

# Poultry Zero Tolerance Verification Task Job Aid

**Instructions:** Review this Job Aid and policy documents, regulations, and inspection methodologies with a mentor.

## Acronyms/Definitions

- ZT – Zero Tolerance
- HACCP – Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
- Sanitation SOP – Sanitation Standard Operating Procedure
- PHIS – Public Health Information System

## Task Overview

- IPP verify that establishments effectively prevent poultry carcasses contaminated with **feces** from entering the chilling system ([9 CFR 381.65\(f\)](#)).

## Basic Procedure

- Schedule a Poultry Zero Tolerance Verification task.
- Each day, conduct at least two fecal contamination checks for each evisceration line for every shift (at least 2 checks x number of shifts x number of lines).
  - **Note:** Under the New Poultry Inspection System (NPIS), IPP use the Poultry NPIS Zero Tolerance Food Safety Verification task to conduct a fecal contamination check each hour for each evisceration line for each operating shift (see [FSIS Directive 6500.1](#)).
- For each fecal contamination check, select and examine 10 poultry carcasses after the final wash and before the chilling tank.
  - IPP are to examine each 10-bird sample set at the pre-chill re-inspection station using the inspection procedure described in [FSIS Directive 6420.5](#) (Sec. V.).
  - IPP are to identify feces according to the identification guidelines described in [FSIS Directive 6420.5](#) (Attachment 2).
  - **Note:** Under NPIS, IPP randomly select carcasses just before the Carcass Inspection (CI) station and examine those carcasses at the pre-chill verification inspection station as described in [FSIS Directive 6500.1](#).
- If IPP observe **feces** on any of the 10 birds in a set, they are to ([FSIS Directive 6420.5](#) (Sec. VII. B.):
  - Notify the establishment.
  - Document noncompliance with [9 CFR 381.65\(f\)](#).
  - Verify establishment corrective actions.
  - Complete the task in PHIS.
- If IPP observe **ingesta** during the check, they are to:
  - Notify the establishment.
  - Verify that the ingesta is removed from the affected carcass.
  - Do not document noncompliance for this finding. However, consider possible sources of ingesta contamination when performing additional inspection verification activities (see [FSIS Directive 6420.5](#)).

- Consider whether findings are associated with past noncompliances or other findings that did not result in a noncompliance that may indicate systemic problems.
  - If the overall pattern of inspection findings suggest that the establishment is not maintaining sanitary conditions during slaughter, consult with FSIS supervisors.  
For example:
    - Repetitive HACCP or Sanitation SOP noncompliance with multiple aspects of the slaughter HACCP system.
    - Establishment's corrective actions in response to findings of visible fecal are consistently ineffective.
- If no findings of identifiable feces, document the regulations verified and complete task in PHIS.

### Discussion Points

- Discuss the significance of repeated zero tolerance failures.

### Knowledge Check

- What is the zero tolerance contaminant in poultry slaughter?
- How many poultry carcasses do IPP examine during each fecal contamination check?

### Resources

- [FSIS Directive 6420.5](#) – *Verifying Poultry Slaughter Establishments Maintain Adequate Procedures for Preventing Contamination with Feces and Enteric Pathogens*
- [FSIS Directive 6500.1](#) – *New Poultry Inspection System: Post-Mortem Inspection and Verification of Ready-To-Cook Requirement*
- IM Workbook – Slaughter Food Safety Standard