



Who's in Charge of What During an Outbreak or Pandemic?

America's response to an outbreak of infectious disease or pandemic is governed by the [National Response Framework](#), [Presidential Policy Directive-44: Enhancing Domestic Incident Response](#), and the [Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Act \(PAHPA\)](#). Federal response and recovery efforts to respond to a pandemic are coordinated closely with state, local and jurisdictional federal agencies. This infographic provides specific roles and responsibilities (with links for more details) of the nation's coordinated response for the top four agencies engaged in the Coronavirus outbreak – not all agencies involved.

For more in-depth information regarding the various agencies/departments, please click on their name



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

- HHS Secretary's Operations Center notifies the World Health Organization on incidents that impact the world
- Lead for the protection of the health of the civilian population against both intentional and accidental or naturally occurring threats.
- Responsible for coordinating with other federal agencies, private sector and nongovernmental partners in response to a biological incident.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The CDC is the U.S. public health authority and directs the nation's scientific response, mitigation, and prevention of an outbreak. They provide technical assistance, disseminate key public health and risk mitigation messages, and provide rapid and sustained public health assessment.



Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response

Assists the Secretary of HHS to lead the federal public health and medical response to emergencies, requests and provides assistance to locally led recovery efforts in the restoration of the public health, health care, and social services networks of affected individuals and communities.



Food & Drug Administration

The FDA's Medical Countermeasures Initiative (MCMi), led by the Office of Counterterrorism and Emerging Threats (OCET), provides strategic leadership and coordination for FDA's counterterrorism and emerging threat portfolios and works to identify and resolve complex scientific and regulatory challenges facing medical countermeasure development, approval, availability, and security.



Federal Emergency Management Agency

- For biological incidents, FEMA primarily manages coordinating centers, funding sources, non-medical supply resourcing, and supports emergency support functions & response support functions.
- Anything related to carrying out responsibilities of the Stafford Act.
- FEMA works with the Office of Personnel Management on DHS Surge Capacity Force personnel requirements.



U.S. Coast Guard

The USCG conducts port and waterway coastal security, search and rescue, and marine safety missions during a biological incident. In addition, the USCG under its cognizant authority shall enforce quarantines, per direction of the CDC, in the maritime environment. USCG On-Scene Coordinators are responsible for coordinating the removal of oil and hazardous substances in the Coastal Zone.



U.S. Customs & Border Protection

For biological incidents suspected or detected inside or at U.S. borders or those individuals that may travel to the United States from abroad, CBP may detain and/or quarantine individuals until medical authorities have been alerted. CBP may deny the admission of an alien not lawfully admitted for permanent residence who is infected with a communicable disease of public health significance.



Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency

(Former National Protection and Programs Directorate)
CISA's focus is on the nation's critical infrastructure. Through its network of Protective Security Advisors, the component sustains communications with the critical infrastructure sector coordinating councils and sector-specific government coordinating councils on appropriate information sharing related to the evolving biological incident.



U.S. Department of Defense

Has significant resources that may be accessed to respond to domestic emergencies and, in the case of a biological incident, provides a spectrum of capabilities that protect not just the department, but the general public as well.



Defense Intelligence Agency National Center for Medical Intelligence

Provides intelligence assessments of foreign health threats, including pandemic warning, to prevent strategic surprise across the broad threat spectrum. NCMi assesses risk and projects the impact of incidents to deliver decision advantage to U.S. warfighters, defense planners, and DoD policymakers.



Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch

Conducts comprehensive health surveillance of DoD forces. The AFHSB serves a key role in biosurveillance to detect disease and to understand the threats from endemic and emerging infectious diseases relevant to DoD forces. Though the focus is on infectious disease threats relevant to DoD forces, the AFHSB serves as a significant source of information to maintain situational awareness.



Federal Bureau of Investigation

The FBI leads and coordinates the operational law enforcement response, on-scene law enforcement, and related investigative and appropriate intelligence activities related to terrorist threats and incidents.



U.S. Department of Justice

The Attorney General is responsible for law enforcement's response through the FBI director.