



Dr. Everett B. Kelley
National President

Jeremy A. Lannan
NVP for Women & Fair Practices

April 7, 2020

Paul Kiecker
Administrator
Food Safety and Inspection Service
1400 Independence Avenue, SW Room 331-E
Washington, DC 20250

Re: COVID- 19 at Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)

Dear Administrator Kiecker:

I write on behalf of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), representing over 700,000 federal employees and roughly 6,500 Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) Employees. As you know, AFGE has been fighting hard for sufficient personal protective equipment (PPE) for all federal employees who are exposed to COVID-19, including FSIS employees. FSIS appears to have fallen critically short in addressing the needs of its employees, imperiling not just the federal workers it is responsible for, but the employees in the industry and our nations very food supply. AFGE wants to be a partner in addressing this crisis, so we can begin making up lost ground.

First, we must have sufficient PPE, including but not limited to N95 respirators for all FSIS employees working in the field. We need this immediately.

Second, we must have regular communication between the Agency and AFGE at the highest levels. We need to know what the Agency is doing to protect employees, the mission and the public. We need weekly briefings with the Union.

Finally, the Union must be involved to share frontline experience in responding to this crisis. This also includes an open dialogue about the extent of the spread of COVID-19 within the Agency and the industry. We need to begin coordinating on responses immediately.

Please begin moving forward working with AFGE Acting National Joint Council President, Paula Schelling, addressing these issues. Her contact information is:

Paula Schelling
465 Mary Street
Burlington, WI 53105
262-492-3704
Paula.Schelling@usda.gov

AFGE looks forward to engaging with the Agency on every level as we partner to combat this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Everett B. Kelley
AFGE National President

