

***WHITE HOUSE, U.S.
GOVERNMENT***



***THE NATIONAL
BIODEFENSE
STRATEGY***

White House, U.S. Government

The National Biodefense Strategy

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FOREWORD

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It is a vital interest of the United States to manage the risk of biological incidents. In today's interconnected world, biological incidents have the potential to cost thousands of American lives, cause significant anxiety, and greatly impact travel and trade.

Biological threats—whether naturally occurring, accidental, or deliberate in origin—are among the most serious threats facing the United States and the international community. Outbreaks of disease can cause catastrophic harm to the United States. They can cause death, sicken, and disable on a massive scale, and they can also inflict psychological trauma and economic and social disruption. Natural or accidental outbreaks, as well as deliberate attacks, can originate in one country and spread to many others, with potentially far-reaching international consequences. Advances in science promise better and faster cures, economic advances, a cleaner environment, and improved quality of life, but they also bring new security risks. In this rapidly changing landscape, the United States must be prepared to manage the risks posed by natural outbreaks of disease, accidents with high consequence pathogens, or adversaries who wish to do harm with biological agents.

Health security means taking care of the American people in the face of biological threats to our homeland and

to our interests abroad. The significant infectious disease outbreaks of recent decades, including Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), pandemic influenza, Ebola virus disease, and Zika virus disease, have revealed the extent to which individual countries and international communities need to improve their preparedness and biosurveillance systems to detect and respond to the next health crisis. The health of the American people depends on our ability to stem infectious disease outbreaks at their source, wherever and however they occur. America's biodefense enterprise needs to be nimble enough to address emerging infectious disease threats, the risks associated with the accelerating pace of biotechnology, and threats posed by terrorist groups or adversaries seeking to use biological weapons.

The *National Biodefense Strategy* is aligned with the 2018 *National Security Strategy* of the United States. Pillar One of the 2018 *National Security Strategy* explicitly calls for protecting "the American people, the homeland, and the American way of life." One component of this goal is achieved by detecting and containing biothreats at their source, supporting and promoting the responsible conduct of biomedical innovation, and improving emergency response. Pillar Two calls for "promoting] American prosperity," which increasingly will depend on a vibrant life sciences and biotechnology enterprise.

This *National Biodefense Strategy* highlights the President's commitment to protect the American people and our way of life, laying out a clear pathway and set of objectives to effectively counter threats from naturally

occurring, accidental, and deliberate biological events. It is broader than a Federal Government strategy. It is a call to action for state, local, territorial, and tribal (SLTT) entities, other governments, practitioners, physicians, scientists, educators, and industry.

VISION

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The United States actively and effectively prevents, prepares for, responds to, recovers from, and mitigates risk from natural, accidental, or deliberate biological threats.

PURPOSE

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This *National Biodefense Strategy* brings together and puts in place for the first time, a single coordinated effort to orchestrate the full range of activity that is carried out across the United States Government to protect the American people from biological threats. With National Security Presidential Memorandum (NSPM)-14, this strategy explains how the United States Government will manage its activities more effectively to assess, prevent, detect, prepare for, respond to, and recover from biological threats, coordinating its biodefense efforts with those of international partners, industry, academia, non-governmental entities, and the private sector.

The mission of the Federal Government during a biological incident is to save lives, reduce human suffering, protect property and the environment, control the spread of disease, and support community efforts to overcome the physical, emotional, environmental, and economic impacts. This federal mission is contingent upon the coordination with and the success of the community response. This strategy describes the goals and objectives that will guide the United States in assessing, preventing, detecting, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from a