



MARK B HORTON, MD, MSPH
Director

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor

May 2, 2009

Updated Interim Guidance on K-12 School and Childcare Facility Dismissal

It is prudent for communities to act to protect their residents and take advantage of a narrow window of opportunity for intervention based on the information available. Similar to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance [available at http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/K12_dismissal.htm], California Department of Public Health (CDPH) recommends that affected counties consider the following guidance for the dismissal of students in affected schools and childcare facilities. As we learn more about this emerging virus, updated guidance will be issued in coordination with the CDC and local partners.

When Human Infection with H1N1 Influenza Virus (Swine Flu) is Confirmed in a Community:

- Sick people (students, faculty and staff) should stay home unless they need to seek medical care and stay away from schools regardless of whether schools and childcare facilities are operating normally or have dismissed students or closed, respectively.
- Options to mitigate community transmission may range from no closure of schools and childcare facilities to dismissal of all students depending on local conditions. Dismissal of students for a period of up to 14 days should be considered in schools and childcare facilities* with either one laboratory-confirmed case, one non-subtypable Influenza A case, or one suspected case epidemiologically linked to a laboratory-confirmed case or non-subtypable influenza A case. Decision to maintain open or close a school/childcare facility should be made by local authorities.
- If no additional influenza-like illnesses (ILI) are identified among students (or school-based and childcare personnel), schools and childcare facilities may consider reopening at the end of the initial closing period. The decision to reopen should be evaluated by local authorities on an ongoing basis depending upon epidemiological findings.

- Decisions regarding broader school dismissal and closure of childcare facilities within these communities should be made by local authorities in coordination with CDPH taking into account the extent of H1N1 Influenza Virus (Swine Flu) in the community. This includes consideration of geographic proximity and extent of student mixing as a cause for preemptive dismissal of students from schools in the area without current laboratory-confirmed cases.
- If a school dismisses students or a childcare facility closes, they should also cancel all school or childcare related gatherings and encourage parents and students to avoid congregating outside of the school.
- Large gatherings linked to settings or institutions with laboratory-confirmed cases should be cancelled, for example a school event linked to a school with cases. Other large gatherings in the community do not need to be cancelled at this time.
- Schools and childcare facilities in unaffected areas should prepare for the possibility of student dismissal, childcare facility closure, or childcare facility capacity reduction. This includes asking teachers, parents and officials in charge of critical school-associated programs (such as continued education, meal services, medication dispensing, etc.) to make contingency plans.

These recommendations are subject to change as additional epidemiological and clinical data become available.

*Childcare Facilities: centers and facilities that provide care to any number of children in a nonresidential setting, large family childcare homes that provide care for seven or more children in the home of the provider and small family childcare homes that provide care to six or fewer children in the home of the provider.