

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Plan is to reduce morbidity and mortality, provide continuity of operations and position the state for recovery if attacked by a novel influenza virus that causes large numbers of illnesses and deaths throughout New Jersey.

2.0 Authority

Development of this Plan is the responsibility of the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, activation of this Plan is by the Governor of the State of New Jersey or his designated authority, and enactment of this Plan is through the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (OEM). NJDHSS is the Lead Agency for the Plan.

3.0 Situation

According to world and federal health officials, there exists an increased risk of a global influenza pandemic. This infectious disease is capable of claiming thousands of lives and adversely affecting critical infrastructure and key resources. Of major significance is the pandemic's ability to reduce the health, safety, and welfare of the essential services workforce; immobilize core infrastructure; and induce fiscal instability.

All infrastructure and commercial sectors are susceptible to the effects of an influenza pandemic and all may experience the resulting severe disruption and impediments to the continuity of civil services and commercial operations. The dependence of sectors on each other may add to the disease a force multiplying effect as all sectors experience pandemic consequences nearly simultaneously and lose the ability to provide mutual support. Without an immediate and effective response to a pandemic, a critical health-focused situation may lead to a temporary collapse of government, business and society.

Long term results can be considerable. New Jersey must be prepared to respond aggressively and immediately to a pandemic threat as any unchecked pandemic might result in disruption of local and state infrastructures. The effect of a pandemic on the private sector, which provides the majority of critical infrastructure, is potentially significant.

Although prominent in news and discussion, the current national readiness for an influenza pandemic is insufficient. Only sustained planning, training and exercise of contingency operations across public, private and volunteer sectors will help to reduce the potential of a catastrophic pandemic disaster.

4.0 Strategy

This plan provides New Jersey with the framework for governmental and private response to an infectious disease capable of claiming thousands of lives and affecting critical infrastructure. The plan provides governmental and commercial entities a common understanding of the conditions, expectations, responsibilities and activities of organizations responsible for the survival of the state's residents and infrastructure should a pandemic occur.

The Plan is based on health and supporting agency responses to a pandemic as defined by the World Health Organization phases and federal pandemic influenza stages and further defined by