

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 13-09
	DATE November 12, 2009

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
ONE-STOP CENTER SYSTEM LEADS

FROM: Jane Oates
Assistant Secretary 

SUBJECT: Anticipating and Responding to the Influenza Pandemic

- 1. Purpose.** To inform One-Stop Career Centers about their role in the influenza pandemic and the supporting resources and information available.
- 2. References.** Executive Order 12656 (Assignment of Emergency Preparedness Responsibilities), 53 FR 47491, November 23, 1988 (Part 12 describes the Department of Labor's (DOL) responsibilities). For an electronic version see: www.lawandfreedom.com/site/constitutional/execorders/EO12656.pdf.
- 3. Background.** The current influenza pandemic is the first worldwide influenza pandemic since 1968, and in response, the United Nation's World Health Organization has issued its highest alert status. Two strains of influenza, seasonal influenza and swine (H1N1) influenza, are currently circulating. Health officials are closely monitoring a third, highly lethal avian (bird) (H5N1) influenza circulating abroad. To meet this health challenge, President Barack Obama has initiated a nationwide influenza prevention campaign. The swine influenza vaccine is being distributed now. For information on the influenza pandemic, see www.pandemicflu.gov and www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R40554.pdf.

Executive Order 12656, Section 1201 assigns the Secretary of Labor the leading responsibility to:

(1) Develop plans and issue guidance to ensure effective use of civilian workforce resources during national security emergencies. Such plans shall include, but not necessarily be limited to:

- (a) Priorities and allocations, recruitment, referral, training, employment stabilization including appeals procedures, use assessment, and determination of critical skill categories; and
- (b) Programs for increasing the availability of critical workforce skills and occupations.

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) supports the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) to identify and mobilize a skilled workforce to help the nation recover from a disaster. ETA's planning for the past several years has included the mobilization of One-Stop Career Centers.

4. ETA Pandemic Influenza Webinar: Anticipating and Responding to a Pandemic

Influenza. On September 14, 2009, ETA held a Webinar to assist the workforce investment system and One-Stop Career Centers in their planning for a pandemic. Roughly 350 individuals participated in the Webinar, and over 500 individuals registered (for a recording, transcript, and PowerPoint presentation of the Webinar, see www.workforce3one.org/view/5000923237649395705/info). Attendees included representatives from State Workforce Agencies, One-Stop Career Centers, Workforce Investment Boards, and a wide variety of local public and private-sector organizations and partners.

To respond to the pandemic, every employer, business, organization, and government needs to ensure that its workers are well informed; that they can recognize the dangers; and that they know the organization's plan to continue operations in a severe pandemic influenza. ETA's influenza-response planning began more than two years ago, in response to a potential avian influenza. At FEMA's request, ETA will identify and mobilize skilled labor, and ETA relies on the State Workforce Agencies and One-Stop Career Centers service delivery system to carry out this function in a severe pandemic influenza. One-Stop Career Centers' may be called upon to perform several roles:

- Interact with a wide array of Federally and State-funded services and local public, private, and non-profit organizations, which serve diverse customers with multiple needs;
- Connect employers with jobseekers who can perform essential medical and public health jobs;
- Assist FEMA by identifying skilled workers for recovery and disaster relief efforts;
- Support training and identify certified health care workers;
- Provide vital information to the public, including influenza avoidance tips and treatment options;
- Offer sites for temporary public health services, such as inoculation or emergency clinics; and
- Deploy mobile vans to disaster sites.

5. Resources.

- For general information see www.pandemicflu.gov and www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R40554.pdf;
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) hotline, 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) is available at all times (in English and Spanish). Questions can be emailed to cdcinfo@cdc.gov; and
- State public health departments are available at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/international/relres.html.

6. Availability. For a recording, transcript, and PowerPoint Presentation of the Webinar see: www.workforce3one.org/view/5000923237649395705/info.

7. **Action Requested.** Using the information provided in this notice, the addressees are encouraged to prepare for this pandemic influenza and to share information with relevant offices, organizations, and individuals.

8. **Inquires.** Questions should be directed to the appropriate ETA Regional Office.