



**JONATHAN E. FIELDING, M.D., M.P.H.**  
Director and Health Officer

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October 15, 2010

Dear Doctors, Laboratory Directors, and other mandated reporters:

Effective October 15, 2010, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) will require reporting of influenza fatalities of all ages with laboratory confirmed influenza of any strain. Physicians, nurses, coroners and other healthcare providers who are legally mandated to report diseases to LACDPH are hereby ordered to report all influenza fatalities to Department of Public Health. Influenza fatalities are defined as persons who died as a direct or indirect consequence of infection with influenza. Laboratory confirmation includes rapid tests, culture, polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or other methods.

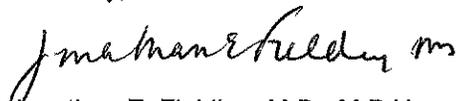
Effective October 15, 2010, LACDPH is adding all positive tests for influenza (rapid, culture, PCR, or other methods) to its list of laboratory reportable diseases. Laboratories that use electronic laboratory reporting to transmit information to Public Health are hereby ordered to report all positive influenza tests (except antibody tests) to the Department of Public Health.

This change in disease reporting is authorized by the Health Officer under the California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Section 2500. During the previous influenza season, extended surveillance and reporting for influenza, including influenza hospitalizations, Intensive Care Unit admissions, and fatalities, were necessary to improve our understanding of novel pandemic H1N1 (pH1N1) influenza infections. Now that pH1N1 is no longer considered an unusual disease and this virus strain has blended into standard seasonal influenza cycles, reporting for influenza can be streamlined. In addition to reporting deaths due to influenza to Department of Public Health, physicians are also encouraged to identify influenza on death certificates if a person died as a direct or indirect consequence of infection with influenza. Confirmed influenza fatalities should be reported within seven calendar days to LACDPH using the confidential morbidity report (CMR) available at <http://www.ph.lacounty.gov/acd/reports/CMR-H-794.pdf> or electronically via visual CMR. Severe influenza cases not leading to death, such as influenza hospitalizations and intensive care patients, are no longer reportable in Los Angeles County.

The information provided by this reporting will aid our understanding of shifts in circulating influenza virus strains and the effects influenza has on our communities. The information will improve our continued outreach and educational campaigns as well as proposed strategies for prevention and treatment. We greatly appreciate the assistance of our partners in our efforts to improve the health of the residents of our county.

For more information on our influenza surveillance projects and to view past surveillance summaries, please visit: [www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/FluSurveillance.htm](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/FluSurveillance.htm). For questions about influenza surveillance, please contact Elizabeth Bancroft, M.D., S.M. at (213) 240-7941.

Sincerely,

  
Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director and Health Officer

  
Laurene Mascola, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.A.P.  
Chief, Acute Communicable Disease Control Program

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c: Elizabeth Bancroft, M.D., S.M.    Mary Beth Duke, M.S., P.H.M.    Robert Kim-Farley, M.D., M.P.H