

First Street, NW., Washington, DC 20534.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Bureau makes this interim final rule to clarify that, when there is an institutional or system-wide Bureau emergency which the Director or designee, such as a Warden, considers a threat to human life or safety, the Director or designee may suspend the operation of the rules in this chapter as necessary to handle the emergency. This rule clarifies that the Director may suspend Bureau rules as needed in light of any emergency affecting the Bureau, and the Warden may do so to deal with emergencies at the institution level. This rule change clarifying the Director's authority to modify Bureau rules to handle emergencies is especially necessary in light of the recent terrorist attacks, threats to national security, threats of anthrax surrounding mail processing, and other events occurring on and after September 11, 2001.

Previously, 28 CFR 501.1 stated that, when there is an institutional emergency which the Warden considers a threat to human life or safety, the Warden may suspend the operation of the rules contained in this chapter to the extent he deems necessary to handle the emergency. The rule also required the Warden to notify the Director within eight hours of any suspension of rules under this section. This rule change simply clarifies that the authority to suspend operation of Bureau rules to handle an institutional or system-wide Bureau emergency originates with the Director.

To provide additional safeguards against indefinite suspension of Bureau rules, this rule also requires that, if the Warden suspends operation of the rules, the Warden must, within eight hours of the suspension, notify the Director by providing written documentation which (1) Describes the institutional emergency that threatens human life or safety; and (2) explains why suspension of the rules is necessary to handle the institutional emergency.

Also, if the Warden does not provide the Director with written justification for suspension every 30 days, or if the Director so chooses for any other reason, suspension of the rules to handle the institutional emergency ceases.

Administrative Procedure Act

This rule relates to a matter of agency management or personnel, and is

therefore exempt from the usual requirements of prior notice and comment. See 5 U.S.C. 553(a)(2).

Where To Send Comments

You can send written comments on this rule to the Rules Unit, Office of General Counsel, Bureau of Prisons, 320 First Street, NW., Washington, DC 20534.

We will consider comments received during the comment period before taking final action. We will try to consider comments received after the end of the comment period. In light of comments received, we may change the rule.

We do not plan to have oral hearings on this rule. All the comments received remain on file for public inspection at the above address.

Executive Order 12866

This rule falls within a category of actions that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has determined not to constitute "significant regulatory actions" under section 3(f) of Executive Order 12866 and, accordingly, it was not reviewed by OMB.

Executive Order 13132

This regulation will not have substantial direct effects on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. Therefore, under Executive Order 13132, we determine that this rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Director of the Bureau of Prisons, under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 605(b)), reviewed this regulation and by approving it certifies that it will not have a significant economic impact upon a substantial number of small entities for the following reasons: This rule pertains to the correctional management of offenders committed to the custody of the Attorney General or the Director of the Bureau of Prisons, and its economic impact is limited to the Bureau's appropriated funds.

Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995

This rule will not result in the expenditure by State, local and tribal governments, in the aggregate, or by the private sector, of \$100,000,000 or more in any one year, and it will not significantly or uniquely affect small governments. Therefore, no actions were deemed necessary under the provisions

of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995.

Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996

This rule is not a major rule as defined by § 804 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996. This rule will not result in an annual effect on the economy of \$100,000,000 or more; a major increase in costs or prices; or significant adverse effects on competition, employment, investment, productivity, innovation, or on the ability of United States-based companies to compete with foreign-based companies in domestic and export markets.

Plain Language Instructions

We want to make Bureau documents easier to read and understand. If you can suggest how to improve the clarity of these regulations, call or write Sarah Qureshi at the telephone number or address listed above.

List of Subjects in 28 CFR Part 501

Prisoners.

Harley G. Lappin,

Director, Bureau of Prisons.

■ Under the rulemaking authority vested in the Attorney General in 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and delegated to the Director, Bureau of Prisons, we amend 28 CFR part 501 as follows.

SUBCHAPTER A—GENERAL MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

PART 501—SCOPE OF RULES

■ 1. Revise the authority citation for 28 CFR part 501 to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 301; 18 U.S.C. 3621, 3622, 3624, 4001, 4042, 4081, 4082 (Repealed in part as to offenses committed on or after November 1, 1987), 4161–4166 (Repealed as to offenses committed on or after November 1, 1987), 5006–5024 (Repealed October 12, 1984 as to offenses committed after that date), 5039; 28 U.S.C. 509, 510.

■ 2. Revise § 501.1 to read as follows:

§ 501.1 Bureau of Prisons emergencies.

(a) *Suspension of rules during an emergency.* The Director of the Bureau of Prisons (Bureau) may suspend operation of the rules in this chapter as necessary to handle an institutional emergency or an emergency affecting the Bureau. When there is an institutional emergency which the Director or Warden considers a threat to human life or safety, the Director or Warden may suspend the operation of the rules in this chapter as necessary to handle the emergency.

(b) *Responsibilities of the Warden.*—