
United States Department of Agriculture
Marketing and Regulatory Programs
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

APHIS Directive

APHIS 1810.1

08/09/2023

APHIS EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

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1. PURPOSE

This Directive establishes the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) policy for using an automated Emergency Notification System (ENS) to notify personnel of emergency events, provide safety guidance, and perform accountability checks following these events. The ENS supports personnel safety and mission continuity.

2. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

a. This Directive supersedes APHIS 1810.1, dated 2/10/2014.

(1) The principal changes included in this Directive are as follows:

- (a) Section 4, SCOPE: Changed and expanded the scope to include procedures for the Dr. Jere Dick Operations Center (JDOC), APHIS duty officers, facility managers, and program emergency points of contact (POCs).
- (b) Section 5, POLICY: Added policy to cover ENS roles, implementation, and training.
- (c) Section 6, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: Changed role for Administrator to Office of the Administrator, removed ENS activation authorization responsibility, and added responsibilities to provide oversight and guidance on this policy, its implementation, and future updates.

Added roles and responsibilities for the Emergency Preparedness Committee.

Added roles and responsibilities for the Deputy Administrator of Emergency and Regulatory Compliance Services (ERCS) and transferred responsibility for this Directive from Marketing and Regulatory Programs Business Services (MRPBS) to ERCS.

Added roles and responsibilities for APHIS duty officers.

Removed role and responsibility for Deputy Administrator of Legislative and Public Affairs as any needed notification to stakeholders can occur outside of this Directive and separate from ENS communications.

Removed roles and responsibilities for Director of MRPBS Emergency Management, Safety, and Security Division; APHIS Continuity of Operations (COOP) Manager; Program COOP Points of Contact; and Emergency Qualification System/Resource Ordering and Status System Program Manager to align with organizational changes and establish new roles and responsibilities for ENS implementation.

Changed responsibilities for APHIS supervisors to ensure personnel are aware of the ENS and its purpose and to encourage them to include additional contact information in the ENS; also removed reference to EQS since information will be maintained in the ENS.

Changed responsibilities for APHIS employees to ensure they provide supervisors with current and accurate contact information; enter contact information into ENS; verify the accuracy of the recorded official duty location, official e-mail address, and official phone number(s); and respond to ENS notifications. Also removed requirement to account for visitors as this is not a part of their responsibilities under the ENS.

- (d) Section 7, PROCEDURES: Added this section to incorporate ENS Use and Notification Criteria and procedures for ENS Profile Access and Maintenance.
- (e) APPENDIX A, PRE-APPROVED MESSAGE TEMPLATES: Added this appendix to share the pre-approved ENS message templates containing the pre-approved messages and employee response options.
- (f) APPENDIX B, EMERGENCY POC DESIGNATION TEMPLATE: Added this memorandum template, which will be used to appoint program emergency POCs and authorize their duties.

- b. This Directive is in force until canceled or superseded.

3. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

This Directive must be applied in conjunction with:

- a. [USDA Department Manual \(DM\) 1800-001, Incident Preparedness, Response and Recovery](#)
- b. [USDA Department Regulation \(DR\) 1800-001, Incident Preparedness, Response, and Recovery](#)

- c. [USDA Department Regulation \(DR\) 3300-001-J, Emergency Communications Programs](#)
- d. [Federal Continuity Directive 1, Federal Executive Branch National Continuity Program and Requirements](#)

4. SCOPE

This Directive applies to all APHIS programs. It imparts procedures to the JDOC, APHIS duty officers, and program emergency POCs for emergency events requiring emergency notification and personnel accountability. An **emergency event** is defined as an unexpected and disruptive event having the potential to significantly impact APHIS mission, facilities, equipment, and personnel. Routine communication regarding the status of facilities, equipment, and personnel following emergencies will continue to be conducted via email and telephonic notification to the JDOC. The ENS is not the primary coordinating mechanism for routine notifications; it is strictly for emergency event notifications.

5. POLICY

- a. APHIS maintains an effective ENS to quickly notify staff of ongoing or impending emergencies and to account for personnel in areas impacted by emergencies.
- b. APHIS maintains and employs functional emergency communications capabilities necessary to support routine operations, emergency response, continuity, Mission Essential Functions and Essential Supporting Activities.
- c. ERCS manages the JDOC and works with MRPBS Information Technology Division to maintain communications technology within the JDOC.
- d. ERCS employees appointed as APHIS duty officers use the JDOC and its communication technology for daily business and incident reporting. The APHIS duty officers use the ENS to send emergency notifications and account for personnel as required.
- e. Each APHIS program staff will implement the ENS following the procedures in this Directive, designate emergency POCs in writing following Appendix B, and train emergency POCs in ENS report composition and distribution in accordance with their business needs in alignment with this Directive. Programs may choose to forego training their emergency POCs on ENS report composition and

distribution and instead have the APHIS duty officers perform that training for them. The emergency POC will still perform the other roles of the position and will coordinate with the APHIS duty officer to initiate ENS usage on their behalf.

- f. Supervisors will maintain overall responsibility for accounting for their personnel.
- g. APHIS programs will train emergency POCs in ENS report composition and distribution following this Directive or defer to APHIS duty officers to conduct their reporting.
- h. Reporting templates and plain language are used for ENS messaging.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following individuals and groups implement this Directive's policy:

a. Office of the Administrator

- (1) Provides general oversight and guidance on this Directive and ENS reporting content and execution to the APHIS duty officers and APHIS programs.
- (2) Provides recommendations for ENS policy updates to ERCS, as needed.

b. Emergency Preparedness Committee

- (1) Reviews this Directive and supports uniform, Agency-wide implementation.
- (2) Provides input to help ERCS develop the policies, roles, responsibilities, and procedures in this Directive.

c. Deputy Administrator for ERCS

- (1) Oversees ENS implementation, reviews and approves all ENS messages, and assigns APHIS duty officers to send ENS notifications from the JDOC.
- (2) Reviews and approves template ENS messaging to be used by the APHIS duty officers and program emergency POCs.

- (3) Participates in the periodic review of this Directive and engages the APHIS Management Team and the Emergency Preparedness Committee to provide recommendations for ENS revision as necessary.
- (4) Monitors APHIS duty officer ENS communications for quality and substance, and to address issues stemming from inaccurate or late reporting.
- (5) Promotes ENS awareness and processes within APHIS and encourages personnel to collaborate with emergency POCs as necessary to facilitate incident reporting and response.

d. APHIS Duty Officers

- (1) Appointed by the ERCS Deputy Administrator, represent the APHIS JDOC, and serve as the Agency headquarters point of contact for ENS use.
- (2) Use established JDOC email distribution groups and reporting templates to disseminate ENS reports and inquiries to APHIS programs.
- (3) Liaise with emergency POCs on ENS training, testing, and notifications.
- (4) Maintain ENS internal records, logs, and trackers.
- (5) Use traditional “call tree” method when employees do not respond to ENS messages or the ENS is unavailable.

e. APHIS Program Emergency POCs

- (1) Designated in writing by program leadership; minimum of one, no maximum.
- (2) Use the ENS for notifications of incidents having the potential impact to their mission, facilities, equipment, and personnel.
- (3) Coordinate with and inform the APHIS duty officer of program-specific ENS notifications to avoid duplicate notifications for the same incident.
- (4) Use established JDOC email distribution groups and reporting templates to report and respond to the JDOC.
- (5) Maintain and use internal processes, such as “call trees,” to account for employees who do not respond to the ENS.

f. APHIS Supervisors

- (1) Maintain overall responsibility for accounting for subordinate personnel and reporting back to the APHIS duty officer through their supervisory chain of command.
- (2) Maintain current contact information for personnel.
- (3) Encourage personnel to include additional contact information in the ENS.
- (4) Ensure personnel are aware of the ENS and its purpose.

g. APHIS Employees (Permanent, Term, Temporary)

- (1) Provide current and accurate contact information to supervisors and enter it into the ENS. At a minimum, ensure the official duty location, official e-mail address, and official phone number(s) are accurate.
- (2) Provide appropriate responses to ENS notifications.

7. **PROCEDURES**

The following procedures are established by this Directive:

a. ENS Use & Notification Criteria

While the APHIS duty officers will be the primary ENS administrators, emergency POCs from each program may also provide notifications to their personnel. These internal notifications must be coordinated with the APHIS duty officers assigned to the JDOC to avoid multiple notifications being sent for the same incident. Programs can forego having their emergency POC distribute messaging and instead request that the APHIS duty officers assigned to the JDOC send ENS notifications to their staff for program-specific incidents.

ENS messages are sent for emergency events having the potential to impact APHIS mission, facilities, equipment, and personnel. ENS notifications are organized into three categories: emergency, preparedness, and accountability. To prevent a delay in sending urgent notifications, the Deputy Administrator for ERCS has pre-approved and the APHIS Administrator has authorized use of the ENS message templates found in Appendix A to this Directive.

Category 1: Emergency. The JDOC activates the ENS to mitigate immediate negative impact to APHIS mission, facilities, equipment, and personnel. Category 1 notifications are distributed as quickly as possible following confirmation of an incident. Examples of category 1 incidents:

- (1) Active threat: Reports of an active threat in or near an APHIS facility.
- (2) Disasters: Natural, technological, biological, or man-made disasters that may impact APHIS mission, facilities, equipment, or personnel.
- (3) APHIS facility evacuation: Evacuation of an APHIS facility for any reason, including but not limited to alarms, fires, potential gas leaks, or structural damage.

Category 2: Preparedness. The JDOC activates the ENS in collaboration with APHIS programs as necessary for upcoming or ongoing events that have the potential to negatively impact APHIS mission, facilities, equipment, or personnel. Category 2 notifications help prepare the Agency for upcoming events likely to impact APHIS mission, facilities, equipment, or personnel.

- (1) Drills and exercises: Any preparedness messaging covering drills, exercises, and operational tests of the ENS.
- (2) Destructive weather: A significant weather event that may impact APHIS mission, facilities, equipment, or personnel.

Category 3: Accountability. Following the incidents listed above, the APHIS Administrator or Department officials may request that APHIS account for employees/personnel in affected areas to assess any impacts. The JDOC will use the ENS to poll employees in impacted areas regarding their status and will consolidate employees' responses into a report for APHIS leadership and any Department-required reporting.

b. ENS Profile Access and Maintenance

APHIS duty officers will work with Marketing and Regulatory Programs-Information Technology to maintain APHIS personnel data in the ENS. This data will be populated via periodic data imports from APHIS Human Resources systems and will include the official duty station, Government email address, and Government telephone number.

After profiles are created in the ENS, personnel will receive an email requesting they review their profile and add additional contact information and work locations. Minimum contact information includes official duty station,

Government email address, and Government telephone number, which will be populated from APHIS Human Resources systems.

Personnel are highly encouraged to provide additional contact information to allow them to receive important emergency notifications through multiple communications devices and channels.

8. FORMS

- a. This directive has no associated forms.

9. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Federal records created by this Directive must be maintained in accordance with the established [General Records Schedule \(GRS\)](#) and/or the [APHIS](#) Records Management Handbook, when applicable. If employees are named in an active litigation hold, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, and/or other action, those records, regardless of media, must be preserved and maintained in their native format until otherwise notified by your Agency Records Officer and/or the USDA Office of General Counsel.

- a. MRPBS Information Technology Division, Information Management Branch (MRP-ITD, IMB) is the official recordkeeper of this Directive. Agency issuances are currently unscheduled.
- b. ERCS' Emergency Management, Safety, and Security Division's Emergency Management Branch is the official recordkeeper of employee emergency contact information entered into the ENS. Disposition will be in accordance with GRS 5.3: Continuity and Emergency Planning Records, Item 020. Specific disposition instructions are indicated on ERCS' file plan.
- c. ERCS' Emergency Management, Safety, and Security Division is the official recordkeeper of accountability reports received and Agency accountability reports produced in association with the ENS and this Directive. Disposition will be in accordance with GRS 5.3: Continuity and Emergency Planning Records, Item 010. Specific disposition instructions are indicated on ERCS' file plan.

10. INQUIRIES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- a. General inquiries concerning this Directive may be directed to the JDOC at 301-436-3110 or via email to JDOC@usda.gov.

- b. Records management inquiries should be directed to the appropriate [Records Management Liaison](#).
- c. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of this policy (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.), should contact the United States Department of Agriculture's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD) for assistance.
- d. This Directive can be accessed online via the [APHIS Issuance Web page\(s\)](#).

/s/

Robert J. Huttenlocker
Deputy Administrator
Marketing and Regulatory Program Business Services
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

11. APPENDIX A: PRE-APPROVED MESSAGE TEMPLATES

Category 1: Emergency

Active threat template message: Active threat reported at (XYZ Location) at (local time). (Seek shelter immediately; Remain quiet; Shelter in place; Seek high ground; Implement lock-down procedures.) If in an APHIS facility, respond in accordance with your Emergency Occupancy Plans. Authorities will inform you when all is safe and clear. Please select a response from the following list and silence your devices.

1. I am an APHIS employee. I acknowledge receipt of this message.
2. I am not an APHIS employee. Please remove my information from this system.

Disaster template message: The (site name) office may be impacted due to a (hazard) at (location). (Seek shelter immediately; Remain quiet; Shelter in place; Seek high ground; Implement lock-down procedures.) Coordinate with your supervisor for further direction. Please select a response from the following list:

1. I am an APHIS employee. I acknowledge receipt of this message.
2. I am not an APHIS employee. Please remove my information from this system.

APHIS facility evacuation template message: The (site name) is being evacuated due to (threat/reason) at (location). Evacuate to your assigned assembly location. Do not use elevators. Please select a response from the following list:

1. I am an APHIS employee. I acknowledge receipt of this message.
2. I am not an APHIS employee. Please remove my information from this system.

Category 2: Preparedness

Drills and exercises template message: This is a (drill/test/exercise) – please select a response from the following list:

1. I am an APHIS employee. I acknowledge receipt of this message.
2. I am not an APHIS employee. Please remove my information from this system.

Destructive weather template message: This is a destructive weather warning message from the JDOC. Destructive weather is anticipated to impact your area (as early as local time) (or immediately). Check your local weather forecast for details. Please select a response from the following list:

1. I am an APHIS employee. I acknowledge receipt of this message.
2. I am not an APHIS employee. Please remove my information from this system.

Category 3: Accountability

Personnel accountability template message: In the wake of (XYZ event), APHIS leadership has requested that the JDOC obtain accountability of potentially impacted employees. Please select a response from the following list:

1. I am an APHIS employee. I am accounted for and acknowledge receipt of this message.
2. I am not an APHIS employee. Please remove my information from this system.

12. APPENDIX B: EMERGENCY POC DESIGNATION TEMPLATE

TO: Name
Deputy Administrator
Emergency and Regulatory Compliance Services

FROM: (Name of Deputy Administrator or Office Director)
Deputy Administrator (or other title)
(Name of Program)

SUBJECT: Emergency Point(s) of Contact Designation

Per APHIS Directive 1810.1, APHIS Emergency Notification System, the personnel listed below are appointed as emergency points of contact for (program name):

(Full Name 1)
(Full Name 2)
(Add more as required)

These emergency POCs are authorized to:

- a. Receive access to and use the APHIS emergency notification system.
- b. Receive access to and use the program emergency management email box in Microsoft Outlook.
- c. Use the ENS for incidents with potential impact to our program mission, facilities, equipment, and personnel.
- d. Coordinate with and inform the APHIS duty officer of program-specific ENS notifications.
- e. Use established Jere L. Dick Operations Center (JDOC) email distribution groups and reporting templates to report and respond to the JDOC.
- f. Maintain and use internal processes, such as “call trees,” to account for employees who do not respond to the ENS.

CC: JDOC (JDOC@usda.gov)