



TOMÁS J. ARAGÓN, M.D., Dr.P.H  
Director and State Public Health Officer

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency  
California Department of Public Health



GAVIN NEWSOM  
Governor

August 30, 2022

Dear Poultry Operation Owner/Manager:

Influenza vaccination can protect your workers from missing work and from inadvertently spreading influenza viruses. **Please consider offering on-site flu vaccine clinics for all of your employees and contractors, especially those who handle poultry.**

Seasonal influenza vaccination benefits your workers: Each year, on average, 5 to 20 percent of the U.S. population gets the flu, resulting in tens of thousands of hospitalizations, thousands of deaths, annual medical costs of \$10.4 billion, and additional annual lost earnings and costs of \$16.3 billion.<sup>1</sup> Vaccination can result in 18%–45% fewer lost workdays and 18%–28% fewer days working with reduced effectiveness.<sup>2</sup> **By preventing flu, employers can help protect employees' health and reduce losses in productivity and revenue.**

Reduce the risk of dual infection with seasonal influenza and avian influenza: In 2022, avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 has been found in wild birds and backyard and commercial flocks across the United States, including in California. Two human cases of this strain of avian influenza A (H5N1) have been identified. Consistent with longstanding best practices, poultry workers are highly encouraged to receive the seasonal influenza vaccine each fall to reduce the possibility of dual infection with seasonal influenza and avian influenza at the same time<sup>3,4</sup>. Dual infection could result in the formation and spread of hazardous new influenza viruses. Seasonal influenza vaccine does not directly protect against infection with avian influenza viruses but can prevent dual infection.

Consider offering worksite influenza clinics: [Hosting a flu shot clinic](#) can help your company to:

- Reduce employee absenteeism
- Reduce time away from the job to go to another location for the shot
- Enhance your relationship with your employees



Other options to prevent influenza include:

- Partnering with your health department, provider, or pharmacy to host community flu clinics
- Providing vouchers for staff to get vaccinated at a retail pharmacy or local clinic for free
- Supporting paid time off work for employees to receive flu vaccine
- Reminding workers of everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs:
  - Wash hands often with soap and water
  - Avoid contact with sick people
  - Stay home and away from others when they're sick

For more information about worksite influenza clinics or how to prevent influenza, please contact your [local health department](#). Thank you for protecting your business and staff from influenza this season.

Sincerely,



Barbara Materna, Ph.D., CIH, Chief  
Occupational Health Branch  
California Department of Public Health

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### Resources for planning a worksite flu clinic:

- [CDC "Make it your business to fight the flu" Toolkit](#)
- [CDC Promoting Vaccination in the Workplace](#)

### Information on protecting poultry workers during an outbreak of avian influenza:

- [CDC, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health \(NIOSH\), Alert: Protecting Poultry Workers from Avian Influenza \(Bird Flu\), May 2008](#)
- [Cal/OSHA Regulation, "Aerosol Transmissible Diseases – Zoonotic" 8CCR §5199.1](#)
- [CDC, Recommendations for Worker Protection and Use of Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) to Reduce Exposure to Novel Influenza A Viruses Associated with Severe Disease in Humans](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\), Prevention and Antiviral Treatment of Bird Flu Viruses in People](#)
- [United States Food and Drug Administration \(USDA\), Avian Influenza](#)

## References:

1. National Business Group on Health. Hospitals should require flu vaccination for all personnel to protect patients' health and their own health. National Business Group on Health's Position Statement on Influenza Vaccination of Hospital Personnel. October 18, 2011. [Position Statement on Influenza Vaccination \(kff.org\)](#)
2. Molinari NA, Ortega-Sanchez IR, Messonnier ML, Thompson WW, Wortley PM, Weintraub E, Bridges CB. The annual impact of seasonal influenza in the US: measuring disease burden and costs. *Vaccine* 2007; 25(27):5086–5096. [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17544181](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17544181)
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Bird Flu Virus Infections in Humans: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/avian-in-humans.htm>
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Transmission of Avian Influenza A Viruses Between Animals and People: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/virus-transmission.htm>