

## Introduction

1. General background information and statistics about the H1N1 virus
2. Five things an employer should take in preparing for and protecting its workforce against H1N1

## Background Info on H1N1

1. H1N1 is not a food borne disease, it is airborne. You cannot get H1N1 from eating pork despite its other moniker of “swine flu”
2. Statistics and symptoms of “seasonal flu”
3. Novel H1N1 flu virus – contagious respiratory illness which is now a pandemic
  - a. More severe symptoms of seasonal flu, including vomiting, diarrhea and nausea
  - b. “High risk” individuals
4. Hygiene practices to follow to eliminate or minimize exposure to flu virus
  - a. Infection incubation period
  - b. Specific simple practices to follow to protect yourself from flu virus
  - c. Vaccines for both seasonal flu and H1N1 flu
  - d. Antiviral drugs

## 5 Things To Keep in Mind to Prepare for H1N1

1. Review and update existing policies and procedures and have legal counsel review
  - a. Implement or update Injury and Illness Prevention Program (“IIPP”)
  - b. Employee handbooks and personnel policies
  - c. Identify key personnel responsible for coordinating H1N1 policies and procedures
2. Communicate with workforce re H1N1
  - a. Training session/mock drills
  - b. E-mails/letters/staff meetings
  - c. Audits by legal counsel or other outside emergency preparedness expert
3. Maintain a contact list for key safety providers and advisors in the community
  - a. Identify competent legal counsel for consultation and advice
  - b. Find local urgent care centers
  - c. Identify local and state health agencies to use as resources for information
  - d. Secure web addresses for informational websites
  - e. Compile internal lists of employees responsible for coordinating response to H1N1 outbreak
4. Set up a timeline for accomplishing the H1N1 plan and document it
  - a. Good intentions often die on the vine if things are not implemented before an outbreak
  - b. Act now before the flu season gets in full swing
  - c. Use outside legal counsel and consultants to assist
5. Reassess H1N1 plan once outbreak occurs in community
  - a. If outbreak become severe, take prophylactic steps to prevent spread of disease
  - b. Sick employees should stay home, or if at work, they should be advised to go home
  - c. Tell employees you do not want them to come into work sick so they do not worry about losing their jobs
  - d. Consider active “visual” screening of employees who report to work with flu-like symptoms
  - e. Set up alternative work schedules or cross-train employees
  - f. Advise employees before traveling to take certain steps
  - g. Ensure infrastructure capable of supporting alternative work schedules and situations

The material in this podcast is of a general nature and is not offered as legal advice. You should seek professional advice based on the particular facts and circumstances of your situation.