



Revision History

Version	Date
Notification of Service Disruption Policy, 1.0	5 August 2021

NOTIFICATION OF SERVICE DISRUPTION POLICY

I. Introduction

System Managers periodically will need to take an important service offline temporarily, for scheduled maintenance or for upgrades. It is critical to communicate very thoroughly to avoid confusion and resulting loss of productivity.

This policy provides guidance on what to include in a downtime announcement and how to communicate upcoming maintenance windows to users.

Capitalized terms used in this Policy without definition are defined in the Charter.

II. Policy

A. Lead time of notification

- When possible, users will be informed of planned downtime at least 3 days in advance.
- When the impact on users is assessed by the Systems Manager and Data Protection Officer (DPO) to be significant, a longer lead time will be given.
- Server maintenance on major systems will be communicated at least one week in advance, while minor systems maintenance notice will be given 1-2 days in advance.

B. Frequency of notification

Multiple notifications will be given. For example, for a notice given 7 days in advance the frequency of notifications will be as follows:

- Initial notification (7 days in advance);
- Second notification (3 days in advance);
- Third notification (1 day in advance);
- Fourth notification (same day of planned downtime);
- Final notification (once systems are back online).

C. Scheduling of Maintenance

For scheduled downtime, a time will be selected that would provide the least disruption for users, based on user location and access history, expected duration of maintenance, and impact of systems downtime.

D. Method of Communication

Multiple channels will be used. Email will be the primary method, with social media, webpages, and internal communication tools (e.g. Microsoft Teams, Google Hangouts, etc.) also adopted, depending on the user audience.

For online services, an online website status service (such as Atlassian's [Statuspage](#)) should be used to provide notification.

E. Message Content

The Notification message will contain the following information:

- **Type of notification and criticality**
 - a. Importance of downtime
 - b. Severeness of the disruption
 - c. Planned or unplanned
 - d. Purpose
 - e. Explanation of benefits of downtime to the user
- **Scope**
 - f. Parts and/or services that are affected
 - g. What users can or cannot do during the downtime
 - h. Summary of work to be done
- **Time and duration**
- **Whether any user action is required.**