

# **DAS Newsrelease**

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## **DAS Hosts Pandemic Flu Summit**

(East Hartford) —The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) today hosted a Pandemic Flu Summit for state agencies called **“Keep Government Going”** at The Club at Rentschler Field.

Governor M. Jodi Rell charged DAS Commissioner Linda Yelmini with organizing the half-day event, which was designed to develop plans for the implications that the pandemic flu could have on the state workforce’s ability to deliver vital government services.

Some the issues under consideration were:

- 1) Identify work that must be performed by agencies under any circumstances and the workforce (auxiliary if necessary) that will carry out that work;
- 2) Educate the workforce to take precautions to prevent spreading the flu;
- 3) Create modifications for employees to perform work in the event they cannot report to their regular workplace.

Speakers at the event included: DAS Commissioner Linda Yelmini, Event Chairman Dr. Martin Anderson (DAS), Department of Public Health (DPH) Commissioner J. Robert Galvin, MD, John Bigos, MD of DPH, Robert Kenny of DPH and Michael Varney from the Department of Information Technology.

This event is part of a multifaceted, comprehensive plan by the Governor, who in December of 2005, proactively launched initiatives to prepare for potential health hazards.

At that time, Governor Rell directed four state agencies – Departments of Public Health, Agriculture, Environmental Protection and Homeland Security – to join forces to ensure that Connecticut is fully prepared to meet any public health threats from possible influenza outbreak. She charged them with developing a comprehensive state plan which was delivered to her on January 1, 2006.

On January 12, the Governor's Office announced that Connecticut would receive \$1.35 million in federal funds for pandemic flu preparedness efforts for state and municipalities to accelerate and intensify current plans.

And, on February 2, Governor Rell and Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt hosted a Pandemic Flu Summit for more than 600 community leaders at the Connecticut Convention Center.

"State agencies are responsible for coordinating and maintaining essential services to our citizens during all types of emergencies," said the Governor. "We must challenge our agencies to creatively plan how to keep government functioning, while providing maximum protection for our employees. This proactive effort will help ensure that state government is fully prepared for whatever public health challenges we may face in the future."

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