



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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**DOH CONFIRMS FIRST CASES OF NOVEL H1N1 INFLUENZA
A ON THE BIG ISLAND OF HAWAI'I**

All have recovered or are recovering

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) confirmed 14 additional cases of novel H1N1 Influenza A of swine origin over the extended holiday weekend. Nine of the cases were confirmed last Friday evening by the DOH State Laboratories Division, and five cases were confirmed on Saturday. Two of the individuals live on the island of Hawai'i and 12 are O'ahu residents. It is important to note that all of the individuals have recovered or are recovering at home with no complications. Since May 5, a total of 58 confirmed cases in the state have been reported to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Of the latest 14 confirmed cases, six are adults and eight are school-aged children. The two cases that live on the island of Hawai'i are school-aged children that are not attending school at this time. One acquired their illness while traveling in another state, the other had contact with a confirmed case. Of the 12 confirmed cases on O'ahu, two school-aged individuals acquired their illness while traveling in another state; one school-aged individual had contact with a previously confirmed case; and one adult had contact with a previously confirmed case.

"The number of cases is not alarming since we know community transmission is taking place," said Health Director Dr. Chiyome Fukino. "To date, this novel H1N1 virus is behaving similar to seasonal flu and individuals are recovering at home with no complications. It is important that we continue to carefully monitor the severity and spread of this flu strain."

(more)

To date, the Department of Health (DOH) has investigated and conducted case follow-up for over 800 individuals tested for Influenza A. The DOH State Laboratories Division currently conducts subtype testing on approximately 60-80 Influenza A positive specimens each work day, and between 5-10% of specimens have been positive for novel H1N1 Influenza A of swine origin. The remaining cases are seasonal flu.

This Fall, the DOH will once again begin its "Stop Flu at School" program and ask parents to provide consent for their child to receive free seasonal flu vaccine at their school. All elementary and middle schools are urged to participate in this free program to protect their students from seasonal flu. Parents are asked to watch for and complete consent forms that will be sent home from their children's school.

Anyone experiencing flu-like symptoms should call a doctor and isolate themselves from other people. Guidelines for home care for individuals with the flu are available on the DOH website at www.hawaii.gov/health. The public may also call 211 for information on novel H1N1 Influenza. Aloha United Way's 211 provides language interpretation and TDD/TTY services.

It is very important to stay at home if you are sick to prevent spreading illness. Consult a physician if you have a fever higher than 100 degrees and a sore throat or cough. Proper hand washing can help prevent contracting the flu viruses along with avoiding touching your face, eyes, nose and mouth. Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your inner arm can also reduce the spread of illness.

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