

NMDOH INFECTION CONTROL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY SETTINGS (10/21/09)

Businesses that have direct contact with the public have expressed concern about the risk posed by sick customers or clients. Questions about the appropriateness of wearing surgical masks and respirators by workers in the community have been raised. However, outside of medical situations, the benefits of wearing masks or other PPE have not been established.

The risk for infection with novel influenza A (H1N1) can be reduced through a combination of actions. No single action will provide complete protection, but an approach combining the following steps can help decrease the likelihood of transmission. These recommended actions are:

1. Wash hands frequently with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.
2. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
3. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
4. People who are sick with an influenza-like illness (ILI) (fever plus at least cough or sore throat) should stay home and keep away from others as much as possible, including avoiding travel, for at least 24 hours after fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Fever should be gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine).
5. Avoid close contact (i.e., being within about 6 feet) with persons with ILI

All business owners and workers should stringently follow sanitary measures to reduce the spread of influenza, including covering their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or coughing or sneezing into their sleeve if a tissue isn't available), frequently washing hands with soap and water, or using hand sanitizer if hand washing with soap and water is not possible, and staying home if they become ill with an influenza-like illness (fever of $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$ with cough and/or sore throat) until they have been without fever for at least 24 hours without the use of anti-fever medications.