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H1N1 Guidance for Food Service Establishments

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Food Service Workers

- Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.
- Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu, including 2009 H1N1 and have respiratory symptoms without a fever. Severe illnesses and deaths have occurred as a result of illness associated with this virus.
- Food workers should wash their hands often with soap and warm water for 15 to 20 seconds.
- Employees should be educated about the symptoms of influenza and should report to management immediately if they experience any symptoms.
- Food workers should minimize handling food with their bare hands and instead use utensils, such as gloves, deli paper or tongs, when available.
- Ill food workers should not work with exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, linens, or unwrapped single-service or single-use articles.
- One of the best ways to reduce the spread of influenza is to keep sick people away from well people. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that employees with flu-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- Emphasize hand-washing for all employees—wait and bus staff included.

Food Service Facility

- Studies have shown that influenza virus can survive on environmental surfaces and can infect a person for two to eight hours after being deposited on the surface.
- All food contact surfaces should be cleaned and sanitized several times a day to help prevent the potential for cross contamination.
- Heavy hand contact (such as menus, condiment containers like ketchup bottles, salt and pepper shaker, etc.) or service areas (non-food contact surfaces) should be disinfected several times per day with household disinfectant per the manufacturer's instructions.
- Restrooms areas should be cleaned often to prevent the potential for cross contamination.
- Supplemental handwash signs should be installed in restrooms to encourage customers to wash hands.
- Hand sanitizer stations should be installed in the dining area and close to children's play areas; emphasize their use with signs.

- Customer self-service areas (e.g. buffet bar) should be monitored to prevent contamination.
- Consider wrapping ready-to-eat items individually to reduce the chance for transmission.
- Serving utensils should be changed often.
- Utensils, plates, tableware and other multi-use items should be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized between uses.
- Raw fruits and vegetables should be washed thoroughly before preparing.