

Hello all

Your calls have been received and we are monitoring events and will pass along reports and alerts as they become available. We will do this through the alert systems we have in place, the Roam Secure system and the Delco Alert network. You should all be in the Roam Secure (RSAN) group and can be added to the Delco Alert groups by registering at <http://delco.alertpa.org> and choosing the public health alert group. The Delco Alert group receives alerts as they are passed to us by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA). The Roam Secure group will receive information from the County EMA as appropriate.

If you have key staff that need to be added to your Emergency Management Profile please let Larry Bak know by email (lbak@icdc.com) with their name, email, cell phone number and cell phone carrier and we will add them to your group. Please monitor the [PEMA website \(http://www.pema.state.pa.us/\)](http://www.pema.state.pa.us/) which has links to CDC & PADOH, for up to the minute information and we will continue to provide information as we assimilate data coming into us and make decisions on actions.

We are participating in daily conference calls with PEMA, PADOH and CDC to stay informed of changing conditions. I will continue to send emails as conditions warrant.

**Regards
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Additionally, below is information which explains the Word Health Organization's phases of alerts.

Current WHO phase of pandemic alert

Current phase of alert in the WHO global influenza preparedness plan

[Pandemic preparedness](#)

In the 2009 revision of the phase descriptions, WHO has retained the use of a six-phased approach for easy incorporation of new recommendations and approaches into existing national preparedness and response plans. The grouping and description of pandemic phases have been revised to make them easier to understand, more precise, and based upon observable phenomena. Phases 1–3 correlate with preparedness, including capacity development and response planning activities, while Phases 4–6 clearly signal the need for response and mitigation efforts. Furthermore, periods after the first pandemic wave are elaborated to facilitate post pandemic recovery activities.

The current WHO phase of pandemic alert is 4.

In nature, influenza viruses circulate continuously among animals, especially birds. Even though such viruses might theoretically develop into pandemic viruses, in **Phase 1** no viruses circulating among animals have been reported to cause infections in humans.

In **Phase 2** an animal influenza virus circulating among domesticated or wild animals is known to have caused infection in humans, and is therefore considered a potential pandemic threat.

In **Phase 3**, an animal or human-animal influenza reassortant virus has caused sporadic cases or small clusters of disease in people, but has not resulted in human-to-human transmission sufficient to sustain community-level outbreaks. Limited human-to-human transmission may occur under some circumstances, for example, when there is close contact between an infected person and an unprotected caregiver. However, limited transmission under such restricted circumstances does not indicate that the virus has gained the level of transmissibility among humans necessary to cause a pandemic.

Phase 4 is characterized by verified human-to-human transmission of an animal or human-animal influenza reassortant virus able to cause “community-level outbreaks.” The ability to cause sustained disease outbreaks in a community marks a significant upwards shift in the risk for a pandemic. Any country that suspects or has verified such an event should urgently consult with WHO so that the situation can be jointly assessed and a decision made by the affected country if implementation of a rapid pandemic containment operation is warranted. Phase 4 indicates a significant increase in risk of a pandemic but does not necessarily mean that a pandemic is a forgone conclusion.

Phase 5 is characterized by human-to-human spread of the virus into at least two countries in one WHO region. While most countries will not be affected at this stage, the declaration of Phase 5 is a strong signal that a pandemic is imminent and that the time to

finalize the organization, communication, and implementation of the planned mitigation measures is short.

Phase 6, the pandemic phase, is characterized by community level outbreaks in at least one other country in a different WHO region in addition to the criteria defined in **Phase 5**. Designation of this phase will indicate that a global pandemic is under way.

During the **post-peak period**, pandemic disease levels in most countries with adequate surveillance will have dropped below peak observed levels. The post-peak period signifies that pandemic activity appears to be decreasing; however, it is uncertain if additional waves will occur and countries will need to be prepared for a second wave.

Previous pandemics have been characterized by waves of activity spread over months. Once the level of disease activity drops, a critical communications task will be to balance this information with the possibility of another wave. Pandemic waves can be separated by months and an immediate “at-ease” signal may be premature.

In the **post-pandemic period**, influenza disease activity will have returned to levels normally seen for seasonal influenza. It is expected that the pandemic virus will behave as a seasonal influenza A virus. At this stage, it is important to maintain surveillance and update pandemic preparedness and response plans accordingly. An intensive phase of recovery and evaluation may be required.