

Appendix G

VS Memo No. 580.18 Policy to Ensure the Protection of Personnel Involved in HPAI Control and Eradication Activities

This policy is based on what is currently deemed optimal precautions to protect individuals from illness and the risk of viral reassortment while they are involved in the response to a HPAI outbreak. Personnel involved in HPAI control and eradication activities on known affected or potentially affected premises are at increased risk for exposure to HPAI virus because those personnel frequently have prolonged and direct contact with infected birds and/or contaminated surfaces in an enclosed setting.

Guidance for At-Risk Poultry Workers

HPAI is a highly contagious disease of poultry. Poultry experts agree that immediate culling of infected and exposed birds is the first line of defense to both reduce further losses in the agricultural sector and to protect human health. However, culling must be carried out in a way that protects workers from exposures to HPAI viruses and therefore reduce the likelihood of infection, illness, or viral reassortment.

Exposure to infected poultry, feces, and respiratory secretions and contact with contaminated surfaces is thought to result in transmission of virus to humans and subsequent infection; however, this is a rare occurrence. Although there is evidence of limited person-to-person spread of HPAI virus infection, sustained and efficient human-to-human transmission has not been identified.

The following summarizes recommendations for protecting workers at risk developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Personnel involved in HPAI control and eradication activities must take these precautions.

1. All persons who have been in contact with poultry, feces, respiratory secretions, or contaminated surfaces should wash their hands frequently. Hand hygiene should also be performed immediately after gloves are removed and should consist of washing with soap and water for 15-20 seconds or the use of other standard hand-disinfection procedures as specified by State government, industry, or USDA outbreak-response guidelines.
2. All workers involved in the culling, transport, or disposal of HPAI virus-infected poultry should be provided with appropriate personal protective equipment:

- a. Protective clothing capable of being disinfected or disposed of, preferably coveralls (plus an impermeable apron) or surgical gowns with long cuffed sleeves (plus an impermeable apron);
 - b. Gloves capable of being disinfected or disposed of; gloves should be carefully removed and discarded or disinfected and hands should be thoroughly washed. Gloves should be changed if torn or otherwise damaged;
 - c. Respirators: the minimum recommendation is a disposable particulate respirator (e.g., N95, N99, or N100) used as part of a comprehensive respiratory protection program. The elements of such a program are described in 29 CFR 1910.134. Workers shall be medically cleared and fit tested for the model and size respirator they wear and be trained to fit-check the seal of the face piece to the face at a minimum;
 - d. Eye protection (e.g., goggles);
 - e. Boots or protective foot covers that can be disinfected or discarded
3. Environmental cleanup should be carried out in areas of culling, using the same protective measures as in items 1 and 2, above.
 4. Unvaccinated workers should immediately receive the current season's influenza virus vaccine to reduce the possibility of dual infection with avian and human influenza viruses.
 5. Workers should receive a daily influenza antiviral drug (that is approved for use as prophylaxis) for the duration of time during which direct contact with poultry, their secretions, or contaminated surfaces occurs and continuing 5 to 7 days after the last day of potential virus exposure. Antivirals should be administered in combination with the influenza vaccine (as mentioned above). The choice of antiviral drug should be based on sensitivity testing when possible. In the absence of sensitivity testing, a neuraminidase inhibitor (e.g., oseltamivir) is the first drug of choice since the likelihood is smaller that the virus will be resistant to this class of antiviral drugs than to amantadine or rimantidine.
 6. Potentially exposed workers should monitor their health for the development of fever, respiratory symptoms, and/or conjunctivitis (i.e., eye infections) for 1 week after last exposure to HPAI virus-infected or exposed birds or to potentially contaminated environmental surfaces. Individuals who become ill should seek prompt medical care and give notification before arrival at the health care provider that they may have been exposed to HPAI virus.
 7. It is important to take measures to prevent the virus from being spread to other areas. To do this, disposable items of personal protective equipment should be discarded properly, and non-disposable items

should be cleaned and disinfected according to outbreak-response guidelines.

8. To reduce the possible risk of transmission of HPAI virus to their contacts, especially household members, ill persons should practice good respiratory and hand hygiene.
9. Patients or health care providers should report possible cases of zoonotic transmission of HPAI to their local or State Department of Health.

Guidance for Veterinary Laboratory Workers

HPAI viruses are classified as “select agents” and must be handled under Biosafety Level (BSL) 3 enhanced or BSL 3 agriculture laboratory standards. These include controlled access, double-door entry with change room and shower out, use of respirators when working with specimens outside a biological safety cabinet, and decontamination of all wastes. Laboratories working on these viruses must be USDA approved.

Clinical specimens from suspect HPAI virus cases may be tested by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) assays using standard BSL 2 work practices in a Class II biological safety cabinet. In addition, commercial antigen detection testing can be conducted under BSL levels to test for influenza viruses.

ODA will seek additional recommendations from the USDA’s Standard Operating Procedures HPAI Task Force Manual and the National Avian Influenza Response Plan, April 2006.

Decontamination Plan For Individuals Involved With Depopulation and Disposal: (To be utilized at the discretion of the State Veterinarian)

Individuals will transport participants to the infected premises. Once on the premises, the participants shall not cross the dirty/clean line until the end of the workday.

At the end of the workday, the participants shall use two tents to exit the premise. These tents shall be placed on the clean/dirty line. Each individual shall enter the dirty tent, remove all clothing and place the clothing in provided receptacles. They will then clean hands, face, neck and feet with an alcohol gel cleanser then enter the clean tent. In the clean tent, the individual will put on new set of over clothes. They may then enter the van provided and return to hotel.

On return to the hotel, they will enter the dirty room, remove all clothing and place it in appropriate receptacles. They shall expectorate, blow their nose and take a thorough shower. Before passing from the dirty to the clean room, they shall use an alcohol gel

on their feet. Once in the clean room they may redress in their street clothes and exit the hotel room.

No one involved with disposal and depopulation shall have direct or indirect exposure to poultry in the following three days.

A portable decontamination unit, shower in/shower out facility at the premises, or a portable shower between the two tents would eliminate the need for the hotel rooms and would be desirable.

When the operation is completed, supporting poles shall be removed from the outside of the tent and the tent allowed to collapse. A pre-placed plastic sheet shall be used to wrap the tent and its contents. This sheet shall be taped closed, sprayed with disinfectant and placed on top of a second plastic sheet on the clean side. This second sheet shall be wrapped around the first one and its contents, taped closed and sprayed with disinfectant. It shall be disposed of by burning on site or burial in a landfill.