



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

Steve Troxler, Commissioner

MPID NOTICE	15-25	7-31-25
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Compliance Review Protocol for Meat and Poultry Handlers

I. PURPOSE

This document establishes procedures for the review of Meat and Poultry Handlers: farmers, poultry exempt operators, distributors, warehouses, salvage dealers, and others.

II. REFERENCES

Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601 et seq); Federal Poultry Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C 451 et seq.); 9 CFR Parts 300 to 500; NC Compulsory Meat Inspection Law (Chapter 106, Articles 49 B & C of the North Carolina General Statutes); NC Poultry Products Inspection Act (Chapter 106, Article 49 D of the North Carolina General Statutes); FSIS Directive 8010.1 Rev. 6.

III. CANCELLATION

MPID Notice 7-23 dated 6-22-23

IV. DEFINITIONS OF BUSINESS TYPES

Distributor: A person, firm, or corporation that receives and handles meat or poultry, typically from multiple domestic or overseas suppliers, stores those products in cold storage or freezers, and then redistributes those products to multiple customers without processing or breaking down the product. A distributor is required to register as a meat and poultry handler (21 U.S.C. 643 and 460).

Food Bank: An organization that collects or purchases meat and poultry products from individuals, manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, or government agencies to store and donate the collected product to non-profit and community food programs.

Meat and Poultry Handler: An individual or business that engages in receiving and/or storing, transporting and/or offering for sale (wholesale and/or retail) fully marked, labeled and wholesome meat and/or poultry product. All such product must bear a state or federal inspection legend on the final product at the time of sale. Opening of product containers for further processing or repackaging is not permitted.

Poultry Exempt Operator (PEO): A person, firm, or corporation that slaughters or processes poultry exempt from Federal or State inspection. This type of operation can sell to household or non-household consumers unless the operation is a custom exempt operator. Custom exempt operators may not engage in the buying or selling of any poultry product capable of use as human food (9 CFR 381.10(a)(5-7), 381.10(b), and 381.10(c)).

Retailer: A person, firm, or corporation that sells meat and poultry products directly to consumers for consumption, generally off-premises. Retail operations may include cutting up, slicing, trimming, grinding, freezing, curing, cooking, smoking, breaking bulk, or wrapping or rewrapping amenable food products (9 CFR 303.1(d)(1), 381.10(d)(1)).

Salvage: A person, firm, or corporation that purchases, sorts and sells "distressed" meat and poultry products that other businesses have been unable to sell (i.e., wholesome and properly labeled products that have quality issues or do not meet purchase specifications).

Warehouse: A person, firm, or corporation that handles meat and poultry products from multiple domestic or overseas suppliers and may be public (leases space to product owners) or private (stores its own products for its own retail stores). A public warehouse is required to register as a meat and poultry handler; a private warehouse is not required to register (21 U.S.C. 643 and 460). A warehouse also may operate under voluntary identification or certification service that allows it to be repackage/label, certify for export, or perform other activities (9 CFR 350.3, 362.2).

V. RISK CATEGORIES

Risk Category	Risk Category Descriptions	Review Timeframes
1	Violators	3 months
2	Warehouses, distributors, food banks, non-profits and salvage dealers, door-to-door salesmen; PEOs who slaughter more than 300 birds per year	4-6 months
3	Meat handler farmers who have 5 or more animals slaughtered under inspection and offered for sale per year, PEOs who slaughter fewer than 300 birds per year	1 year
4	Meat handler farmers who have fewer than 5 animals slaughtered and offered for sale per year; PEOs who have not slaughtered any birds for sale in the previous year and communicated no intention to slaughter any birds for sale without notifying MPID Compliance Officer first (does not want to cancel registration)	2 years
5	Meat handler farmer who has not had any animals slaughtered and sold since last review and communicated no intention to do so without notifying MPID Compliance Officer first (does not want to cancel their registration)	3 years
9	Violator who has completed violator progression schedule (see note below); withdrawal of meat handler registration	N/A

Note: RC1 is highest priority and 9 lowest. When a violation is written, the violator is placed in RC1 for quarterly review. Violators remain in RC1 until they have received their Notice of Warning or Civil Penalty and quarterly review shows no concerns. With acceptable reviews, violators progress through the risk categories (RC1→ RC2 → RC3 → RC9) until they are removed from the list or returned to appropriate RC for their type of operation. If a review identifies any concerns, MPID Compliance Officer will reassess RC.

VI. PROCEDURES

MPID Compliance Officers (CO) will conduct reviews of Meat and Poultry Handlers and Poultry Exempt Operators in their designated areas. Each CO will conduct at least 15 reviews from MPID Compliance Review database and 3 random reviews of any business offering meat/poultry for sale to general public per month with priority

given to violators and new registrations. If an individual is a meat handler farmer and PEO, both reviews will be conducted at the higher risk category frequency.

Veterinary Medical Officers (VMO) will conduct follow-up reviews of Meat and Poultry Handlers in their designated areas when assigned by CO.

Individuals dealing in meat or poultry products in or for commerce and that do not operate under State or Federal Inspection are required by law to register with the NCDA&CS Meat and Poultry Inspection Division.

Once registered with NCDA&CS Meat and Poultry Inspection Division, individuals who raise poultry may slaughter birds of their own raising on their farm to sell under the 1,000- or 20,000- bird poultry exemption.

A. New Registrations for Meat and Poultry Handlers

1. Raleigh Office receives the request and submits [C&E 35a Compliance Referral](#) form to MPID's CO assigned to the county of the registrant's operation.
2. COs will contact registrant to schedule a review.
3. At the review, COs will gather information to complete MP-2 form Registration of Meat and Poultry Handlers and appropriate C&E 8 form.
 - [MP-2](#) – completed for new registrations of Meat and Poultry Handlers
 - [C&E 8](#) – completed for Violators, Distributors, Meat Handlers acting as Warehouses, door-to-door salesmen, salvage dealers, consumer complaints and sanitation concerns in conjunction with County Health officials
 - [C&E 8F](#) – completed for Meat Handlers who are farmers
4. COs will review facilities to ensure product is stored in a sanitary manner and product is properly labeled.
 - a. Observe freezers and/or coolers where inspected meat and poultry products will be stored ensuring they meet the [requirements](#).
 - b. Observe meat and poultry product labels and packaging to ensure product contains NCDA or USDA mark of inspection, other label requirements of [9 CFR 317](#), and packaging has not been compromised.

- c. Observe area where the freezer and/or cooler is stored. It should meet sanitary requirements and be able to be secured when operators are not on premises.
5. COs add the new firms to the MPID Compliance Database generating a registration number. The assigned registration number will be added to the MP-2 form then signed by CO. An electronic copy will be attached to the firm record in the database.
6. COs will enter a new review into MPID Compliance database at the PCR Planned Compliance Review (2nd tab) and attach completed C&E 8 form.
7. COs provide signed MP-2 forms and the following documentation appropriate for the type of business along with the CO's contact information to the registrant and answer any questions they have.
 - Farmer Meat Handler – [MPID Notice 7-18](#), [MPID Notice 6-21](#), and establishment directory
 - Warehouse and Distributor – [MPID Notice 7-18](#)

B. New Registrations for Poultry Exempt Operators (PEOs)

1. Raleigh Office receives the request and submits [C&E 35a Compliance Referral](#) form to CO assigned to the county of the registrant's operation.
2. COs will contact registrant to schedule a review.
3. At the review, COs will gather information to complete [C&E8P](#) form.
4. COs will review facilities to ensure product is properly labeled stored in a sanitary manner.
 - a. Observe freezers and/or coolers where exempt poultry products will be stored ensuring they meet the requirements.
 - b. Observe poultry product labels to ensure product label contains required features.
 - c. Observe area where the freezer and/or cooler is stored. It should meet sanitary requirements and be able to be secured when operators are not on premises.

- d. Observe the equipment used to slaughter and process birds under the exemption (bleeding cones, pot & water heating equipment, plucking machine, tables, bags/packaging, etc.).
 - e. Explain to PEO the importance of using potable water hoses.
 - f. Review documentation for water and/or ice potability.
 - g. Explain record-keeping requirements (slaughter and sale records).
5. COs provide and explain the following documentation appropriate for the type of business and answer any questions they have.
 - [MPID Notice 5-18](#) or [MPID Notice 6-18](#) and [Best Management Practices for On-farm Poultry Processing](#)
 6. COs add the new firm to the MPID Compliance Database.
 7. COs will enter a new review into MPID Compliance Database and attach completed C&E8P form.
 8. If the new PEO is not a registered meat and poultry handler, make sure they sign a [C&E 8A](#) form for the “Agreement and Certification” statement.

C. Meat and Poultry Handler and PEO Follow-up Reviews

1. CO/VMOs schedule follow-up PCP review at frequency listed in risk category table in Section V.
2. CO/VMOs review C&E8 records from previous reviews prior to site visit.

Note: If the firm does not have a MP-2 or C&E 8A with the “Agreement and Certification” statement signed, one must be completed at the next review.
3. At review, CO/VMOs verify name(s), address, phone number and email of farmer(s).
4. CO/VMOs will review facilities to ensure product is properly labeled and stored in a sanitary manner.
5. CO/VMOs complete appropriate C&E8 form, enter a new review for the firm in the MPID Compliance Database and attach the completed form.

- [C&E 8](#) – completed for Violators, Distributors, Meat Handlers acting as Warehouses, door-to-door salesmen, salvage dealers, consumer complaints and sanitation concerns in conjunction with County Health officials
- [C&E 8F](#) – completed for Meat Handlers who are farmers
- [C&E 8P](#) – completed for Poultry Exempt Operators

D. Removing Meat and Poultry Handler and/or PEO from Follow-up Reviews

1. When a Meat and Poultry Handler or PEO has ceased operations requiring a PCP review, COs will have the Meat and Poultry Handler and/or PEO sign the appropriate form:
 - [C&E 2A](#) form, Meat & Poultry Handler Withdrawal form, or
 - [C&E 2B](#) form, PEO Withdrawal form.
2. COs will enter a new review for the firm in the MPID Compliance Database, assign a risk category of 9, and attach the signed Withdrawal form.
3. If the firm is both a Meat and Poultry Handler and PEO and only wishes to cease one or the other, COs will edit the firm profile in the MPID Compliance Database and remove relevant category.
4. The Compliance Supervisor and Raleigh Office should be notified by email to remove the hard copy file from active to inactive filing cabinet.

VII. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: If you have any questions or need additional information, contact your supervisor.

**Dr. Karen Beck
State Director**

DISTRIBUTION:
MPID Compliance Officers

SUBJECT CATEGORY:
Compliance