

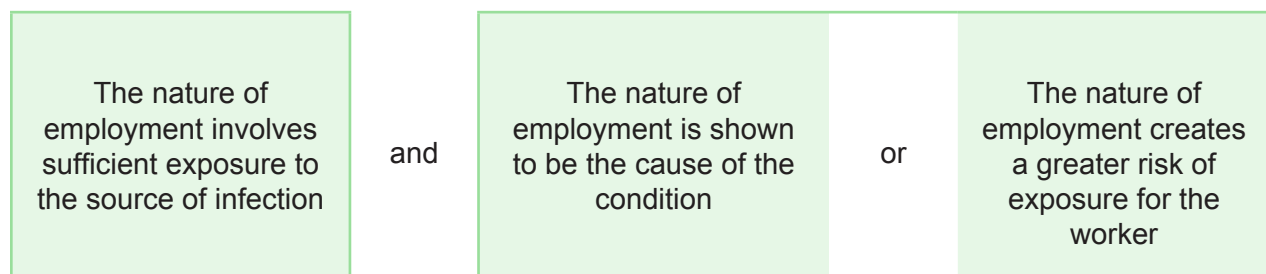
H1N1

The H1N1 Influenza has raised many questions about coverage, reporting responsibilities and process. The following information will help you determine your responsibility as an employer during this pandemic flu.

Most instances of H1N1 Influenza are not work-related and should not be reported to WCB-Alberta. However, there are a few exceptions.

When H1N1 may be considered work-related

When a worker contracts H1N1 Influenza as a direct result of employment, the worker is entitled to compensation if the following conditions are met:



Work-related example

Acute care hospital worker	Worker has patients coming in for treatment of H1N1. Thus, they are at a greater risk than the general public of contracting the disease.
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Non work-related example

A cafeteria worker at a hospital	Job is not directly related to looking after sick people even if workers sometimes come in contact with them.
Grocery store clerk	Job puts workers in contact with many people but not specifically with sick people.

Reference: Policy 03-01: Part II – Occupational Disease

In every case, WCB-Alberta will adjudicate work-relatedness and benefit entitlement based on the specific and unique circumstances of each case.

Q&A

When do I report a case of H1N1 to WCB-Alberta?

If it meets the specific criteria. Like in the examples provided, if your staff is at greater risk at work than the general public and also lose time from work, then a claim needs to be reported to WCB-Alberta.

However, if your staff is NOT at greater risk of infection than the general public, do not report. Examples of this include; people who believe they caught the H1N1 Influenza from a coworker or client.

Do I report cases where one staff member caught H1N1 Influenza from another?

No. Influenza and particularly a pandemic influenza like H1N1 can be caught through many different contacts in the community, home or work.

If I am an employer in the acute health care field or if I believe my staff is at greater “risk of exposure” at work than the general public, do I need to report all exposures?

No, only time loss claims for H1N1 must be reported to WCB-Alberta. If workers were exposed but develop no symptoms, the incident must be recorded in your records but not reported to WCB.

Do I report cases where my worker had H1N1 influenza but the problem is related to its treatment?

Yes, if the H1N1 Influenza would have been considered work-related due to greater work risk, the treatment complications are also considered work-related.

If I am an employer whose staff is at greater “risk of exposure” at work than the general public and decide to send them home because there is a high risk of exposure, do I need to report to WCB?

No, only time loss claims for H1N1 must be reported to WCB-Alberta. If there is no illness, there is no claim.

Will WCB accept H1N1 claims where there are symptoms but no medical reporting to confirm an actual diagnosis of H1N1?

Yes, if it meets the specific criteria. Because there are so many cases of possible H1N1 most doctors will not see patients for symptoms, unless they are severe.

It is recommended that the worker remain home until the symptoms have resolved, normally five to seven days. If their symptoms persist or become worse, the worker should seek medical treatment and have that reporting forwarded to WCB.

What happens when an H1N1 claim is submitted?

Like any other claim, WCB-Alberta will determine if the exposure to the disease arose out of employment and was caused by an employment hazard (in this case, workplace exposure to the virus). We have a team of people who specialize in the adjudication of infectious disease claims and can appropriately apply policy and legislation. If the illness meets the conditions for coverage, WCB will cover medical aid costs and any time lost because of the condition.

Where can employers find information online on infectious disease claims?

More information is available online at www.wcb.ab.ca go to Employers > Employer fact sheets
http://www.wcb.ab.ca/employers/employers_facts.asp