

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2018

Statement on the National Biodefense Strategy

September 18, 2018

Today I have taken action to better protect the American people by releasing a National Biodefense Strategy and signing a National Security Presidential Memorandum (NSPM) that will strengthen our Nation's defenses against biological threats to health and safety. The implementation of these actions will promote a more efficient, coordinated, and accountable biodefense enterprise. Taken together, they represent a new direction in the Nation's defense against biological threats.

The National Biodefense Strategy builds on lessons learned from past biological incidents, such as the 2001 anthrax attacks, the 2009 influenza pandemic, and the 2014 West Africa Ebola epidemic, to develop a more resilient and effective biodefense enterprise. Biological threats emanate from many sources, and they know no borders. They have great potential to disrupt the economy, exact a toll on human life, and tear at the very fabric of society. My administration will take steps to improve our understanding of the risks posed by biological threats and to respond to them effectively and efficiently.

The NSPM I have signed directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to serve as the Federal lead in coordinating implementation of the National Biodefense Strategy. It also establishes a Cabinet-level Biodefense Steering Committee to support the transformation of America's biodefense enterprise and to protect Americans from bioterrorism and natural outbreaks of deadly diseases. Finally, it directs my National Security Advisor to review biological threats and prioritize biodefense actions annually, which will enable the Government to better anticipate, prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from biological incidents.

My administration is changing the Government's approach so that it can adapt to the complex nature of biological threats. Our National Biodefense Strategy will address the full range of biological threats, including those that are naturally occurring, deliberate, and accidental—a first for the United States Government. We will comprehensively evaluate our national biodefense needs and monitor implementation of our strategy on an ongoing basis in order to prioritize effectively the Government's biodefense resources and actions.

My administration is focused on strengthening our Nation's defenses against the full range of threats to our health and security, including those of a biological nature. With these actions today, I am reaffirming my unwavering commitment to protecting the American people, the American homeland, and the American way of life.

Categories: Statements by the President : Diseases : National Biodefense Strategy.

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