

For Immediate Release: For More Information:
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Governor Corzine Announces Five Confirmed Cases of H1N1 Influenza In New Jersey

TRENTON - Governor Jon S. Corzine today announced that samples sent to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Tuesday indicate that five New Jersey residents have confirmed cases of H1N1 Influenza. All five individuals were listed as probable cases as a result of testing conducted at the New Jersey Public Health and Environmental Laboratories in Trenton.

"We have been on top of this from the start and will continue to be vigilant as long as the threat to public safety exists," Governor Corzine said. "There is no need for alarm but we must all be aware of the situation. I want to assure the people of New Jersey that we are doing everything in our power to contain the spread of this flu virus."

All five individuals had a mild case of H1N1 Influenza. None were hospitalized and all are recovering at home. The individuals with confirmed cases of H1N1 Influenza are:

- A 43-year old Monmouth County female
- A 22-year old Bergen County female
- A 14-year old Burlington County male
- A 10-year old Burlington County female
- A 47-year old Burlington County male

The three Burlington County cases were members of the same family. The two Burlington County children did not attend school before becoming sick and have not returned to school.

Four of the five individuals recently travelled to Mexico. The fifth travelled to California.

"As we said earlier this week, we knew there was a likelihood that New Jersey would have H1N1 Influenza cases and we should also expect there will be more cases as this outbreak continues," said Health and Senior Services Commissioner Heather Howard. "Of the five confirmed cases, it should be noted they were in three different regions of the state, so we are not seeing non-family clustered cases. New Jersey will continue its surveillance activities and continue its coordinated response with our federal, state and local health care partners."

Working with Commissioner Howard and the Department of Health, the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security (OHSP) gathered its partner state agencies to test the state's Pandemic Influenza Response Plan and identify operational gaps. Additionally, OHSP briefed members of the State's Infrastructure Advisory Committee on the activities of State Government to coordinate the response to H1N1 Influenza, a review of Best Management Practices, and how they can interact with the state on information sharing activities.

"As this crisis continues to unfold, interagency coordination is never more important than it is during moments like this," said Homeland Security Director Richard L. Canas.

Additionally, the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) has established a Joint Information Center (JIC) at the Regional Operations and Intelligence Center in West Trenton. The Office of Emergency Management is currently working at a Level 2 monitoring state and is prepared for any operations and planning efforts to address the H1N1 Flu Outbreak.

All county offices of emergency management coordinators have been contacted and will be working alongside the Office of Emergency Management both operationally and in a public information capacity. If necessary, NJOEM is prepared to facilitate and support any distribution of anti-viral medications with security support from the New Jersey State Police.

"The key to dealing with the current H1N1 crisis has been the partnership and cooperation of all state agencies involved in ensuring the health and safety of the citizens of New Jersey. We have held joint exercises with many branches of state government to prepare for this type of scenario," said State Director of Emergency Management Colonel Rick Fuentes.

The Department of Health and Senior Services also has opened up a 24-hour toll-free information line for both the general public and healthcare providers. That number is 1-866-321-9571.

Commissioner Howard continues to urge everyone to practice effective preventive measures.

"Good hygiene habits such as washing your hands frequently and thoroughly will greatly reduce the chance of getting sick," said Commissioner Howard. "Also, people should be covering coughs and sneezes. Most important, if you are sick, stay home from work or school."

H1N1 Influenza is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza viruses that cause regular outbreaks in pigs. People do not normally get H1N1 Influenza, but human infections can and do happen.

The symptoms of H1N1 Influenza in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with H1N1 Influenza. In the past, severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths have been reported with H1N1 Influenza infection in people. Like seasonal flu, H1N1 Influenza may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

For more information on H1N1 Influenza, visit www.cdc.gov/swineflu or www.nj.gov/health.