

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS DIRECTIVE	5420.7	6/25/04
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**HOMELAND SECURITY THREAT CONDITION RESPONSE -
HUMAN HEALTH MONITORING AND SURVEILLANCE**

I. PURPOSE

A. This directive details the emergency procedures that the Food Safety and Inspection Service, Human Health Sciences Division (FSIS HHSD) personnel will follow in the event of an Orange or Red Alert declaration by the Department of Homeland Security. HHSD personnel should only begin implementing these procedures outlined in this directive when instructed to do so by the Assistant Administrator (AA) of the Office of Public Health and Science (OPHS) or designee.

B. This Directive also:

- provides specific information on how the Meat and Poultry Hotline (the Hotline), the Consumer Complaint Monitoring System (CCMS), and Public Health and Epidemiology Liaisons (PHELs) will provide emergency coverage during threat conditions; and
- provides specific information on how information concerning human health issues will be disseminated to the public.

II. [RESERVED]

III. [RESERVED]

IV. REFERENCES

Directive 5420.1, Rev. 1, Homeland Security Threat Condition Response – Food Security Verification Procedures

V. BACKGROUND

In 2002, the White House Office of Homeland Security established a Homeland Security Advisory System based on color to provide a comprehensive and effective means to disseminate information regarding the risk of terrorist acts to Federal, State, and local authorities and to the American people. A declaration of a Threat Condition Orange by the Department of Homeland Security indicates that there is a high risk of terrorist attacks. A declaration of a Threat Condition Red reflects a severe risk of terrorist attacks. While the threat may or may not involve the nation's food and agriculture sector specifically, it is imperative that any such declarations be communicated effectively and rapidly to all program areas within FSIS so that appropriate actions can be taken in response to the threats and to ensure the security of meat, poultry, and egg products.

VI. NOTIFICATION

During normal operating conditions, HHSD, through the PHELs and CCMS staff, is responsible for monitoring and reporting foodborne illness information. The CCMS staff maintains a national database on consumer complaint information it receives from the Hotline and the FSIS District Offices – Enforcement and Investigation Analysis Officers (EIAO). The PHELs and FSIS' liaison to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) receive illness information on a continuous basis from State Health and Agriculture officials and from CDC, respectively.

A. In the event of a declaration of any Threat Condition Orange or Red by the Department of Homeland Security, the FSIS Office of Food Security and Emergency Preparedness (OFSEP) will inform the FSIS Administrator and the senior executive leadership of all program areas and issue an e-mail letter to all employees notifying them of the heightened threat condition.

B. The following actions are to be taken by HHSD in the event of a declaration of:

1. **Threat Condition Orange or Red with no threat to the food and agriculture sector:** HHSD will continue normal operations and take no further action unless instructed to do so by the Assistant Administrator or designee, as outlined in VI. Notification.

2. **Threat Condition Orange with a specific threat to the food and agriculture sector:** The CCMS staff and the Hotline Staff, upon notification by the AA or designee, will:

a. Operate under the special hours of operation; Monday through Friday - 10 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST), and Saturday and Sunday noon until 5:00 p.m. EST. In addition, the CCMS staff will increase its monitoring of the CCMS to

reflect expanded hours of coverage by district-based personnel, as determined by the Office of Field Operations (OFO).

b. The FSIS website www.fsis.usda.gov will be updated with food security information, as it becomes available for public dissemination.

c. CCMS staff will provide to OPHS and OFSEP daily summary statistical reports (containing information about numbers, categories, and geographic locations of complaints and plants), prepared by the Automated Information Systems Division (AISD).

d. PHELS will request and pursue daily contact with designated representatives from each State and territorial public health jurisdiction. Contact with these representatives and reporting of activities may be in person or by phone, fax or e-mail.

e. The FSIS liaison to CDC will provide OPHS and OFSEP daily updates on foodborne disease activity being monitored at CDC that might be associated with FSIS regulated products.

f. HHSD will assist the Office of Public Affairs, Education and Outreach in developing appropriate notices for distribution to public health officials via the CDC's Health Alert Network (HAN).

3. Threat Condition Red by the Department of Homeland Security with a specific threat to the food and agriculture sector:

a. The CCMS staff will increase monitoring and surveillance of all reported cases of human illnesses and consumer complaints. A Red Alert triage team will augment the CCMS staff during expanded hours of operation.

b. The CCMS staff and the Hotline Staff will further extend their hours of operation: Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. EST, and Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. EST. In addition, the CCMS staff will increase its monitoring of the CCMS to reflect expanded hours of coverage by district-based personnel, as determined by OFO.

c. The FSIS website, www.fsis.usda.gov, will be updated as needed.

d. The CCMS staff will provide to OPHS, OFO, and OFSEP daily (or more frequent, as circumstances dictate) summary statistical reports (containing information about numbers, categories, and geographic locations of complaints and establishments), prepared by AISD.

e. PHELS will request and pursue daily real-time contact with designated representatives from each State and territorial public health jurisdiction. Contact and reporting of activities may be in person or by phone; supplementary contact and reporting activities may be by fax or e-mail.

f. The FSIS liaison to CDC will provide OPHS and OFSEP daily updates on foodborne disease activity being monitored at CDC that might be associated with FSIS-regulated products.

g. Additionally, the Hotline will issue press releases as needed, advising the public of the availability of the Hotline for food safety and food security information.

C. Downgrading of a Threat Condition will be communicated by OFSEP, to HHSD through the senior executive leadership in OPHS.

All questions related to this directive should be directed through normal supervisory channels.

/s/ Philip S. Derfler

Assistant Administrator
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