



**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AND CONSUMER SERVICES  
MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION DIVISION  
Raleigh, North Carolina**

*Steve Troxler, Commissioner*

<b>MPID NOTICE</b>	<b>1-21</b>	<b>1-12-2021</b>
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**Standard Operating Procedure for Completing Compliance Referral Form**

**DO NOT IMPLEMENT THIS NOTICE UNTIL FEBRUARY 1, 2021.**

**I. Purpose:** The purpose of this document is to establish procedures ensuring that reports of foodborne illnesses and other consumer complaints are properly prioritized and relayed to the appropriate compliance officer. In addition, these procedures will outline the steps to take when members of the general public inquire about Meat & Poultry Handler registration.

**II. Cancellation:** MPID Notice 1-18 dated 6-14-18

**III. Scope:** This procedure shall be followed by all MPID receptionist personnel upon occurrence when completing C&E Form 35a.

**IV. Procedure:**

- Enter your name in the "Request Taken By" block and the month, day, and year in the "Date" block.

**Consumer Complaints**

- Obtain the nature of the caller's complaint.
- Determine whether or not the product is USDA Inspected by:

Asking if the product bears a round inspection legend that says "USDA Inspected and Passed" for meat products or "USDA Inspected for Wholesomeness" for poultry products.

  - If the answer is "yes" the caller should be referred to the USDA FSIS District Office at 919-844-8400 or 1-800-662-7608. By referring the complaint to USDA, the caller will become part of a National Consumer Complaint Monitoring System.
  - If the product is not USDA inspected or the caller does not know, continue the conversation, and ask:
    - If any illness has been associated with the consumption of the product. If yes, check the "illness" box.
    - If the caller alleges product contamination or foreign material. If yes, enter this on the corresponding block.
- Since this is a consumer complaint, check the "consumer" box.
- Record the caller's name, address, city/zip, phone number and county in the corresponding blocks.

- Record the product(s) involved, and if an establishment is known, record the establishment's name and address in the corresponding blocks.
- Check Compliance Supervisor and the Compliance Officer responsible for the area of the state where the complaint occurred.
- In the "Comments" section, give a full description of the nature of the complaint.
- Email to those on the distribution list at the bottom of the form as well as the Compliance Supervisor and the Compliance Officer.
- If illness, contamination, or foreign material is reported, inform the State Director and call the Compliance Supervisor.
- Assign risk level (1, 2, 3 or 4) per attached "MPID Consumer Complaint Response Matrix."
- Shelia Hall will assign a case number and enter the complaint in the Compliance Spreadsheet on the H: drive. She will also update the status of the complaint, as necessary.
- If the consumer's complaint involves allegations of unfair business practices, refer them to the North Carolina Department of Justice Consumer Protection Section at 919-716-6000.

#### **Allegations of Illegal Activities**

- Obtain the caller's name, address, city/zip, phone number and county, and enter in the corresponding blocks. If the caller wishes to remain anonymous, please let them know that we will pursue their allegation but can often do a better job if we have a contact person to ask questions to later.
- Check the "illegal" box on the form.
- List the type of products involved in the illegal activity they are reporting.
- If the allegation involves a company or inspected establishment, list their name and address in the corresponding block.
- Check the Compliance Supervisor and the Compliance Officer responsible for the area of the state where the alleged illegal activity is occurring.
- In the "Comments" section, give a description of the nature of the illegal operation. Be sure to ask the following questions and record the answers:
  - Who is conducting the illegal activity (name)?
  - Where is this being conducted? (specific location)
  - When does the illegal activity tend to take place (day of the week, time of day)?
  - Where can the illegal products be found in commerce? (names of business or persons that are purchasing from the illegal operator)
- Email to the Compliance Supervisor, the Compliance Officer, and those on the distribution list.

### **Meat Handler/Poultry Exempt Inquiries**

- Obtain the caller's name, address, city/zip, phone number and county, and enter in the corresponding blocks.
- Check the "meat handler" or "poultry exempt" box on the form.
- Inquire as to the nature of their planned business.
- List the type of products they desire to sell in the "Product" box on the form.
- In the "Comments" section, give a description of the nature of the type of business they plan to operate. For example, wish to conduct door-to-door sales, desire to have animals slaughtered and sell meats at flea market, etc.
- Email the Compliance Officer responsible for the area of the state where the caller lives. CC the Compliance Supervisor and those on the distribution list.
- Let the caller know you are referring their request to a field employee who will be contacting them to set up an appointment for registration. This process typically takes a week to ten days.

**Attachments:** [C&E Form 35a Compliance Referral Form](#)  
[Map: Compliance Officer Regions](#)

**Dr. Karen Beck**  
**State Director**

<b>DISTRIBUTION:</b> MPID Raleigh Office Personnel, Compliance Officers	<b>SUBJECT CATEGORY:</b> Compliance
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### MPID Consumer Complaint Response Matrix

Risk Level	Time to contact	Time to complete
1	Upon receipt of complaint	Within 3 business days
2	Within 24 hours of receipt of complaint	Within 1 week
3	Within 24 hours of receipt of complaint	Within 1 week
4	Within 48 hours of receipt of complaint	Within 2 weeks

#### Risk Level Definitions

**1 - Highest Priority:** foodborne illness confirmed by doctor, hospitalization, multiple incidents

**2 - High Priority:** suspected foodborne illness; no medical confirmation of illness

**3 - Medium Priority:** no illness reported, product could cause illness/harm to consumer (ex. Foreign material

**4 - Low Priority:** no illness reported, product complaint is quality related and/or not likely to cause illness/harm to consumer (ex. Food tastes/smells bad)

- Complaints regarding USDA inspected product: refer to USDA, FSIS Raleigh District Office, 919-844-8400
- Complaints regarding unfair business practices: refer to NC Attorney General's Office of Consumer Protection: 1-877-566-7226