[Company name]

How to use this document: delete this paragraph before saving, sharing, or circulating it. Every part shown in blue is yours to replace: type your own details over each blue [field] until no blue remains. Then select all (Ctrl+A) and set the font colour to the same dark colour throughout. What is left is your finished document.

System Outage Notice Template

A letter to affected users: what is down, what to do instead, and when the next update will come.

Notice details: Notice reference number: _____ **Type of outage:** _____

Date of this notice: _____ **System or service affected:** _____

Part 1. Outage notice Subject: [Subject line for this outage notice]

Dear [Recipient group for this outage notice],

[Name of the system or service affected] [is currently unavailable / will be unavailable] [from the start time stated below]. This notice explains what is affected, what you should do, and when you will hear from us next.

What is happening: [Plain-language description of what is happening, without technical detail that does not help the reader.]

What is affected: [List of the services, locations, and user groups affected, and anything that is not affected.]

When: from [Start date and time of the outage] to [Expected end date and time of the outage, or confirmation that the end time is not yet known]. All times are in [Time zone used in this notice].

Why, where this can be shared: [Reason for this outage, in terms a non-technical reader can understand. Omit this paragraph if the reason is not yet known or cannot be shared.]

What you should do: [Instructions for affected users, including anything they should save, avoid doing, or do differently until service returns.]

Workaround: [Workaround available during this outage, or confirmation that no workaround is available.]

Do not report this again unless: [Condition under which users should still contact support, if they are affected outside the groups listed above.]

Next update: we will update you by [Date and time of the next update], or sooner if service is restored before then.

Contact: [Contact details for questions about this outage]. Please quote reference [Notice reference number for this outage] when you contact us.

Thank you for your patience while we [restore service / complete this maintenance].

[Full name of the sender of this notice] [Job title of the sender of this notice]

Part 2. All-clear notice Use this shorter notice when service is restored. Send it through the same channel as Part 1, so everyone who saw the outage notice also sees the all-clear.

Subject: [Subject line for the all-clear notice]

Dear [Recipient group for the all-clear notice],

[Name of the system or service affected] is back in normal operation as of [Date and time service was restored]. Please return to your normal way of working.

If anything you entered during the outage appears to be missing, or if anything still does not work as expected, contact [Contact details for follow-up after this outage] and quote reference [Notice reference number for this outage].

[Full name of the sender of the all-clear notice] [Job title of the sender of the all-clear notice]

Part 3. Before sending checklist: [ ] The affected systems, groups, and locations have been checked against the current incident record, not copied from a previous notice.

[ ] Start and end times, and the time zone, are stated in the notice itself, not left for readers to assume.

[ ] The workaround has been tested by someone other than the person who wrote it, where a workaround is offered.

[ ] The next update time is a time the team can actually meet, and someone owns sending that update.

[ ] The notice has been sent through a channel that still works during this outage, not only through the affected system itself.