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DIRECTIVE BY THE GOVERNOR
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TO: Washington State Agencies
FROM: Christine O. Gregoire, Governor
SUBJECT: Pandemic Flu Preparation

Keeping the people of Washington safe and healthy is one of my priorities. I'm sure, like me, you've seen stories in the news almost daily about the threat of an influenza pandemic. We must make sure state agencies have plans in place and are ready to provide vital services during an outbreak. I want you to know what is being done to prepare and what my expectations are of state agencies.

- I have asked Secretary of Health Mary Selecky and the Department of Health to take the lead in developing pandemic flu health and medical response plans. The department will work closely with other state and local agencies to assist them as they develop plans to deal with the many personal and professional challenges a pandemic would bring.
- I have directed the Department of Health to develop pandemic influenza guidelines and distribute them to all state agencies by August 1, 2007. Additionally, the department will help other state agencies identify their role in responding to a pandemic and develop procedures to ensure a coordinated state response.
- I am directing the Washington State Military Department and the Department of Information Services (DIS) to distribute continuity of operation planning guidelines to state agencies by August 1, 2007. I am asking each executive cabinet agency to use these guidelines to update or complete a plan to provide services to the public during a pandemic. This continuity of operation plan should be finished no later than December 15, 2007.

- A pandemic will present many unique human resource challenges. I am asking the state Department of Personnel and the Office of Financial Management Labor Relations Office to work together to provide guidance to state agencies on human resource management by September 1, 2007. The information will address leave policies, telecommuting, alternate work arrangements, protecting employee health and safety, and hiring policies during a declared pandemic emergency.

It will take all of us—government, business, and the public—to prepare for pandemic influenza. It is vital we do our part by mapping out a strategy now to assure people have access to important state services during a pandemic or other major emergency.