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**Interim CDPH Guidance for Public Gatherings:
Policies to Mitigate Spread of
Novel Influenza A (H1N1) Virus Infections
May 19, 2009**

Introduction

Novel influenza A (H1N1) virus (“swine influenza”) is a new virus. To date it has mainly cause mild illness; however, health officials need to take precautionary measures to limit the spread of infection until more is known about the risks of this virus. At public gatherings such as weddings, graduation ceremonies and other events where people have close contact (like handshaking and hugging) there may be increased risk for spread of novel of Novel influenza A (H1N1) virus.

Objective and Scope

The objective of this document is to provide guidance on preventing the transmission of Novel influenza A (H1N1) virus during public gatherings, including large public gatherings and assemblies or groupings of many people in one place. Examples of such gatherings can include college and university commencement exercises, church services, sporting events, concerts, social and cultural celebrations, weddings, conferences, and other similar activities attended by relatively large groups of people. This interim guidance does not attempt to define such events in terms of numbers of people in attendance; rather, the focus is on community situations in which crowding is likely to occur. In addition, these recommendations do not distinguish between public gatherings held indoors and those held outdoors, because differences in Novel influenza A (H1N1) virus transmission patterns in these two settings are not known. Please monitor CDPH, CDC, and your local health department websites for updated recommendations regarding Novel influenza A (H1N1) virus.

Current Recommendations

Decisions regarding large public gatherings during this time of Novel influenza A (H1N1) virus outbreak should be made based on local influenza activity. Given the current information on disease severity and spread, CDPH recommends that:

1. Persons with influenza-like illness (ILI) (i.e., fever with either cough or sore throat) should stay home and refrain from attending any public gatherings for 7

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be communicated through a variety of means such as letters, newspaper notices, public service announcements, Web site postings, and text messages.

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/SwineInfluenza.aspx>

Additional Recommendations

Other measures can be used by event organizers to help reduce the risk for novel influenza A (H1N1) infection.

- Provide tissues, hand washing facilities with soap and running water, or alcohol-based hand sanitizer at events.
- Provide options such as remote Web-based viewing sites, teleconferencing that reduce the need for public gatherings.

These recommendations are subject to change as more information about novel influenza A (H1N1) becomes available.