

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

Department of Health  
Commonwealth News Bureau  
Room 308, Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

**CONTACT:** Stacy Kriedeman, PA DOH  
(717) 787-1783

Jeff Moran  
Philadelphia Department of Health  
(215) 686-5244

## **HEALTH OFFICIALS REPORT PENNSYLVANIA'S FIRST PROBABLE CASE OF SWINE FLU**

*No Confirmed Cases Yet Reported*

**HARRISBURG** – The Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH) and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health today reported the state's first probable case of swine influenza. Currently, Pennsylvania does not have any confirmed cases of 2009 H1N1.

However, officials stressed that this probable case may not be confirmed when additional testing on samples is conducted at the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The case occurred in a two-year-old child in Philadelphia who became ill on March 23. This date is before the current swine flu outbreak was recognized in the United States, and the child has no known risk factors for exposure to swine flu. Laboratory testing conducted in March found influenza A infection, but the Philadelphia Department of Health asked that the samples be reviewed because of the current concerns regarding the swine flu outbreak. As a result, they were recently forwarded to the State Public Health Lab. The child has fully recovered from the illness.

“Based on CDC’s case definition, we must consider this a probable case of the 2009 H1N1 influenza,” said Pennsylvania Secretary of Health Everette James. “However, I want to

emphasize that many of the specimens from probable cases in other states sent to the CDC for additional testing have been found to be negative for 2009 H1N1.”

“Because this child is no longer ill, further public health actions are not necessary at this time,” said Philadelphia Health Commissioner Donald Schwarz. “The health department is actively searching for possible cases of swine flu. Even if this case is confirmed, it would not change our current approach to swine flu in Philadelphia.”

All public health agencies in Pennsylvania have intensified surveillance efforts statewide and this possible case was identified as part of those efforts. The samples from this patient have been sent to CDC and results of additional testing will be released once they are available.

As with any influenza, citizens are reminded to take the following steps to prevent spreading illness to others:

- Stay home when you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others;
- Cough or sneeze into the bend of your elbow or a tissue and properly dispose of used tissues;
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth;
- Stay healthy by eating a balanced diet, drinking plenty of water and getting plenty of rest and exercise; and
- Seek care if you have influenza-like illness.

The Department of Health Web site is being updated daily with the most recent Pennsylvania-specific swine flu information, including links to CDC recommendations and other swine flu information. For more information, visit [www.health.state.pa.us](http://www.health.state.pa.us).

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