

**Vatave, Ajay (CDC/CCEHIP/NCEH)**

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**From:** Sinks, Tom (ATSDR/OA/OD)  
**Sent:** Friday, October 12, 2007 11:40 AM  
**To:** CDC All - NCEH/ATSDR  
**Cc:** Falk, Henry (CDC/CCEHIP/OD); Galaska, Louise (CDC/CCEHIP/OD); Lucido, Sal (CDC/OD/OEC); Kocher, Paula L. (CDC/OCOO/OD); Sinks, Tom (ATSDR/OA/OD)  
**Subject:** PLEASE READ - Procedures related to Outside Contacts - on behalf of Dr. Frumkin  
**Attachments:** Final Outside Contact Procedure.doc



Final Outside  
Contact Procedur...

Last year, ATSDR staff were asked by FEMA to assist in evaluating levels of formaldehyde in trailers being used post Hurricane Katrina. Our staff had been working on environmental contaminations issues post-Katrina for many months. Their work was timely and highly valued by our partners. This request must not have seemed extraordinary to our staff. Once ATSDR received the data, the work proceeded rapidly and was released in an expedited manner, similar to how other post-Katrina environmental data reviews had been handled.

Unfortunately, the request was generated by FEMA lawyers attempting to respond to legal actions against FEMA. Our staff were asked to handle the EPA-generated data as confidential. They honored the request. FEMA lawyers never contacted DHHS lawyers to discuss this arrangement. NCEH/ATSDR Leadership was unaware that our staff were working directly with FEMA lawyers or that supervisors had not been directly included in the work.

We want to emphasize the value of working collaboratively with other organizations. NCEH/ATSDR cannot achieve its mission in a vacuum. At the same time, we rely on our staff to seek appropriate guidance, support and approval from their supervisors when requested to work on projects involving other organizations. We also rely on supervisors to inform the chain of command about highly sensitive projects and out-of-the-ordinary requests.

Please review the attachment which provides guidance about informing management about collaborations with organizations outside of CDC/ATSDR.

## NCEH/ATSDR Procedures Regarding Official Interaction With Persons or Organizations Outside of NCEH/ATSDR

<b>Purpose</b>	To specify procedures for handling official contacts and interactions with individuals or organizations outside CDC/ATSDR.
<b>Background</b>	<p>NCEH/ATSDR staff often work closely with staff of external organizations in the public and private sectors. Routine staff-level interactions are expected and appropriate in fulfilling NCEH/ATSDR's mission. However, employees must ensure that any official assistance provided and documents developed as a result of interactions with contacts external to CDC are approved by supervision and cleared through all appropriate levels of review per the NCEH/ATSDR Clearance Policy and Procedure and division-specific clearance guidelines</p>
<b>Procedures</b>	<p>NCEH/ATSDR supervisors must be informed of, and concur with, their staff's assistance to outside organizations, including other federal agencies. Any reports, talking points, memoranda, or similar documents developed in response to requests from outside organizations should be approved by supervisors and cleared through all appropriate levels of review.</p> <p>As stated, routine staff-level interaction with outside organizations is expected in fulfilling NCEH/ATSDR's mission. However, if an outside contact from the list below seeks an official position or statement from NCEH/ATSDR, employees should notify their supervisor and follow Division guidelines for ensuring notification of their division policy and communications contacts (if applicable) and the NCEH/ATSDR Office of the Director.</p> <p>Representatives of organizations in this category include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Congressional staff or members of Congress;</li><li>• state legislators or legislative staff;</li><li>• government affairs/policy staff of external organizations;</li><li>• policy staff from HHS and other Federal agencies/departments;</li><li>• Office of General Counsel or other legal staff from HHS and other Federal agencies/departments, and any other outside lawyer including private, state and local;</li><li>• communications staff from HHS and other Federal agencies/departments; and</li><li>• members of the media.</li></ul> <p>Division policy and communications staff and NCEH/ATSDR offices can assist you and your supervisor in responding to inquiries from external groups. It is also important to notify these offices as they in turn are responsible for notifying various CDC and HHS offices.</p>

## Who to Contact

The below table below summarizes Office of the Director contacts to engage prior to interactions with various external organizations. If there is a potentially sensitive issue and you are not sure who to contact, please notify the Issues Management Team and they will help connect you with the appropriate office.

If you are contacted by:	In addition to your supervisor and Division policy/communications contacts, please notify:
Congressional staff or members of Congress	Office of Policy, Planning, and Evaluation (OPPE), Issues Management Team Sascha Fielding: 404-498-2058, <a href="mailto:SFielding@cdc.gov">SFielding@cdc.gov</a>
State/local legislators or legislative staff	OPPE, Issues Management Team Sascha Fielding: 404-498-2058, <a href="mailto:SFielding@cdc.gov">SFielding@cdc.gov</a>
Government affairs/policy staff of external organizations	OPPE, Strategic Engagements Tim Hack: 404-498-0497, <a href="mailto:THack@cdc.gov">THack@cdc.gov</a>
Policy staff from CDC, HHS, and other Federal agencies/departments	OPPE, Director Ken Rose: 404-498-0080, <a href="mailto:KRose@cdc.gov">KRose@cdc.gov</a>
Office of General Counsel or other legal staff from HHS and other Federal agencies/departments and any other outside lawyer	Office of the General Counsel (OGC): (404) 639-7200
Communications staff from CDC, HHS, and other Federal agencies/departments	Office of Communication Jana Telfer: 404-498-0183, <a href="mailto:JTelfer@cdc.gov">JTelfer@cdc.gov</a> Media Line: 404-498-0070, <a href="mailto:CGreen@cdc.gov">CGreen@cdc.gov</a>
Reporters or other members of the media	Office of Communication Media Line: 404-498-0070, <a href="mailto:CGreen@cdc.gov">CGreen@cdc.gov</a>