



**NEW YORK STATE
OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY
ASSISTANCE
40 NORTH PEARL STREET
ALBANY, NY 12243-0001
Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor**

Local Commissioners Memorandum

Section 1

Transmittal:	11-LCM-02
To:	Local District Commissioners
Issuing Division/Office:	Division of Operations and Program Support
Date:	March 25, 2011
Subject:	Local District Emergency Closings and Reporting of Emergency Information
Contact Person(s):	Deputy Commissioner's Office Operations and Program Support 518-473-3912
Attachments:	Attachment 1: LDSS Contact Information for Emergency Events
Attachment Available On – Line:	Yes
Previous LCMs	05-LCM-12, 07-LCM-03

Section 2

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Local Commissioner's Memorandum (LCM) is to update procedures for reporting emergency closings of local district offices, and to inform you of notification methods that will be employed to enhance communication processes in times of emergencies. This LCM also will inform local district offices about the availability of NY-Alert for emergency notifications. This LCM supersedes 07-LCM-03. Changes to the previous LCM includes an annual designation and reporting of emergency contacts (Section I), additional notification to information and referral services (Section III), information on NY-Alert (Section III), and posting of an emergency contacts list to the OTDA Disaster Preparedness Intranet site (Section III).

An emergency is a sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances requiring immediate action, e.g., inclement weather, fire.

We would also like to reinforce the annual submittal of a prioritized listing of three (3) emergency contacts for each local district, which will be used as needed, for off-hours emergency communications with OTDA and the Human Services Committee of the NYS Disaster Preparedness Commission (DPC) during activations and disaster response/ recovery activities.

II. Background

As the Chair agency of the Human Services Committee for the NYS Disaster Preparedness Commission, OTDA assists and oversees the implementation of State Human Services plans that provide assistance to local governments upon the State Declaration of Disaster Emergency by the Governor.

Prompt reporting of emergency closings will enable OTDA to provide assistance in emergency situations, and to coordinate response actions with the districts in less serious, more temporary emergency situations. Timely reporting of information will also enable OTDA to respond to any inquiries in an informed manner and to provide accurate representation of operational impacts on a regional or statewide basis.

Lessons learned from past disasters in New York State have consistently shown that open lines of communications among decision-makers at all levels of government improves the overall delivery of services that are critical to protection of the health, safety and well-being of our citizens.

III. Necessary Actions

1. Notifications

In the event of an emergency closing, each local social services district should designate three emergency contacts to make necessary notifications per Section I listed above. Parties notified should include the following, in no specific order:

- A. Local police, sheriff, fire department, office of emergency management and other local governmental entities as required by the nature of the emergency.
- B. The Deputy Commissioner's Office of NYS OTDA's Division of Operations and Program Support in Albany at (518)-473-3912, or by sending a message to emergency@otda.state.ny.us, which automatically routes to designated emergency management staff that monitor such activities during off-hours.
- C. Local media, especially radio stations, requesting announcement of the closing and advising the public how to obtain emergency services.
- D. Regional partners that provide information and referral services such as the United Way / Alliance for Information and Referral Services (AIRS) 211 / 311 programs.
- E. Clients scheduled for appointments, if possible, to advise them of the emergency closing.

Your staff should also assure that the district's plan for providing 24-hour emergency services (e.g., fuel emergencies and shelter) remains operational, and appropriate local authorities and agencies are aware of how to access these services.

Information reported to OTDA should include:

- The type of emergency
- Anticipated duration of the closing
- Description of any significant impacts (personnel, property, equipment, systems/data)
- Is mutual aid or state assistance requested?
- Designated point of contact for coordinating assistance

Upon notification of the closure of the facility, OTDA will post local departments of social services' office closures on both its internet and intranet homepages. This will alert OTDA staff of the closures to take into account during their work day as well as advise any OTDA staff assigned to those buildings of alternate plans for reporting to work that day. Clients may obtain information on closures by visiting the OTDA internet site or by contacting the local 211/ 311 information and referral service.

During off-hours, OTDA may utilize any of its notification tools to disseminate information to impacted personnel. This may include posting information to the OTDA Emergency Information Number (toll-free) at 1-866-OTDA911 (1-866-683-2911), and use of NY-Alert.

NY-Alert is an application developed and supported by the New York State Office of Emergency Management (NYS OEM). It is a web-based all-hazard notification portal which is used by OTDA for notifications to staff members as part of our Comprehensive Emergency Management/ Continuity of Operations Plan (CEMP/ COOP). Use of this web-based notification portal is also available to Local District Social Services Offices. To learn more about NY-Alert or to request a demonstration, please contact support@nyalert.gov.

2. Local District Emergency Contact Designation

In our continuing effort to improve our communications and responses to emergencies, please complete the attached form designating three (3) individuals to serve as your primary, secondary and tertiary contacts in emergency events. Along with each name, please provide office, home, cell/pager numbers and an email address. This information should be sent to Chuck.latham@otda.state.ny.us by April, 2011.

This information will be kept confidential and will be used only in the event of an emergency during off-hours in coordination with OTDA, the Human Services Committee, and the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, Office of Emergency Management (DHSES OEM).

OTDA has posted a listing of previously designated emergency contacts, to our intranet site at http://otda.state.nyenet/psqi/bms/Disaster_Preparedness/default.asp. Please note the only contact information included on this listing is office phone numbers.

Annually each April, OTDA will request an update/ verification of your emergency contacts. Please provide a response within two weeks of notification to ensure timely update of our LDSS Emergency Contacts Directory.

If you have any questions regarding the directory update or information contained in this Local Commissioners Memorandum, you may contact:

Chuck Latham
(518) 473-3099
chuck.latham@otda.state.ny.us

Stephanie Pagnotta
(518) 408-3971
Stephanie.pagnotta@otda.state.ny.us

Thank you for your assistance.

Issued By

Name: John M. Paolucci

Title: Deputy Commissioner

Division/Office: Division of Operations and Program Support