


DATE: February 4, 2008  
TO: Exclusive Representatives  
FROM: Patricia Anderson   
Commissioner  
RE: Pandemic Influenza Preparedness System Test

As you know, state agencies and key partners have been preparing for the potential risks associated with a pandemic influenza. Service continuity preparedness efforts are being undertaken at all levels of government in the event that a highly virulent strain of influenza impacts the United States, resulting in significant reduction and loss of governmental personnel as well as lowered delivery performance by vendors for extended periods of time.

Last April, several state agencies participated in a functional service interruption exercise. This exercise was designed to test internal agency plans. One of the gaps evident in this exercise was the degree to which agencies have identified telecommuting as an option to promote social distancing and ensure the continuation of critical priority services, without having tested their telecommuting capacity to see if their plan is available.

Therefore, in consideration of our planning efforts, on February 13, 2008, between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., the Office of Enterprise Technology will be conducting an exercise to test the capacity of the private internet service providers and the ability of the State's network system to manage the influx of state employees who have the technical capacity to log into the State's computer system. The purpose of this test will be to identify any weaknesses or unknown impacts our system will have with the maximum number of employees logging in at the same time.

We are considering this test to be strictly voluntary and not a work requirement, however, agencies have been instructed that employees who volunteer for this exercise be afforded the one hour to adjust their work schedule for either February 13, 2008 or for a date agreed upon in the future, with supervisory approval.

While we all hope that the pandemic or other emergency of this proportion does not occur, we all agree that preparation is key in the success of the continuation of our services.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Deputy Commissioner Paul Larson.

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