

## Guiding Principles on the Use of This Manual

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This Strategic Government Resources (SGR) ***Best Practices Manual for Pandemic Influenza Planning*** is intended to assist local government agencies (i.e., cities, counties, schools, municipal utility districts, etc.) serving populations under 100,000. This reference document will also benefit cities over 100,000 and other agencies/institutions in their efforts to keep pandemic flu plans current and effective.

The Manual and its exercises are designed to facilitate the drafting of concise and useful Pandemic Influenza Plans (PIPs) that include a Continuity of Operations (COOP) component specific to moderate to severe epidemics of influenza.

This manual is divided into three sections: Best Practices Guide, PIP Template, and Other Helpful Documents.

### ***Part 1: Best Practices Guide***

The *Best Practices Guide* contains background information on the pandemic influenza situation, a discussion of continuity of operations, and detailed information on effective crisis communication.

- The *background* information provided in the *Best Practices Guide* is intended to be used as a written backdrop to the pandemic influenza situation, with time-sensitive information appropriately revised prior to publication. The background information is targeted at elected officials, administrators, managers, and key agency employees whose services will be crucial during the PIP implementation.
- The *continuity of operations* section of the *Best Practices Guide* addresses specific issues, such as critical infrastructure protection and staff shortages, that a local government may encounter during a pandemic influenza crisis situation.
- The information on *effective crisis communication* is intended to provide local government leaders with the tools necessary to effectively communicate with the media and the public during a crisis situation such as pandemic influenza.

### ***Part 2: PIP Template***

The *PIP Template* is a fill-in-the-blank document with six main components and 11 recommended appendices for local governments to utilize and modify in developing their own PIP. Included in the *PIP Template* are key components to assist the local government in developing its own PIP. For example, *Potential Impacts of Pandemic Influenza* is a worksheet designed to show a community the scope of morbidity, mortality, and social disruption that is likely to occur during the approximate one year to 18 month “life” of a pandemic. *Legal Authority to Control Pandemic* delineates the legal authorities of the federal and state governments to take necessary actions to mitigate the effects of a pandemic. It also describes tasks a local government entity should perform to ensure that appropriate disease control authorities (ordinances and resolutions) are in place before an emergency.

*Appendix A of the PIP Template, COOP Worksheets for department directors, is critically important. The ultimate level of quality, thoroughness, and utility of a PIP depends on the degree of seriousness and the amount of time with which each department director devotes to the worksheets.*

*Strategic Government Resources recommends that local governments conduct a tabletop exercise using the morbidity and mortality data in the Pandemic Influenza Plan Template, Potential Impact of Pandemic Influenza, prior to completing the worksheets. Completed worksheets can then be used to craft the actual PIP and COOP Plan.*

*A final note of encouragement may be warranted: As with any other annex or component of a local government's emergency operations plan, a Pandemic Influenza Plan with Continuity of Operations does not have to approach perfection to be highly useful. The mental exercises used to create your agency's flu plan will be quite beneficial during essentially any form of major emergency or catastrophe (All Hazards).*

### **Part 3: Other Helpful Documents**

The last section of this manual contains additional documents that may assist you in pandemic influenza planning. It also contains a table of contents for the *Pandemic Influenza Resources CD* that is included with this manual.