



## State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
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JON S. CORZINE  
Governor

LUCILLE E. DAVY  
Commissioner

October 29, 2009

TO: Chief School Administrators/Charter School Lead Persons  
Nonpublic School Administrators

FROM: Lucille Davy, Commissioner

SUBJECT: H1N1 Influenza Website

I ask that you please read the attached message from Department of Health and Senior Services Commissioner Heather Howard on H1N1 Influenza.

The Department of Education would also like to take this opportunity to remind districts to stay in close communication with your local health department and take all steps recommended to limit the spread of influenza in our schools. Please remind parents/guardians that symptoms of H1N1 include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headaches, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting. If a child is exhibiting these symptoms, please remind parents/guardians to immediately call the child's physician and keep their child home from school.

Also, parents can help us limit the spread of influenza by teaching their children the following:

- Wash hands often, especially after coughing or sneezing. Washing with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds is ideal. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer cleaners are also effective.
- Keep their hands away from their face and avoid touching their mouth, nose or eyes.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of their elbow.
- Stay home when sick.

The Department of Education will continue to distribute the *State of New Jersey H1N1 Influenza Update* and provide districts with the most up-to-date information and guidance regarding H1N1 Influenza.

As noted in the attached message, for more information and questions, please call the New Jersey H1N1 toll-free public information hotline on weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at **1-866-321-9571**. Call center operators will be able to provide general information about H1N1, vaccine safety and availability information, symptoms of H1N1 and flu prevention measures.

We appreciate your assistance in ensuring that we do everything we can to make sure our schools are a safe place.

LED/JH/BS/pp:commissionermemoHINI102909  
Attachment

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PO Box 360  
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Heather Howard  
Commissioner

For Release:  
October 28, 2009

For Further Information Contact:  
Office of Communications  
(609) 984-7160

## Statement from Department of Health and Senior Services Commissioner Heather Howard on



STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES**



most recent information on H1N1 influenza. There are a number of tools that New Jerseyans can use to stay informed, and simple everyday actions we can take to stay healthy.

New Jersey opened an **H1N1 Information Hotline - 1-866-321-9571** earlier this month. Because of increased interest, call center hours will be extended to weekends. This toll-free public hotline will now be accessible seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call center operators will be able to provide general information about H1N1, vaccine safety and availability information, symptoms of H1N1 and flu preventive measures. Since opening the hotline, the Department has answered more than 7,730 calls from the public.

New Jersey's flu activity has moved from regional to widespread. This means that H1N1 flu is present in a majority of counties throughout the state. While any type of flu is cause for concern, it is not cause for alarm. I urge all residents to stay informed and take simple preventive measures to stay healthy.

I also want to take this opportunity to provide an update on vaccine production and availability, vaccine safety, and H1N1 target populations.

### **New Jersey's H1N1 Public Information Initiative**

In an effort to provide critical information to the public, New Jersey created a Find a Flu Shot Locator, an H1N1 Resource Center website, and a toll-free hotline. These resources will help ensure residents and health care providers have access to information and can obtain accurate responses to their questions.

The State established an **H1N1 Resource Center website** that includes important information and timely updates on H1N1 flu in New Jersey. The website can be found at [www.nj.gov/health](http://www.nj.gov/health). Additional information on H1N1 flu is available at the federal website, [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov).

The **Find a Flu Shot Locator** can be accessed at [www.nj.gov/health](http://www.nj.gov/health). Residents can find where H1N1 flu clinics are being held throughout the State. Not all clinics are included on this list because some are being offered to very specific target populations, such as school-based efforts and private doctors' offices. Public flu clinics will be posted on this site as soon as they are scheduled. Additional public health clinics will be scheduled as more vaccine arrives.

### **H1N1 Vaccine Production and Availability**

Many residents are concerned with the slower than expected arrival of H1N1 vaccine. Please understand that the H1N1 vaccine, like other vaccines, is produced by manufacturers and distributed by the federal government. We will do all that we can to ensure orders are placed in a timely manner and that the vaccine is getting to the target populations.

As of October 28, 2009, New Jersey ordered approximately 1.3 million doses of vaccine and more than 567,000 doses have been distributed to nearly 891 providers statewide. Shipments of the H1N1 vaccine will continue to arrive throughout this month and into the winter.

The federal government has assured us that ultimately there will be enough vaccine for everyone who wants it. However, with only limited vaccine available at this time, it is important to first target the individuals most susceptible to H1N1 flu.

### **H1N1 Target Populations**

It is recommended that certain target groups be among the first to receive the H1N1 vaccine as it becomes available. These groups include:

- Pregnant women
- Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age
- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
- All people from 6 months through 24 years of age
- Persons aged 25 through 64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza

### **H1N1 Vaccine is Safe**

Many parents have raised concerns about the safety of the new H1N1 vaccine. All vaccines, including the H1N1 vaccine, are held to the highest standard of safety and are continually monitored. Each year, millions of Americans safely receive seasonal flu vaccines. The H1N1 vaccine is made the same way as seasonal flu vaccine by the same manufacturers that make seasonal flu vaccine. In addition, the National Institute of Health (NIH) has conducted clinical trials for the H1N1 vaccine. The vaccine has been tested and safely used in children, pregnant woman, and adults.