

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES
MEAT SAFETY ASSURANCE
Austin, TX

<h1 style="margin: 0;">MSA DIRECTIVE</h1>	6000.1 Rev. 2	2/4/2026
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RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO FOREIGN ANIMAL DISEASES AND REPORTABLE CONDITIONS

I. PURPOSE

This directive provides MSA staff instructions to follow when they observe clinical signs or have any reason to believe that animals may have conditions that are classified as Foreign Animal Diseases (FADs) or reportable conditions. MSA is issuing this directive to link to the list of reportable diseases from the Texas Animal Health Commission [List of Reportable and Actionable Diseases](#), and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)-reportable list to the [National List of Reportable Animal Diseases \(NLRAD\)](#) maintained by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). The [NLRAD](#) reportable disease list includes all WOAH-reportable diseases and other diseases of interest in the United States (U.S.). This directive also includes the applicable instructions for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) from [MSA Directive 6020.1, Enhanced Inspection of Poultry in Response to a Notification of a Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Outbreak](#), and has been revised for formatting and readability.

II. BACKGROUND

A. The U.S. has multiple controls to prevent the entry of FADs; however, FADs may enter the U.S. unintentionally through the importation of infected animals or animal products. Such diseases also may be carried inadvertently into the U.S. via contaminated clothing, shoes, or other objects (e.g., fomites). Alternatively, diseases also may be introduced intentionally as an act of terrorism.

B. MSA works with the Texas Animal Health Commission (and APHIS) on animal health surveillance of domestic animal disease conditions by observing animals presented for slaughter during routine ante-mortem and post-mortem inspection and reporting conditions that TAHC (and APHIS) has identified as either an FAD or a reportable condition.

C. The control of FADs and reportable conditions are important because the unchecked spread of FADs and emerging diseases (identified as reportable conditions) into agricultural environments will have a ripple effect on many segments of the U.S. economy, including disruption of livestock and poultry marketing, trade, and food security. Outbreaks of certain animal diseases, especially zoonotic diseases, can cause considerable economic and social disruption. Other significant costs would be incurred in controlling the spread of FADs and reportable conditions by animal quarantine, depopulation, the mass disposal of animal carcasses, and the cleaning and disinfecting of animal environments. In Texas, the Texas Animal Health Commission has the primary responsibility to investigate suspect conditions and to respond appropriately to the final diagnosis. If an FAD or reportable condition is detected, a chain of events is to occur at the state and national level to mitigate the risk.

NOTE: Many reportable diseases, including HPAI, are not a public health concern.

D. The Texas Animal Health Commission maintains a [List of Reportable and Actionable Diseases](#). APHIS maintains the National Animal Health Reporting System [NLRAD](#), as well as disease reporting

requirements. The [NLRAD](#) is a comprehensive listing for reportable diseases and is updated annually with any new U.S. reportable diseases.

III. SIGNS OF FADs OR REPORTABLE CONDITIONS

A. Inspection Program Personnel (IPP) are to consider whether FADs or reportable conditions may be present when they observe the signs described in this section or come across similar information related to animals presented for slaughter.

B. IPP are to consider the history of animals (animal records, ante-mortem pen cards, verbal information from the driver, importation of livestock, or any other source of information) when assessing animal health conditions. Information on the history of animals may not be available; however, if information of this type is available, it needs to be accurately passed on to the MSA Veterinarian and CM per Section V of this directive. The following signs observed in animals transported to slaughter or information provided may point toward an FAD or a reportable disease:

1. High morbidity;
2. High mortality;
3. Severe abortion storms of unknown etiology; or
4. Avian disease with acute deaths or central nervous system (CNS) signs.

C. Ante-mortem conditions that do not fit with the typical conditions for a specific domestic disease and may indicate FADs or reportable conditions include:

1. Vesicular lesions;
2. Excessive salivation or drooling;
3. Sudden lameness;
4. Severe respiratory conditions;
5. Pox or lumpy skin conditions;
6. CNS conditions or signs of encephalitic conditions (i.e., head pressing, head tilt, circling);
7. Mucosal diseases;
8. Larvae in wounds, unusual myiasis (fly maggot infestation), or acariasis (mite infestation); or
9. Unusual or unexplained illness or symptoms.

D. Post-mortem conditions that do not fit with the typical conditions for a specific domestic disease and may indicate FADs or reportable conditions include:

1. [Hemorrhagic septicemia](#); and
2. Suspicious or unusual post-mortem findings that do not fit typical conditions, such as necrotic foci on tonsils, enlarged spleen, or hydropericardium, which may be seen in some domestic diseases,

but if coupled with suspicious information (e.g., ante-mortem findings, records) warrant further investigation.

IV. IPP RESPONSIBILITIES FOR HPAI IN THE U.S.

A. Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) is a highly contagious APHIS reportable disease of sudden onset and high mortality in domestic poultry. HPAI is easily spread through direct contact with sick or infected poultry, as well as fomites (inanimate objects or surfaces that can become contaminated with infectious agents), such as equipment and vehicles. Birds infected with HPAI may exhibit clinical signs after virus exposure depending on the stage of disease or birds may die before they develop clinical signs.

B. IPP are to consider whether HPAI may be present when they observe poultry flocks exhibiting:

1. High number of dead birds at ante-mortem;
2. Purple or blue discoloration and swelling of the comb, wattle, snood (turkey) or shanks at ante-mortem;
3. Excessive bruising at ante-mortem or post-mortem; and
4. Lethargy, nasal discharge, coughing, sneezing, or diarrhea in live birds.

V. IPP RESPONSIBILITIES FOR REPORTING FADs AND REPORTABLE CONDITIONS

A. IPP are to notify their CM and their MSA veterinarian as soon as possible when they suspect that any undiagnosed or unusual disease condition is reportable, foreign, or both. The CM and MSA Veterinarian will relay the information to the CO.

B. IPP are to periodically review the establishment's sanitary and hygiene procedures and biosecurity measures. IPP are to refer to [MSA Directive 5060.1](#), *Hygiene and Biosecurity Practices* for additional instructions.

C. When IPP determine that any live animal, carcass, or flock exhibits signs or symptoms consistent with an FAD or reportable condition, IPP are to contact their CM and their MSA Veterinarian and follow the instructions in this section. They may be asked to stop the establishment from further slaughter of the suspected lot of animals, retain all carcasses and parts that have already been slaughtered,

D. IPP are to provide the following information, if available, to their MSA Veterinarian and CM when they suspect a possible FAD or reportable disease:

1. Producer's name, address, county, and phone number;
2. Any clinical history, including any treatments given and responses noted from the certification accompanying the animal;
3. Number and species of animals affected that were presented for slaughter;
4. What conditions, signs, or gross lesions are present; and
5. Establishment contact information, including name, address, and relevant phone numbers.

E. The MSA Veterinarian or CO designee is to notify the Texas Animal Health Commission (or the APHIS [Area Veterinarian-in-Charge \(AVIC\)](#)) and provide the information outlined in Section VI. D. above.

F. The [TAHC](#) will determine how the case is to be handled and provide the MSA Veterinarian or CO designee specific instructions at that time. If TAHC determines that an investigation is warranted, necessary personnel will be notified.

VI. QUESTIONS

Refer immediate questions about this directive through supervisory channels or use [ASK MSA](#) for questions not requiring an immediate response.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James R. Dillon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

James R. Dillon, DVM, MPH
Director, Texas State Meat and Poultry Inspection Program
Department of State Health Services