

Dear AFDO Stakeholder,

Due to the current unpredictable environment around federal funding for nonprofits, including AFDO, the organization's leadership has placed 55% of staff on furlough effective February 3. The remaining 45% will be on rotating furlough every other week to maintain the organization's commitment to supporting food safety professionals at all levels. At a minimum, AFDO anticipates this furlough continuing through Friday, February 14, 2025.

The federal government has added a review and approval process for reimbursement requests — and timelines and expectations for that process are not available. More specifically, AFDO has submitted an approximately \$1 million reimbursement request that typically would have been received in one day, but two days later remains unreceived. AFDO will have very limited services for its state and local partners in the interim, with minimal staffing in place for emergencies.

Specific impacts to various communities are noted below:

- **Vendor partners** working on federal projects will not be paid until the federal government provides reimbursement. AFDO recognizes that this is particularly challenging for its many small business vendors who are providing services for federally funded projects.
- **Federal partners** should assume that no additional work will be completed until at least Friday, February 14.
- **Participants in AFDO (non-FDA funded) training** will receive additional information if there are any changes at least two weeks in advance of the courses. Any impacts to FDA trainings will be provided through FDA.
- **Milk and Shellfish subaward applicants and recipient** payments and decisions on applications will be delayed by at least two weeks.
- **Seafood HACCP Alliance, Produce Safety Alliance and Food Safety Preventive Control Alliance** items will likely be delayed one-week in most cases.

This decision, though challenging, is necessary to ensure that AFDO continues to operate and maintains long-term financial viability. We regret any challenges or inconveniences this may cause. Further, we are saddened to take this action that will impact every single AFDO team member.

If you have any questions, please reach out to me. I appreciate your ongoing support as we navigate through this difficult time. Any immediate needs should be sent to [afdo@afdo.org](mailto:afdo@afdo.org) because this is the only email that will be continually monitored during the furlough period.

Steven Mandernach

Executive Director