



Gloucester County Department of Health

204 East Holly Avenue

Sewell, NJ 08080

(856) 218-4101 or visit www.gloucestercountynj.gov

Date: February 17, 2026

Avian Influenza H5N1 - “Bird Flu”

Gloucester County is aware of multiple presumed cases of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) in Canadian Geese centered near Alcyon Lake in the Borough of Pitman and similar cases reported in other locations within Gloucester County.

These presumed cases indicate that the virus is actively circulating in wildlife or domesticated birds, leading to increased monitoring and preventive actions to control the spread. Public awareness and precautionary measures are essential to mitigate the impact of Bird Flu for both agriculture and public health.

While Bird Flu is primarily an avian virus, the potential for human infection underscores the need for continuous surveillance and quick response. Gloucester County urges the public to remain informed and follow health guidelines as we navigate this situation.

While the current public health risk for the general public remains low, people who work with birds, poultry or cows, or have recreational exposure to them, are at higher risk. The best way to protect yourself and your family from Bird Flu is to avoid sources of exposure. That means avoiding direct contact with wild birds or other animals infected with or suspected to be infected with bird flu viruses.

Signs of Bird Flu infection in humans may include:

- fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, and, in severe cases, respiratory distress.

Protecting yourself and others from Bird Flu infection

- **Do not touch sick or dead animals or their droppings and do not bring sick wild animals into your home**
- Keep your pets away from sick or dead animals and their feces.
- Wash your hands frequently
- Do not eat uncooked or undercooked eggs, poultry, or beef
- Cook poultry, eggs, and other animal products to the proper temperature
- Prevent cross-contamination between raw and cooked food
- Avoid uncooked food products such as unpasteurized raw milk or cheeses

The County of Gloucester complies with all state and federal rules and regulations against discrimination in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, and activities. In addition, County encourages participation of people with disabilities in its programs and activities and offers special services to all residents 60 years of age and older. Inquiries regarding compliance may be directed to the County's ADA Coordinator at (856) 384-6842/ New Jersey Relay Service 711



- Talk to your provider about getting your seasonal flu vaccination. It will not prevent infection with avian influenza viruses, but it can reduce the risk of severe illness from influenza viruses
- If you have a birdfeeder keep it in an area of your yard that you do not frequent to prevent stepping in bird dropping and bringing them into your house on the soles of your shoes
- Do not feed your cat or dog a raw diet
- Report dead or sick domestic birds or animals to your veterinarian and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, Division of Animal Health 609-671-6400 or state.veterinarian@ag.nj.gov
- **Report dead or sick wild birds to:**
 - **Gloucester County Animal Control at (856) 881-2828**
 - **NJ Department of Environmental Protection Division of Fish and Wildlife via hotline 1-877-WARN-DEP (1-877-927-6337)**
- If you have been exposed to sick or dead birds or other animals or work on a farm where avian influenza has been detected, watch for respiratory symptoms or conjunctivitis for 10 days
- If you develop symptoms within 10 days after exposure to sick or dead animals
 - Tell your healthcare provider that you have been in contact with sick animals and are concerned about avian influenza
 - This will help them give you appropriate advice on testing and treatment
 - Stay home and away from others while you have symptoms

In response to the presumed case, the following actions are being implemented:

- Educate the community on Bird Flu, its symptoms, and preventive measures
- Collaboration with Agriculture and Wildlife Agencies: Working with local agricultural and wildlife authorities to assess risks to domestic birds and wildlife
- Surveillance and Monitoring: Increased monitoring of wild birds, domestic birds, and humans, to swiftly identify any additional cases

Together, we can ensure the well-being of our community through awareness and preparedness.

Residents who have questions or concerns can visit the following resources:

<https://gloucestercountynj.gov/DocumentCenter/View/17492/H5N1-resources-FAQ-2026?bidId=>

https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/novel_flu.shtml

<https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/ah/livestockhealth/h5n1.shtml>

Gloucester County Health Department - Nursing Division (856) 218-4102.

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