



Homeland
Security

April 25, 2009

To all DHS employees:

You have all no doubt seen press reports of the swine flu outbreak in Mexico. Here in the U.S., there have been eight cases reported in California and Texas. Thankfully, all the victims have recovered.

I want you to know that I am monitoring this situation and we are working in coordination with local, state and international public health agencies to gather information and keep lines of communication open. Public health officials have increased monitoring and surveillance efforts both here in the U.S. and in Mexico. They are encouraging people to contact their public health offices and their physicians if they think they may have been exposed.

The Centers for Disease Control are posting all the latest information about what is happening here in the U.S. and Mexico with the swine flu, and you can log on to their website at www.cdc.gov/flu/swine.

There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- If you live in San Diego County or Imperial County, California or Guadalupe County, Texas and become ill with influenza-like symptoms, including fever, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, or vomiting or diarrhea, you may want to contact your health care provider, particularly if you are worried about your symptoms. Your health care provider will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed.
- If you get sick with influenza, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

We will send out additional information to our employees who work along the Southwest border and in Mexico, as well as regular updates to all DHS employees until they are no longer needed.

Sincerely,

Janet Napolitano
Secretary