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EDWARD G. RENDELL, Governor

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GOVERNOR RENDELL ANNOUNCES PENNSYLVANIA'S FIRST CONFIRMED CASE OF 2009
A/H1N1 FLU Public Urged to Remain Calm; Take Commonsense Steps to Prevent Spreading Flu

NORRISTOWN - Governor Edward G. Rendell today announced Pennsylvania's first laboratory-confirmed case of 2009 A/H1N1 in a 31-year-old man from Montgomery County.

"Now that Pennsylvania has a confirmed case, it is even more important for the public to understand and follow the commonsense steps that can help prevent the spread of the flu," said Governor Rendell. "Our Department of Health is working closely with all state agencies and local health departments to mitigate the impact of this flu on our citizens and will continue to keep the public informed of any developments."

The Governor was joined by Secretary of Health Everette James and acting Physician General Dr. Stephen Ostroff at a news conference held at the Montgomery County Health Department in Norristown.

"We encourage Pennsylvanians to remain calm and take time to learn about the 2009 A/H1N1 virus, especially what you should do if you have symptoms," said Secretary James. "The commonwealth is taking every possible step to prepare for and prevent the spread of the virus, including readying and deploying the commonwealth's stockpile of anti-viral drugs that will be used for treating either probable or confirmed cases and those in close contact with those individuals. So far, most cases have been relatively mild and treatable with the anti-virals."

The Department of Health has intensified surveillance efforts statewide and will continue to monitor the situation closely. On Thursday, Pennsylvania received its portion of the national anti-viral strategic stockpile which is being safely stored along with the existing state stockpile.

The department is coordinating the state's pandemic planning activities and educating the public and health care providers on the 2009 A/H1N1 virus. The department's Web site, www.health.state.pa.us, is continually being updated with all available federal and state information and recommendations.

Information is being provided directly to all of the state's health care providers, clinicians and hospitals regarding this strain of flu, including how to quickly report possible cases and how to submit samples for testing. Specific guidance for schools, daycare providers and migrant workers is available through the department's Web site. Anyone with questions about

2009 A/H1N1 or health concerns is encouraged to call the Department of Health directly at 1-877-PA-HEALTH.

Type A/H1N1 influenza is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza viruses. Outbreaks of such flu happen regularly in pigs. Before the current outbreak, people rarely got sick unless they were in very close proximity to infected pigs. However, during the current outbreak, the virus is able to spread from person-to-person.

Symptoms of A/H1N1 flu in people are similar to those of regular or seasonal flu and include fever, lethargy, lack of appetite and coughing. Some with this type of flu also have reported runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Although winter is over, there is still a low level of seasonal influenza occurring in Pennsylvania.

There is no vaccine available at this time. It is important for people to take the following steps to prevent spreading the virus to others:

- * Stay home when you are sick to avoid infecting 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.

For more information, visit www.health.state.pa.us or call 1-877-PA-HEALTH.