



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
Washington, D.C. 20240

May 4, 2009

Memorandum

To: Solicitor
Inspector General
Bureau and Office Heads
Attn: Bureau and Office Emergency Coordinators

From: Director, Office of Emergency Management
/s/ Laurence I. Broun

Subject: 2009 H1N1 Flu – Memorandum #1

In his letter to all employees on April 28, Secretary Salazar directed activation of the Department's emergency preparedness organization to respond to the 2009 H1N1 Flu event. The DOI Emergency Management Council, which consists of emergency planners from bureaus and offices, has convened daily to share the latest interagency guidance and formulate the Department's organizational response for H1N1. This will be the first of a series of memoranda to update the status of emergency preparedness and response.

The Department of the Interior has a comprehensive plan for response to pandemic influenza, which was published in November 2007, and has been supplemented by each bureau. This plan provides a solid baseline for our response activities during this event. However, the sequence of events for the 2009 H1N1 Flu has not unfolded as envisioned under the planning scenario provided in 2007 by the Homeland Security Council for preparation of Department and Agency plans. Because of this, questions have arisen as to when various features of the plan should be triggered. The following interim guidance is provided to assist bureaus and offices in initiating key pandemic planning actions:

- At the Departmental level, the Interior Operations Center is now activated to Level 3 (Enhanced Activation). Bureaus and Offices should be reporting preparedness and response activities daily for publication in the Emergency Management Daily Situation Report. The Emergency Management Council will meet daily to provide situational awareness for Bureau and Office Emergency Coordinators and to coordinate preparedness and response activities.
- To assure all DOI employees can locate current health guidance and other important information, links to Centers for Disease Control (CDC) health recommendations and key documents are being posted on <http://www.doi.gov/emergency/swineflu>.

- It is a paramount concern that all messaging from the Federal government be consistent with guidance from the CDC. The Office of Communications and Office of Emergency Management can assist in providing interagency clearance for material with original content through the Joint Information Center (public information) and through the Homeland Security Council's Biosecurity Interagency Policy Sub-Committee (technical guidance), respectively. Materials that set forth existing interagency guidance do not require such clearance.
- Bureaus and offices should now be initiating a heightened level of employee awareness and prevention programs, in accordance with Appendix F of the DOI Pandemic Influenza Plan. The Office of Occupational Health and Safety will provide technical expertise and additional guidance as may become available from the Centers for Disease Control.
- Acquisition should be underway to ensure that supplies are available to promote hand hygiene and infection control in the workplace, including disinfectant soap and/or hand sanitizers and supplies to disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Using the "Worksheet for Calculating Stockpiling Needs for Pandemic Influenza," which is attached, Bureau and Office Emergency Coordinators have quantified requirements for supplies required to implement mitigation strategies, including personal protective equipment and antiviral medication to protect employees in high risk occupational settings and selected medium risk settings. Action should be initiated to ensure there are adequate resources and stockpiles of materials to protect employees during initial response activities.
- Bureaus and offices should promote action to implement telework agreements and to ensure readiness of systems for increased telework activity. Further guidance from the Office of Personnel Management is expected shortly on this and other Federal employee issues.

The 2009 H1N1 Flu is a rapidly developing event. As medical officials learn more about the characteristics of this flu, we should be prepared to adjust plans in accordance with enhanced guidance.

cc: Assistant Secretaries
Deputy Secretary
Chief of Staff