

ANNEX N

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

I. Purpose

The purpose of the City of Lovington Pandemic Influenza Annex is to define the non-medical issues and challenges associated with an influenza pandemic and to provide a planning guide so that the City of Lovington can continue to provide essential services in the event of an influenza pandemic.

Although the threat of an influenza pandemic is the primary catalyst for development of this Annex, the City of Lovington may undertake some or all of the measures outlined herein to provide an effective response to any contagious pathogen that achieves pandemic proportions.

The goal of this Annex is to minimize the loss of life, economic and societal disruption, and impact on the provision of essential City services in the event of an influenza pandemic or any contagious biological event.

The Annex begins with background on pandemic influenza and the potential impact an influenza outbreak of pandemic proportions could have on the City of Lovington. Next, the Annex specifies the authorities various state and local officials have with respect to protecting public health and safety. This information is critical to understanding how an influenza pandemic emergency is declared and who has responsibility for activating various emergency plans. Finally, the Annex describes the specific plans of the City, including goals and assumptions, concept of operations, and organization in terms of assignment of responsibilities. The essential services that must be maintained are identified, along with logistical planning, financial management, and reporting requirements that shall be activated in the event of an influenza pandemic. Specific guidance for implementing the Annex is also included.

II. Background

Local emergency preparedness plans at the City of Lovington have traditionally focused on response to natural disasters such as tornados, wildland fire, and HazMat. Yet historically, the most significant threat to the world's populations has not been natural disasters, nor war, but disease.

Pandemic influenza is at this time the most significant disease threat we face. Unlike Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, or SARS, which first struck between November 2002 and July 2003, where transmission was primarily confined to hospitals and close household contacts, pandemic flu will spread quickly through a community and across the world. This acute viral illness has an incubation period of one to three days with a period of communicability of up to 24 hours prior to the onset of symptoms to seven days after symptoms develop.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza type A of subtype H5N1 (commonly known as bird flu) is the strain of influenza virus of greatest concern today. While not easily transmitted to humans at this time, the disease has demonstrated that it can be fatal to those who contract it with mortality at approximately 60 percent.

Because influenza pandemics are recurring events, it is not a question of whether there will be another pandemic; it is only a question of when the next one will occur and how severe it will be. The last two influenza pandemics were comparatively mild, but the pandemic of 1918 killed 40,000,000 people worldwide, including more than 500,000 in the United States.

In many respects, we are more vulnerable to an influenza pandemic today than we were in 1918. We travel internationally more and we come in contact with far more people on a daily basis than people in 1918 did. In addition, our population includes more elderly and immune-compromised people (HIV/AIDS, chemotherapy patients, etc.) than it did in the past. Our ability to respond effectively to a pandemic is also compromised. There is very little surge capacity in our health care system today; “just-in-time” ordering of needed supplies has replaced warehousing critical items onsite for most businesses and governmental organizations; and, unlike citizens in 1918, we are not accustomed to following government restrictions, including the rationing of goods and services.

Potential Impact of a Pandemic on the City

An influenza pandemic today could have far-reaching negative consequences for the health and well-being of Lovington residents and for the economic and social stability of Lovington and Lea County.

For example, pandemic influenza has the potential to infect 30 percent or more of the population, with an average of 20 percent of the workforce unable to work for an extended period of time. In an affected community, a pandemic outbreak could last from six to eight weeks.

Multiple waves (periods during which community outbreaks occur across the country) of illness might also occur, with each wave lasting two to three months. Historically, the largest waves have occurred in the fall and winter, but the seasonality of a pandemic cannot be predicted with certainty.

Increased absenteeism among all workers and a requirement to implement social distancing to help delay the spread of a pandemic could place a severe strain on all City services, particularly public safety and health-based services. Alternative methods of operations may be required.

Effective planning and preparation, however, can minimize the negative impacts of an influenza pandemic, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Figure 1** illustrates how planning can delay disease transmission and diminish overall health impacts.

The Pandemic Wave

1. Delay disease transmission and outbreak peak
2. Decompress peak burden on infrastructure
3. Diminish overall cases and health impacts

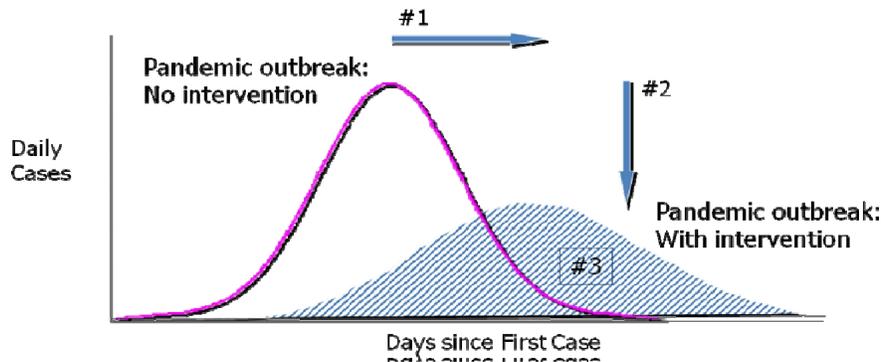


Figure 1: Preparation Reduces Impact of Pandemic

III. Authorities

Developing an influenza pandemic plan at the City level is complicated by the fact that various New Mexico state and local public officials have overlapping authorities with regard to protecting public health and safety. The Mayor of Lovington, Governor, New Mexico Department of Health, and Lea County each can issue directives aimed at protecting public health, including increasing social distancing by closing public or private facilities as required to control the spread of the disease.

Following is a description of the relevant authorities of the officials who have a role in protecting public health and safety:

- a. **Governor of New Mexico:** The Governor has authority to proclaim a state of emergency after finding that a disaster affects life, health, property, or the public peace. The Governor may assume direct operational control over all or part of local emergency management functions if the disaster is beyond local control. After proclaiming a state of emergency, the Governor has the authority to restrict public assembly, order periods of curfew, and prohibit activities that he or she believes should be prohibited in order to maintain life and health.
- b. **New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH):** The New Mexico Department of Health has authority to adopt rules to protect the public health, including rules for the imposition and use of isolation and quarantine and for the prevention and control of infectious diseases. Local boards of health, health officials, law enforcement officials, and all other officers of the State or any county, city, or town shall enforce all rules that are adopted by the New Mexico Department of Health.

- c. **Mayor of Lovington:** The Mayor of Lovington may proclaim a state of civil emergency within the City when, in the judgment of the Mayor, extraordinary measures are necessary to protect public peace, safety and welfare. Under a state of civil emergency, the Mayor may impose curfews, close any or all business establishments, close any or all public buildings and places including streets, alleys, schools, parks, beaches and amusement areas, direct the use of all public and private health, medical and convalescent facilities and equipment to provide emergency health and medical care for injured persons, and proclaim any such orders as are imminently necessary for the protection of life and property.

Because these authorities sometimes overlap, there must be close communication and coordination between elected leaders and the Local Health Officer to ensure decisions and response actions are clear and consistent. This Annex clarifies the various thresholds for release of public information and internal guidance around an influenza pandemic. Other sections of this Annex specify as appropriate when City officials must act in coordination with State and local officials to activate or execute on any part of this plan.

IV. Plan Overview

The City of Lovington has employed a two-pronged approach to its influenza pandemic planning effort. We have identified the specific activities that must be undertaken by the NMDOH and the public health community at a countywide level to prepare for and respond to the medical aspects of a pandemic. The details of that interagency plan are specified in the document titled "Pandemic Influenza Response Plan – Public Health Lovington & Lea County."

Emergency Management, through this planning process, has identified the specific activities that must be undertaken by City departments and agencies to maintain essential services during a pandemic and to address the non-medical aspects of the pandemic emergency from preparation through to recovery.

Departmental plans address business continuity, and include lines of succession for key management and leadership positions, resource management and requirements for emergency response, equipment needs, and training. Plan information included in this Annex is based on these plans, which are included in this Annex.

a. Plan Activation and Goals

A worldwide influenza pandemic is different from other natural disasters in that it develops over time and over a potentially distant geographic area, and the disease development pattern is tracked by international, national, state, and local health authorities. For this reason, the City of Lovington will not on its own designate a pandemic emergency. Rather, the United States Department of

Health and Human Services shall use the Pandemic Alert Levels identified by the World Health Organization (WHO) to determine the extent of disease spread throughout the country. When appropriate, NMDOH shall announce a public health emergency for influenza based on the designated criteria within its Pandemic Influenza Response Plan. At this point, the Mayor of the City of Lovington, working with OEM, shall proclaim an emergency, activate the City's Emergency Operations Center and department operations centers if necessary, and begin implementation of the Response and eventually Recovery components of this Annex.

The Pandemic Alert Levels that serve as a catalyst for this process are specified in WHO's global influenza preparedness plan. The WHO plan defines six phases of increasing public health risk associated with the emergence and spread of a new influenza virus subtype. It also specifies for each phase the response measures WHO will take and the recommended actions that countries around the world should take. The Director General of WHO formally declares the current global pandemic phase and adjusts the phase level to correspond with pandemic conditions around the world.

The City of Lovington has strategically correlated its planning goals and response activities with the six phases identified in WHO's global influenza preparedness plan. **Table 1** provides a summary of those six phases, along with the public health goals and City of Lovington goals that correspond to each phase.

Table 1: Phases of a Pandemic

Pandemic Phases	Public Health Goals	City Response
<p>Inter-Pandemic Period</p> <p>Phase 1 – No new influenza virus subtypes detected in humans. An influenza virus subtype that has caused human infection may be present in animals. If present in animals, the risk of human infection or disease is considered low.</p> <p>Phase 2 – No new influenza virus subtypes detected in humans. However, a circulating animal influenza virus subtype poses substantial risk of human disease.</p>	<p>Strengthen pandemic influenza preparedness at all levels. Closely monitor human and animal surveillance data.</p> <p>Minimize the risk of transmission of animal influenza virus to humans; detect and report such transmission if it occurs.</p>	<p>During Pandemic Phases 1, 2, and 3, when Lovington is not directly affected, the City OEM and departments shall maintain normal operations.</p>
<p>Pandemic Alert Period</p> <p>Phase 3 – Human infection(s) are occurring with a new subtype, but no human-to-human spread, or at most rare instances of spread to a close contact.</p> <p>Phase 4 – Small cluster(s) of human infection is highly localized suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans.</p> <p>Phase 5 – Larger cluster(s) of human infection but human-to-human spread is localized, suggesting that the virus is becoming increasingly better adapted to humans, but may not yet be fully transmissible (substantial pandemic risk)</p>	<p>Ensure rapid characterization of the new virus subtype and early detection, notification, and response to additional cases.</p> <p>Contain the new virus within limited foci or delay spread to gain time to implement preparedness measures, including vaccine development.</p> <p>Maximize efforts to contain or delay spread to possibly avert a pandemic, and to gain time to implement response measures.</p>	<p>Lovington OEM with regional partners shall assess, evaluate, and update their plans as needed.</p> <p>Assess whether to activate the sections of the Pandemic Influenza Plan. The EOC shall activate at an increased readiness level.</p> <p>Based on guidance from the NMDOH, the City shall activate department plans for maintaining essential City services. The EOC shall activate to the Inter-Department Coordination and Increased Readiness Level.</p>

Pandemic Phases	Public Health Goals	City Response
<p>Pandemic Period</p> <p>Phase 6 – Pandemic is declared. Increased and sustained transmission in the general population.</p>	<p>Implement response measures, including social distancing to minimize pandemic impacts.</p>	<p>The City OEM, directed by the Mayor, shall activate all parts of the Pandemic Influenza Annex. Lovington EOC shall activate to the EOC Major Activation level.</p>

b. This Annex is built on the following assumptions:

An influenza pandemic demands a different set of continuity assumptions from previous emergency planning because it will be widely dispersed geographically, is likely to spread fairly quickly, and typically occurs in two to three waves. Such pandemic waves could last from six to 12 weeks at a time over a three month to 18 month period. The second wave may occur several months after the first and the level of illness is often more severe than in the first wave.

Because an influenza pandemic is likely to be a global event, mutual aid and federal assistance should not be assumed when a pandemic occurs.

The Mayor of Lovington, shall proclaim a state of emergency when warranted based on the latest guidance from the World Health Organization, the U.S. government, and NMDOH health officials. The City shall also coordinate the release of this information based on the expert guidance of providers and infection control experts at Nor Lea Hospital along with the administration of the Lovington Municipal Schools.

During an influenza pandemic, up to 40 percent of the work force could be absent for an extended period of time (weeks or months depending on family circumstances).

Through its planning process, the City of Lovington will develop an enterprise level prioritized list of essential services.

Social distancing, frequent hand washing, work surface cleaning, and additional public education will be the primary actions taken by the City within the government and recommended to all residents of Lovington to help slow the spread of pandemic influenza.

The City of Lovington will implement alternative work arrangements (e.g. telecommuting) to ensure that strategies to keep the influenza from spreading among employees are successful.

City systems such as telephones, e-mail, and other applications that support essential City services will remain functional during the pandemic emergency.

Many City buildings may have to be closed during parts of the pandemic.

As supply chains are affected, the City will likely have to ration or reallocate its limited resources of fuel, other supplies, and materials to ensure that essential services are sustained. It is essential that departments maintain security and control of their supply.

The impact of widespread illness and the social distancing imposed to mitigate it may have a severe impact on the City's revenues as businesses curtail their hours or close and construction activity declines.

Vaccines and anti-viral drugs will be in extremely limited supply and provided on a public health specifically defined basis, with first responders in the high priority group.

Low income, immigrant, the elderly, and medically fragile populations will be impacted especially hard by the disease itself and by the disruption of the social services on which these groups depend.

Long-term recovery from a severe pandemic will likely span many months or years. The psychosocial and economic consequences may also be long lasting.

The health planning assumptions included this Annex are based on the most current information available from international, federal, State, and local health agencies at the time of publication. The operational planning assumptions are taken from written material developed by individual departments and agencies, as well as from discussions with the City administration and commission.

V. Concept of Operations

The Lovington All Hazard Plan, provides the essential framework for the City's concept of operations for a general emergency and is applicable in the event of an influenza pandemic. The City of Lovington Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be the focal point of the City's non-medical response and recovery to a flu pandemic emergency.

When activated for a pandemic, the Lovington EOC shall include selected representatives of Lovington departments (those providing essential City services and those aiding logistical support), and selected infrastructure owners and private sector representatives.

Activation of the Lovington EOC for an influenza pandemic requires the use of non-traditional procedures in comparison with other disasters. Per the direction of NMDOH, personal protective measures shall be implemented, including social distancing, the use of telecommuting, and enhanced communications systems (video conferencing, computer, fax, conference calls, etc.) to reduce the risk of infection to Lovington EOC representatives and staff.

Prior to and during a pandemic, the Lovington EOC shall be responsible for supporting response with selected logistics, assistance in public information and education, and the acquisition of information on the status of essential City services, critical infrastructure, and selected businesses. Normal reporting systems shall be used, and a specific influenza pandemic operational status report shall allow agencies to report their operational status based on the impacts of the pandemic. Agencies may also be required to report the number of employees absent on a daily basis to assist in reallocation of resources to support essential services.

The sections that follow describe the organizational structure that will be activated in the event of an influenza pandemic, including who has authority to direct and control implementation of this plan, how City of Lovington processes will be organized during the pandemic, and how responsibilities for critical activities will be allocated between the City agencies and NMDOH.

A. Organizational Structure

- a. The National Incident Management System will be implemented. The City executive team shall fulfill the functions of Incident Commander, Public Information Officer, Liaison, and Safety. Department heads will be assigned the various section chief roles (Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Admin). The level of the incident command system implemented will be based upon the decision of the City Manager, in conjunction with consultations with local health officials and the City Commission.

B. Plan Implementation

- a. The City Manager will have the authority to direct and control implementation of this plan. The decision to implement will be based upon consultation with department heads, local health officials, and NMDOH.

C. Communications

- a. Internal communications – Staff will obtain information through the City’s official email’s, memos, and alerts through the City mass text applications per the City Communications Plan.

- b. External communications – All release of information to the public will be authorized by City Management and the Incident Commander. The designated Public Information Officer will be the point of contact for all media inquiries and the release of official statements.
- c. It is desirable to coordinate the release of information to the public that is consistent with other organizations within the City (Nor Lea Hospital, Lovington Schools, Lea County). The purpose for the release is to generate a consistent message and reduce the likelihood of conflicting statements or opinions.

D. Infection control

a. Hygiene

- i. City internal and external communications will stress the importance of the use of universal precautions as well as any official recommendations received from local health officials, NMDOH, and CDC.
- ii. Signage at City facilities will be placed in multiple public locations that emphasize frequent handwashing as well as proper techniques.
- iii. Staff will monitor stocks of sanitation supplies and ensure areas in which heavy human traffic is present have a sufficient supply and remain secure. City facilities where the public interacts with City staff on a regular basis or have a potential for gatherings will have priority. Priority facilities identified are the following:
 - 1. City Hall
 - 2. Bill McKibben Senior Citizens Center
 - 3. Lovington Public Library
 - 4. Lovington Motor Vehicle Department
 - 5. Lovington Museum (Commercial Hotel)
 - 6. Troy Harris Center
 - 7. Youth Center

b. Personal Protective Equipment

- i. It is assumed early on during a pandemic that shortages of PPE will occur.
- ii. Public safety departments will ensure at all times they have sufficient amounts of PPE to conduct their essential functions.
- iii. Non-public safety departments will follow universal precautions as recommended by Nor Lea Hospital and the CDC. Department heads at these department are encouraged to maintain a supply of PPE at all times
- iv. Security of PPE must be maintained at all times.

c. Staffing

- i. Employees or their family members who are exhibiting symptoms are encouraged to remain at home until health guidelines advise they are beyond the contagious period.
- ii. In the event of a highly infectious disease, department heads are encouraged to allow alternative means of allowing employees to work (i.e. telecommute) when feasible.
- iii. In the event that widespread illness is present, the use of annual leave will not be permitted. Prior authorized leave may be cancelled after the evaluation by the respective department head and city management.

Education for City of Lovington Employees on COVID-19

COVID-19 is a specific strain of the Coronavirus. This is a respiratory disease that is spread from person to person. The best way to protect yourself is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19. There is currently no vaccine to protect against this virus. There is no specific antiviral treatment. Supportive and symptomatic measures are taken. Education on the virus and prevention is critical in the containment of any virus. This includes common colds, Influenza, Coronavirus and RSV.

The population most at risk for severe complications include the very young, people above 55, those with immune-compromised systems, and people with severe chronic respiratory conditions. All ages can catch this virus. However, it is less likely to cause severe symptoms and complications in people who are healthy and have no daily heart and lung diseases.

1. Keep yourself healthy.
 - a. Continue taking home medications for chronic medications, especially blood pressure medications.
 - b. Supplements high in Vitamin C, and multivitamins, are fine to take.
 - c. Drink lots of water and avoid excessive dehydration.
 - d. Any medication that combats fever (Tylenol, Motrin, Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen) are good to have on hand at home.
2. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water.
 - a. Wash for at least 30 seconds.
 - b. The scrubbing of your hands with soap is the actual method of removal for contaminants. Don't just let them run under water.
 - c. Dry with a paper towel and use this to open the door.
3. Use antimicrobial cleaner to wipe down workstations.
 - a. When you clean a station, leave the surface wet and allow to air dry.
 - b. Common household cleaners such as Lysol and bleach are appropriate.
 - c. If store bought containers of wipes are unavailable, you may use mixed solution and paper towels to decontaminate.
 - d. Clean several times a day, and after any person who has symptoms of a cold.
4. Wear your PPE (personal protective equipment) appropriately.
 - a. The issuance of respiratory masks will be restricted to public safety personnel who are in direct contact with people who may be showing symptoms of this illness, have a high probability of having the illness, or have a confirmed case. One mask will be assigned to each person and ensured that it fits appropriately. They will be trained in the fitting, storage and use of this mask. This mask will

always be stored and transported by the personnel, in a brown simple paper sack. CDC states that this will allow any virus to be exposed to air, in which it will not be able to live/replicate.

- b. Non-medical or police personnel are encouraged to wear gloves if you handle items that may be soiled by the public.
 - c. USE YOUR PPE APPROPRIATELY. We have a limited number of resources. This is currently a phenomenon nationwide.
5. Wash all produce.
- a. This includes items that you would not normally wash such as citrus fruit, avocados, bananas, etc.
 - b. Produce is handled more frequently than any item at a grocery store. Wash when you get home.
6. Avoid touching your face, eyes, mouth and nose.
- a. Any virus can live and thrive in your moist mucus membranes.
 - b. Corona virus is known to attack the airways specifically. Try to avoid exposing yourself inadvertently.
 - c. "Safe distance" for droplet transmission is considered 6ft
7. Utilize any telehealth to speak with a health professional.
- a. If you are not critically ill, you are encouraged to use telemedicine apps such as TeleDoc to speak to a doctor.
 - b. This will allow you to access medications and advice from the privacy and safety of your home.
 - c. If you are unsure if you or your spouse have this option as a part of your insurance benefits, speak to the HR representative at the employer.
8. Consider wearing gloves if you handle money or large amounts of paper from the public.
9. If utilizing a city vehicle to transport the public, wipe down the surfaces after transporting any patient with symptoms.
- a. Decontamination with antimicrobial sprays, wipes, and Biomist may be utilized.
10. Antibacterial hand sanitizers may be used. But this should NEVER replace hand washing.
- a. If your hands are visibly soiled, you must wash them.
 - b. Do not use antibacterial sanitizers multiple times in a row. This will build a layer of product and could become counterproductive.
 - c. Gels and foam are available to stock at all heavily traveled departments in Lovington.
11. If you or your family members are ill with fever, severe cough, or shortness of breath, you should stay home.
- a. Cover your mouth or sneeze with a tissue. Then discard this tissue.
 - b. Clean and disinfect your home frequently.
 - c. Throw away used toothbrushes and use clean ones.