



# Genesee County Employee Notification System Usage Policy Manual

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Policy Number: XX.XXX

Effective: XX/XX/XXXX – RES-XXXX-XXX

## **Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the authorized use of the Genesee County Employee Notification System to communicate time-sensitive information to county employees.

The system is intended to provide rapid notification during emergencies, significant operational disruptions, and other situations that may affect employee safety, county facilities, continuity of operations, or departmental activities.

## **Authority and Responsibility:**

This policy is approved by the Genesee County Board of Commissioners.

Emergency Management and Information Technology are jointly responsible for implementation.

Human Resources is responsible for maintaining employee contact information.

Information Technology is responsible for managing system access, including granting, modifying, and removing user authorization within the notification system.

## **Application:**

This policy applies to all Genesee County departments and employees who may receive alerts through the notification system and to personnel authorized to request, approve, or initiate notifications.

## **Definitions:**

- Employee Emergency Notification System: The county's platform for sending urgent alerts by text, email, and app.
- Authorized Sender: An individual approved to initiate notifications.
- Department-Level Notification: A notification sent by a Department Head or approved designee to employees within a specific department or operational group for department-specific operational, safety, or informational purposes.



- Level 1 Alert: Immediate life-safety notification.
- Level 2 Alert: Operational disruption notification.
- Level 3 Alert: Informational communication with limited use.

## **Policy:**

### **1. Authorized Emergency Notification Senders**

- Chairperson – Board of Commissioners
- Director of Administration
- Chief Information Officer (CIO)
- Emergency Manager
- Facilities and Operations Manager
- Health Officer
- Sheriff's Office Radio Room

### **2. Authorized Designees**

- a. Each authorized position may designate one alternate.
- b. Designees must:
  - i. Be formally identified to Emergency Management and Information Technology
  - ii. Complete required training
  - iii. Be approved prior to access
- c. Authority shall not be broadly delegated.

### **3. Notification Priority Levels**

- a. Level 1 – Emergency / Life Safety  
Immediate alerts requiring action to protect life or safety.
- b. Level 2 – Operational  
Alerts impacting county operations or access to facilities.
- c. Level 3 – Informational  
Limited-use communications that do not require immediate action and should generally be limited in scope.

### **4. Alert Targeting**

- a. Notifications shall be distributed to the smallest appropriate group of employees whenever possible to ensure alerts remain relevant and effective.
- b. Notifications may be directed to predefined employee groups based on department, function, or facility.
- c. Countywide notifications shall only be used when incidents affect multiple facilities or the entire county workforce.



## 5. Message Standards

Messages shall be:

- Clear
- Concise
- Actionable
- Based on verified information

Messages should identify:

1. What is happening
2. Where it is happening
3. Who is affected
4. What action is required

## 6. Alert Prefixes

- EMERGENCY
- EVACUATE
- SHELTER IN PLACE
- ALERT
- UPDATE
- ALL CLEAR
- CLOSURE

For countywide operational notifications such as weather-related building closures, prefixes such as ALERT or CLOSURE may be used.

## 7. Follow-Up Notifications

Follow-up messages should be issued when conditions change or incidents are resolved.

- If inaccurate information is distributed, a correction should be issued as soon as practical.

## 8. Notification Coordination

- a. Emergency notifications and follow-up messages should be coordinated through Emergency Management when practical.
- b. Immediate life-safety alerts may be sent without prior coordination.
- c. During ongoing incidents, additional messages should be coordinated to prevent conflicting communication.

## 9. Prohibited Use

No solicitation, political messaging, personal announcements, or non-county business.



## 10. Opt-Out Policy

- a. Employees issued county-owned devices are required to participate in the Employee Emergency Notification System.
- b. Participation using personal devices is optional, however all county employees will continue to receive communications via their official county email accounts.

## 11. Training

Authorized senders must complete initial training prior to receiving system access. Training shall be coordinated by Information Technology. Additional training or refresher guidance may be provided as needed.

## 12. System Testing

- a. The system shall be tested at least annually.
- b. The system may also be utilized during:
  - Building evacuation drills
  - Fire drills
  - Lockdown exercises
  - Other emergency preparedness activities
- c. Testing may also be coordinated with statewide or local emergency preparedness exercises, including the State of Michigan Severe Weather Awareness Week tornado drill, when feasible.
- d. All test messages shall begin with:

**“TEST MESSAGE”**

## 13. Misuse and Access Suspension

- a. The Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners, the Director of Administration, the Chief Information Officer (CIO), or Emergency Management may suspend system access if the system is used outside the scope of this policy.
- b. Access may be restored following administrative review.

## 14. Incident Documentation

Emergency Management and/or Information Technology shall maintain notification records in accordance with applicable county retention requirements.

## 15. Department-Level Notifications

- a. Department Heads and approved designees may initiate notifications directed solely to their department or operational group without prior approval.
- b. Department designees are approved by the Department Head and system access is managed by IT.
- c. Appropriate uses include:
  - Operational updates



- Scheduling changes
  - Facility or building-specific issues
  - Training or exercise notifications
  - Situational awareness relevant to department personnel
- d. Department-level messages:
- Must be limited to the appropriate audience
  - Must be clear, concise, and actionable
  - Should avoid excessive or unnecessary messaging
- e. Department-level notifications shall not be used for countywide or multi-department messaging without proper authorization.

#### **16. Notification Use Guidance**

- a. The notification system is intended for communications that impact employee safety, county operations, or departmental functionality.
- b. Users should exercise sound judgment to ensure messages remain relevant and appropriate.



## Appendix A – Notification Alert Decision Flowchart

**Note:**

Emergency Management should be notified for Level 1 alerts and any countywide or multi-department notifications.

**Incident Occurs → Does it affect employee safety, county operations, or facility access?**

**NO** → Use normal communication channels

**YES** → Is immediate action required?

**YES** → Send **Level 1 Alert**

- Select appropriate audience
- Review message
- Send alert
- Notify Emergency Management
- Send updates and **ALL CLEAR** when resolved

**NO** → Send **Level 2 Alert**

- Select appropriate audience
- Review message
- Send alert
- Notify Emergency Management (if countywide or multi-department)
- Send updates and **ALL CLEAR** when resolved