

Guidelines for School Staff to Prevent the Spread of the H1N1 Flu

Prevention Activities

Take the following steps ALL the time and not only during flu season to help keep your students and yourself from getting sick with flu.

- **Educate and encourage students to cover their mouths and noses** with tissue when they cough or sneeze. Also, provide them with easy access to tissues. Remind them to cover coughs or sneezes using their elbows instead of their hands when tissue is not available.
- **Remind students to practice good hand hygiene** and provide the time and supplies (easy access to running water and soap or antibacterial gel).
- Staff should ensure that **all restrooms have antibacterial soap in bathrooms and antibacterial gel** in all dispensers. Be a good role model by practicing good hand hygiene and covering your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- **Keep an eye out for sick students** and send them to the clinic for further evaluation. Sick people should stay at home until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine).
- **Clean surfaces and items** that are more likely to have frequent hand contact such as desks, door knobs, keyboards, or pens, with cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas. Follow the directions to use VIREX and/or CREW, both germicidal solutions.
- **Use only disinfectants approved** by the Facilities Department.
- **Teachers should also stay home when sick.** Stay home until at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine).
- **If you are pregnant, have asthma, diabetes, or other conditions** that put you at higher risk for complications from the flu, you should speak with your doctor as soon as possible if you develop symptoms of flu-like illness. People at high risk of flu complications who develop flu can benefit from early treatment with antiviral medicines.
- If you have children, **plan ahead for child care** if your child gets sick or his or her school closes.
- **Be prepared in case the flu becomes more severe.**
 - Develop options for how school work can be continued at home (e.g. posting work on ANGEL, homework packets, phone calls), if school is dismissed or your students are home because someone in their household is sick.
 - Be prepared for sick students or staff to stay home for at least 7 days, even if they feel better sooner. Those who are still sick after 7 days should continue to stay home until at least 24 hours after symptoms have gone away.
 - Allow high-risk students to stay home. These students should make this decision in consultation with their physician or other health professional.
 - Find ways to increase social distances (the space between people) in your classroom. For example, you might rearrange desks so that there is more space between students, consider canceling classes that bring students together from different rooms, or postpone class trips.

Suspected Cases – student and/or parent report that their child has H1N1 flu. School staff should take the following actions:

1. Confidentiality should be maintained at all times.
2. The report of a suspected case should be made immediately to the School Nurse for investigation. The School Nurse will inform the Principal.
3. The School Nurse will contact the parent to seek written confirmation from the licensed health care provider.
4. Suspected cases should be reported by e-mail to the School Health Services Facilitator (Nancy Rithmire).
5. Continue the established routine disinfectant cleaning of shared surfaces.

Confirmed Cases – once a case is confirmed by a physician, the school should take the following actions:

1. Diagnosed students must remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever without the use of fever reducing medications.
2. Inform staff when there is a confirmed case so that pregnant staff may consult with their health care provider. Please remind staff to maintain student and staff confidentiality.
3. If a school has 10% of the student population absent, a report will be made in accordance with the GaDOE.