

Operational Services

Administrative Procedure - National Terrorism Advisory System

The National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) replaced the Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS). The HSAS was a color-coded scale in which each color corresponded to a particular risk of terrorist attack. Instead of a color-coded scale, NTAS provides information that is specific to a credible threat.

Posting of NTAS Alerts

NTAS Alerts are only issued when credible information is available. NTAS Alerts are announced by the Secretary of Homeland Security, and are posted at www.dhs.gov/alerts. Additionally, the Department of Homeland Security distributes the alerts to the news media and across its social media channels.

Levels of Information Available

Depending on the circumstances, the NTAS Alert may include information pertaining to the threat's nature, the geographic region, mode of transportation, or critical infrastructure potentially affected by the threat, as well as steps that individuals and communities can take to protect themselves and help prevent, mitigate, or respond to the threat. NTAS Alerts carry an expiration date and will be automatically cancelled on that date. Updates to an Alert, as well the cancellation of an Alert, will be distributed in the same way as the original Alert.

Threat Levels

NTAS Alerts will state whether a threat is *elevated* or *imminent* as follows:

A threat is *elevated* if there is no specific information about the timing or location.

A threat is *imminent* if the threat is believed to be impending or occurring very soon.

District Response Measures

The following position is responsible for tracking NTAS Alerts and disseminating NTAS Alerts that merit administrative review: Assistant Superintendent for Business Services.

After receiving an NTAS Alert, each administrator shall review the information contained in it and determine what response measures, if any, should be taken. To determine the appropriate response, the administrator should gauge the threat to District activities for which he or she is responsible and examine the suggested response measures below. Administrators should strongly consider closing the school whenever there is an *imminent* threat to the District.

Risk Level to District as Determined by District Administrators after Reviewing an NTAS Alert	Potential Response Measures in Addition to Those Suggested by the NTAS Alert
Low or general risk of terrorist attack	Response measures: Update the school site-based safety plans, specifically the emergency and disaster response procedures. Coordinate emergency plans with county, State, and federal agencies. Instruct employees and students to report suspicious activities or persons to the administrative office. Conduct emergency and disaster response training for employees at all levels. Implement visitor control procedures. Inventory emergency supplies and equipment.

Risk Level to District as Determined by District Administrators after Reviewing an NTAS Alert	Potential Response Measures in Addition to Those Suggested by the NTAS Alert
	<p>Maintain current emergency communication lists. Review parent/guardian notification procedures. Disseminate emergency communications methods and resources (i.e., where to get information) to employees, parents, and community.</p>
<p>Significant risk of terrorist attack</p>	<p>In addition to the measures listed above, the following responses may be instituted: Assess increased risk with public safety officials. Review schools' site-based safety plans with all staff. Reassess facility security measures, e.g., lock exterior doors. Limit visitor access to school. Update employee and student emergency contact numbers. Test alternative communication capabilities. Test parent/guardian notification procedures.</p>
<p>High risk of terrorist attack</p>	<p>In addition to the measures listed above, the following responses may be instituted: Take additional precautions at public events, e.g., hiring additional security staff, restricting public access, or canceling the event. Review field and class trip decisions. Designate an alternative communications center located off school property. Increase communication with parents/guardians and community via website and email distribution. Inform parents/guardians of procedures to reunite children with parents/guardians should schools close mid-day.</p>
<p>Severe risk of terrorist attack</p>	<p>In addition to the measures listed above, the following measures may be instituted: Assess threat circumstances to determine status of school openings and closings. Address critical emergency needs under the direction of public safety officials. Review and communicate parent-child reunification process. Increase building security throughout the school system. Continue staff, parent, and community communication.</p> <p>If school is open: Cancel outside activities and field trips. Curtail regular and/or extracurricular bus service. Prohibit visitor access. Request police department to increase patrols around school. Prohibit parking near buildings. In case of a building lockdown, ensure each school building has a reasonable supply of food, drinking water, medical supplies, back-up communication equipment, generator, batteries, etc.</p>

To access NTAS Alerts please refer to the following link:

NTAS Alert Website: www.dhs.gov/alerts

To sign up to receive NTAS Alerts via email:

public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDHS/subscriber/new?topic_id=USDHS_164

To add NTAS Alerts to a website:

www.dhs.gov/files/programs/ntas-developer-resources.shtm

For further information on the NTAS please refer to the following links:

www.dhs.gov/files/programs/ntas.shtm

www.dhs.gov/files/publications/ntas-public-guide.shtm

www.dhs.gov/files/publications/ntas-questions-answers.shtm

For a sample NTAS Alert please refer to the following link:

www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/ntas/ntas-sample-alert.pdf

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