[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	[Notice reference number]
Type of outage	[Type of outage: planned maintenance or unplanned outage]
Date of this notice	[Date of this notice]
System or service affected	[Name of the 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]

[Company name]

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.