

**Minnesota Department of Agriculture  
Food and Feed Safety Division**

Document FOOD.60.07	Page 1 of 3
Version #: 2	Effective Date: 12/28/2016
Title: <b>Letter of Information SOP</b>	

**Table of Contents**

1. PURPOSE
2. SCOPE
3. BACKGROUND
4. RESPONSIBILITY
5. DEFINITIONS
6. PROCEDURES
7. RELATED DOCUMENTS (includes References, Attachments)
8. EQUIPMENT/MATERIALS NEEDED
9. SAFETY
10. CIRCULATION
11. APPROVAL/DOCUMENT HISTORY

**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this procedure is to describe the process used to compose and issue LETTERS OF INFORMATION.

**2. SCOPE**

This document will cover all letters of information issued by Compliance Unit Staff of the Feed and Food Safety Division (FFSD).

**3. BACKGROUND**

A LETTER OF INFORMATION is an enforcement tool used in the Progressive Enforcement Continuum. Informational letters are an initial step in the enforcement process and used to clarify or explain regulatory requirements to allow for voluntary correction if needed prior to the commitment of significant agency resources or involvement. This type of communication is used to explain a potential issue or violation, such as the requirement for a food handling license or how to obtain a license. A LETTER OF INFORMATION is used when there is reasonable suspicion of a violation, but insufficient probable cause to support one, and not used to issue orders or give warning of potential enforcement actions that may be taken.

**4. RESPONSIBILITY**

**Compliance Case Administrator** –The Compliance Case Administrator will finalize correspondence and maintain documentation related to issuance of LETTERS OF INFORMATION.

**Compliance Officer** – The Compliance Officer will draft and send the LETTER OF INFORMATION and maintain documentation related to issuance of LETTERS OF INFORMATION.

**5. DEFINITIONS**

**Letter of Information:** A written notice used when there is reasonable suspicion of a violation, but insufficient probable cause to support one.

**6. PROCEDURES**

**6.1 Draft Letter of Information - Compliance Officer**

- 6.1.1 Draft a letter using the *Letter of Information Template*.
- 6.1.2 Describe the matter that has been observed and indicate the potential for a regulatory violation.

**Minnesota Department of Agriculture  
Food and Feed Safety Division**

Document FOOD.60.07	Page 2 of 3
Version #: 2	Effective Date: 12/28/2016
Title: <b>Letter of Information SOP</b>	

- 6.1.3 Identify the statute, rule, regulation or act that applies to the observed issue.
- 6.1.4 Explain the need to correct any potential violations and any possible penalties if the issue is not corrected.
- 6.1.5 Conclude the document with any required contact information for area inspectors or specific staff needed to address the concern.
- 6.1.6 Upload LETTER OF INFORMATION to the SharePoint (SP) enforcement file and change the file status as appropriate. If a LETTER OF INFORMATION is prepared in response to a complaint, send via email to the Compliance Case Administrator for mailing.

**6.2 Finalize and Mail Letter of Information - Compliance Case Administrator**

- 6.2.1 Print the letter and enclosures to be mailed. For enforcement cases, scan the letter and enclosures and attach to the SharePoint enforcement file and the assigned Enforcement ID in USAFS. If a LETTER OF INFORMATION is prepared in response to a complaint, upload the LETTER OF INFORMATION to the appropriate Complaint ID in USAFS.
- 6.2.2 Send letter including enclosures via first class mail and email if available.
- 6.2.3 Electronic copy any Department Staff indicated on the letter.

**6.3 Maintain Documentation – Compliance Staff**

- 6.3.1 Maintain all documentation related to the assessment of the LETTER OF INFORMATION in the electronic files per program policy.

**7. RELATED DOCUMENTS (includes References, Attachments)**

Letter of Information Template

**8. EQUIPMENT/MATERIALS NEEDED**

N/A

**9. SAFETY**

N/A

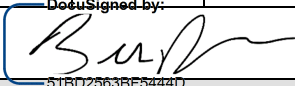
**10. CIRCULATION**

This policy will be circulated to the following groups: Compliance Officers, Compliance Case Administrator, Compliance Unit Supervisor, and the Food Standards Coordinator. The current version will be stored electronically on the FFSD document control site.

**Minnesota Department of Agriculture  
Food and Feed Safety Division**

Document FOOD.60.07	Page 3 of 3
Version #: 2	Effective Date: 12/28/2016
Title: <b>Letter of Information SOP</b>	

**11. APPROVAL/DOCUMENT HISTORY**

Document History		
Version #	Status (I, R)	Change History
1	I	<b>Initial Policy Drafting.</b>
2	R	<b>Divided previous procedure into three sections applicable to Compliance Officer role and Case Administrator roles.</b>
DocuSigned by: 		12/28/2016
<b>Approved By:</b>		<b>Date</b>
<b>Approved By:</b>		<b>Date</b>

I = Initial document; R = Revised document