

## Bird Flu Fast Facts for Workers

Bird flu is a disease that infects birds, cows, and other animals. It can also spread to people who work with animals, such as at poultry farms or dairy farms.

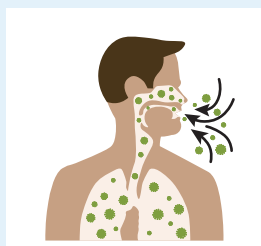
Some symptoms in humans include:

- Pink eye (conjunctivitis).
- Fever.
- Fatigue.
- Muscle aches.
- Stuffy or runny nose.

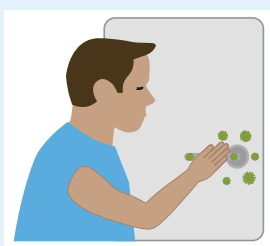


### How does bird flu spread?

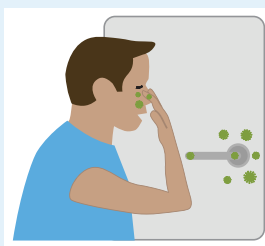
Workers can become infected when they:



Breathe in tiny particles containing the virus.



Touch a surface contaminated with the virus, then touch their eyes, nose, or mouth.



Are splashed in the face with even small amounts of liquid containing the virus.

### How can workers be protected?

Workers should:

- Wash hands often.
- Keep down dust and reduce milk splashes.
- Report any symptoms to your employer and **local health department**, and go for medical check-ups.
- Follow the employer's safety procedures.
- Use PPE properly.
- Shower when leaving restricted areas.



respiratory protection



coveralls



apron



head covering



eye protection



gloves



shoe covers

(continued on next page)

## You Have Rights!

You have the right to a safe and healthy workplace, regardless of immigration status, and may file confidential complaints about workplace safety and health hazards with Cal/OSHA.

For work-related questions or complaints, contact the Cal/OSHA Call Center in English or Spanish at 833-579-0927.

### Workers' Compensation

Employers must provide workers' compensation benefits for workers that get bird flu on the job.

Employees exposed to animals on the job can likely prove that their illness is from work, unless they were exposed to bird flu away from work.

Workers' Compensation benefits:

- **Medical Care** – employer pays all reasonable and necessary testing and treatment.
- **Temporary Disability Benefits** – employer pays portion of lost wages if employees misses three or more days of work because of the illness.
- **Permanent Disability Benefits** – if illness causes permanent impairment.

### Paid Sick Leave

Employers are required to provide employees paid sick leave.

Employers must allow employees to use up to 40 hours or 5 days, whichever is more, of earned paid sick leave in a 12-month period.

To qualify, employees must have:

- Worked at least 30 days for the same employer in a year.

An employee is entitled to use what they have earned on the 90th day of employment, although an employer can lend paid sick leave in advance of accrual.

## Retaliation is Illegal

All workers in California are protected by labor laws, including retaliation protections, regardless of immigration status. It is illegal for employers to fire, reduce the pay or work hours, or otherwise punish workers for following California laws or threaten to report a worker to immigration authorities for following California laws.

Some of the many activities that are protected from retaliation under California law include speaking up about unsafe conditions or unpaid wages, refusing to work in unsafe conditions, or reporting an unsafe workplace or labor violation.

Employers who commit retaliation may be required to reinstate the employee, pay back wages and pay penalties.

Workers who believe they have experienced retaliation can get more information at [www.wagetheftisacrime.com](http://www.wagetheftisacrime.com), file a retaliation complaint online at [www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/dlseRetaliation.html](http://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/dlseRetaliation.html), or call the Labor Commissioner's Office at 1-833-526-4636.

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For more information, go to Cal/OSHA's Avian Influenza webpage: [www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/avian-flu](http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/avian-flu)  
This document is available with active links at [www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh\\_publications](http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh_publications)

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