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**I. Policy**

This policy establishes the Health Alert Network (HAN) for the Florida Department of Health. The HAN provides a uniform alerting and notification system capable of rapid distribution of health alerts, secure collaboration among a defined set of public health professionals involved in an outbreak or event, and the broad sharing of information with the public. The Health Alert Network application is the Florida Department of Health Emergency Notification System (FDENS).

The HAN will comply with federal alerting and notification requirements as outlined in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Public Health Information Network (PHIN) Partner Communications and Alerting (PCA) requirements.

The Department of Health State Surgeon General and each Department of Health (DOH) division, office, county health department (CHD), Children's Medical Services clinic (CMS), and the A.G. Holley Hospital director will be the primary contact for alerting and notification within the public health emergency response system to assure that public health professionals and key response partners have relevant and timely access to information necessary to respond to events that may be of urgent public health consequence.

**II. Authority**

- A. 42 U.S.C. 247d-3.
- B. CDC Preparedness Goal 6: Control, Critical Task 7
- C. Chapter 252, Florida Statutes: "The Emergency Management Act"
- D. Chapter 381, Florida Statutes

**III. Supportive Data**

- A. Public Health Information Network @ <http://www.cdc.gov/phn/index.html>
- B. Partner Communication and Alerting @ <http://www.cdc.gov/phn/preparedness/pca.html>
- C. PHIN Certification @ <http://www.cdc.gov/phn/certification/index.html>
- D. Florida Department of Health Information Security and Privacy Policy

**IV. Signature Block with Effective Date**

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Dr. Ana M. Viamonte Ros  
Surgeon General, Department of Health

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Date

**V. Definitions**

- A. FDENS – Florida Department of Health Emergency Notification System is the application for the Health Alert Network.
- B. HAN – Health Alert Network is a national program that provides vital health information and the infrastructure to support the dissemination of that information at the state, local and national levels.
- C. PCA – Partner Communication and Alerting is a nationwide network of integrated communications systems capable of rapid distribution of health alerts, secure collaboration among a defined set of public health professionals involved in an outbreak or event, and the broad sharing of information with the public.
- D. PHIN – Public Health Information Network is CDC's vision for advancing fully capable and interoperable information systems in the many organizations that participate in public health. All systems are required to be certified by 2010.
- E. PHIN Certification - PHIN Certification helps the CDC determine whether partner systems can meet the specific high-level functionalities and detailed key performance measures required to support public health activities.
- F. DEMO – Division of Emergency Medical Operations
- G. HAN Administrators – Personnel trained to manage a specific list of users within the HAN.
- H. EOP - Emergency Operations Plan
- I. User – Person registered in the HAN who has been assigned user ID and password.

**VI. Protocols****A. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 1. The State Surgeon General of the Department of Health will direct all Department personnel, (including contract staff), to participate in the Health Alert Network.
- 2. The Director of the Office of Public Health Preparedness, within the Division of Emergency Medical Operations, is responsible for implementation of the Health Alert Network.
  - a. The Director will appoint a HAN Coordinator.
  - b. The Director will ensure the Health Alert Network meets Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Public Health Information Network requirements.
  - c. The Director is responsible for maintaining the Alert and Notification Annex of the Department of Health's Emergency Operation Plan.
  - d. The Director is responsible for implementation of the Health Alert Network application.
- 3. Each Department of Health (DOH) division, office, county health department (CHD), Children's Medical Services clinic (CMS), and the A.G. Holley Hospital director will participate in the HAN by:
  - a. Appointing members of their organizations to staff/carry out the HAN Administrator and backup responsibilities as defined in #5.
  - b. Identifying additional staff to be assigned and trained to participate in the HAN.
  - c. Ensuring that each Administrator and Collaborator has received appropriate training.

- d. Acting as a key stakeholder in the HAN.
- e. Identifying who has authority to send alerts/notifications within the HAN.
- 4. The state Health Alert Network (HAN) Coordinator is responsible for the overall management of the HAN and shall:
  - a. Act as the Primary Point of Contact (POC) for the Florida Department of Health, Health Alert Network.
  - b. Develop, maintain and distribute the policies and procedures for the Health Alert Network.
  - c. Develop and implement a plan for statewide user training.
  - d. Conduct periodic testing of the alerting system.
  - e. Represent Florida on national HAN working groups.
  - f. Recruit key stakeholders.
  - g. Create and maintain the user database.
  - h. Provide support to the user community.
  - i. Act as the Primary Point of Contact (POC) with the HAN vendors.
- 5. The local HAN Administrator is responsible for the management of the Health Alert Network at the local organizational level and shall:
  - a. Maintain the local user group list.
  - b. Create the communication structure for the local group.
  - c. Assign the roles and role groups for local personnel.
  - d. Train the local users.
  - e. Initiate alerts and notifications for their local organization.
  - f. Participate in the statewide HAN User Group Meetings.
- 6. As of July 1, 2007, Florida Department of Health Emergency Notification System (FDENS) will be the HAN application for the Department of Health.

**B. Training**

- 1. All HAN users must complete the basic level training outlined in the FDENS User Training Manual. The FDENS Basic User Training is available in Trak-It and at [www.flhan.com](http://www.flhan.com).
- 2. HAN Administrators must complete additional training on the HAN responsibilities and system capabilities provided by the HAN Coordinator or designee.

**C. Privacy and Security**

- 1. Users must agree to use the HAN notification system for the intended purposes as outlined in the FDENS User Training Manual found at [www.fdens.com](http://www.fdens.com)
- 2. Sensitive roles can be assigned to restrict who can view users with security issues.
- 3. The alerting and notification system shall not be used to communicate confidential health information exempt from public records under Florida Statute or Public Law.
- 4. Any transmission of confidential information is a violation of state and federal laws, including but not limited to, sections 381.0031, 381.004, 384.29, 392.65, and 456.057, Florida Statutes and Public Law 104-191 (HIPAA).

5. DOH leadership and the HAN Coordinator have the right to suspend or terminate an account and refuse any and all current or future use of the system.

**D. Data Sharing**

1. Information used for alerting and notification shall be maintained and shared in accordance with DOH Information Policy.
2. Access to the HAN is based on the privileges assigned to the user's access level, as defined in the FDENS User Training Manual found at [www.fdens.com](http://www.fdens.com).

**E. Public Records Requests**

1. Identity and contact information contained in FDENS databases and system are Section 119.071(3)(a), F.S. security sensitive information, exempt from public record requests.
2. Requests for information will be processed according to the DOH Request for Public Information Procedure.

**VII. Procedures**

Procedures for the operation of the HAN are found in the User Guides located in the FDENS Document Library.

**VIII. Distribution List**

Deputies  
Division Directors  
Executive Office Directors  
Bureau Chiefs  
County Health Department Directors/Administrators  
Children's Medical Services Medical/Nursing Directors  
Web Manager  
Records Management Liaison Officers

**IX. History Notes**

This is a new policy. The Division of Emergency Medical Operations, Office of Public Health Preparedness, is responsible for this document.