette measures, coughing into your sleeve or into a tissue, frequent hand washing with soap and water or using alcohol based hand sanitizer, keeping your hands away from your eyes, nose, and mouth, and staying home when you are sick are examples.

As soon as the vaccine is available, persons in the five target groups should receive the H1N1 influenza vaccine; this is the best measure to prevent the H1N1 flu. All children 6 months of age through 24 years of age are a target group so should be offered the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available in a few weeks, probably late October.

The State of Alaska has developed this toolkit for you and your community partners to review together to facilitate decision making about holding a school located immunization clinic. Please take a few minutes to look through the tools and select those that will be of most value in planning and conducting your school located immunization clinic.

Schools in which clinics are held without the presence of students' parents will require consent forms and related items such as the CDC Vaccine Information Statements (VIS). Templates for consent forms and a draft VIS for inactivated H1N1 vaccine are available in the Related Materials website cited below.

The following links will provide you with continuously updated information on H1N1 influenza and H1N1 influenza related activities:

- State of Alaska Pandemic Flu website: www.pandemicflu.alaska.gov.

- Center for Disease Control 2009 H1N1 Influenza School-Located Vaccination Planning Guide;
 - Information for Planners:
<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/slv/planners.htm>
 - Related Materials:
<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/slv/relatedmaterials.htm>

The efforts put forth by you and your staff, to provide a safe and healthy environment for Alaska's children, are appreciated.