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RIVERSIDE COUNTY

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### **Media Advisory**

#### **Influenza A H1N1 virus (Swine Flu) Pandemic Alert Level Raised**

Riverside County health officials will continue to monitor local H1N1 virus cases in light of today's announcement that the virus has reached pandemic status.

Despite the heightened alert levels, local health officials continue to urge residents not to panic and to take proactive measures to protect their health. The official pandemic designation does not indicate a change in the severity of the so-called swine flu, said county Health Officer Eric Frykman.

"The county will remain vigilant in its response to the virus," Frykman said.

The World Health Organization raised the H1N1 alert level to Phase 6, its highest level, to indicate widespread community infections in at least two distinct regions. It means that the virus spreads easily from one person to another and that a global pandemic is underway.

Locally, the outbreak of the new influenza has been moderate. Riverside County has 70 confirmed cases of H1N1 virus. An additional seven probable cases await confirmation.

People with flu-like symptoms are recommended to stay home from work or school to avoid spreading any illness to others. Everyone should cover their nose and mouth during a sneeze or cough and wash their hands regularly.

The county Department of Public Health will receive additional supplies in preparation for the fall flu season. For information on any significant changes in local conditions and for updates, visit [www.rivcoph.org](http://www.rivcoph.org).