



**Department of
Environmental
Protection**

59-17 Junction Boulevard
Flushing, New York
11373-5108

**Christopher O. Ward
Commissioner**

**Louis J. Tazzi
Deputy Commissioner
Bureau of Management
And Budget**

MEMORANDUM

TO : Bureau Directors
FROM : 
Zoe Ann Campbell
Director of Human Resources Management
DATE : September 12, 2003
SUBJ : WTC Health Registry

DEP has been asked to participate in the World Trade Center (WTC) Registry. This Registry is a public health initiative currently being developed by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in partnership with the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR).

The WTC Registry will be a public health data base that may enroll as many as 100,000 to 200,000 people who lived, worked, or attended school near the WTC site and were most heavily exposed to smoke, dust, and debris following the WTC disaster. The Registry will help the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene assess if there are any long-term physical and mental health effects of the disaster.

In the Agency's attempt to assist in this project, I am asking you to identify the employees within your Bureau who fall into any of the categories listed below and send a copy of this memo to them:

- People who were working in or visiting buildings south of Chambers Street on 9/11/, as well as people who were passers-by in the area that day.
- Workers involved in rescue, recovery, or clean up at the WTC site and/or WTC Recovery Operation at Staten Island between September 11, 2001 and June 30, 2002.
- Students and staff enrolled at schools or day care centers south of Canal Street on 9/11.
- People whose primary residence on September 11, 2001 was south of Canal Street.



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In addition, I am attaching a copy of a WTC Registry Form that must be completed by all employees who agree to volunteer as well as a WTC Registry Questions and Answers Sheet. All completed forms should be returned to Herb Roth, Deputy Director of Human Resources Management by September 30, 2003.

While this is a voluntary project, we are encouraging all affected employees to participate and I would appreciate any assistance that you could lend in this effort.

If you have any questions concerning this project, please feel free to call me.

Attachment

c: C. Ward
D. Tweedy
S. Grob
L. Tazzi
H. Roth
Bureau Administrators
File

WORLD TRADE CENTER REGISTRY PROJECT

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH), in collaboration with the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), has requested the Department of Environmental Protection's assistance in an important public health initiative – the World Trade Center (WTC) Health Registry. The WTC Health Registry is designed to collect health information about the people most heavily exposed to smoke, dust, and debris from the collapse of the World Trade Center. It will help identify patterns of illness and recovery that might not be uncovered by individual doctors. Participants in the WTC Health Registry will be kept informed of important medical or public health information that may directly benefit their health.

The Department of Environmental Protection has been asked to cooperate with this project by providing employee contact information to RTI International, the company contracted to develop the Registry, so that our employees who may be eligible for the Registry will have the opportunity to participate. With your permission, we will provide your name, address, and telephone number to RTI for follow-up.

WTC Health Registry staff will contact each person on the list to explain the Registry. If the person wishes to participate, an interview will be conducted over the telephone and all information will be held in strict confidentiality under federal law. Every person has the right to refuse to participate in the WTC Health Registry at any time.

We feel our organization's participation in this public health initiative is important and provides a potential benefit to our employees and their long term physical and mental health. If you would like additional information regarding the WTC Health Registry please visit NYCDOHMH's website at <http://www.ci.nyc.ny.us/html/doh/html/wtc/index.html>.

Please indicate below whether you agree to have your contact information released to RTI International. All information will be held in strict confidence under federal law.

_____ Yes, the Department of Environmental Protection may release my contact information for the World Trade Center Health Registry

_____ No, do not release my contact information to the World Trade Center Health Registry project

Name of employee _____

Signature of employee _____

Please return this notice to Mr. Herb Roth, Deputy Director of HRM by September 30, 2003.

Thank you for your cooperation.



The World Trade Center Registry

The World Trade Center disaster was an unprecedented event. Beyond the loss of life and physical destruction experienced on 9/11, the disaster's full impact may not be known for years to come. That's because it is unclear what kind of effect, if any, the smoke, dust, and debris from the WTC collapse may have on public health over the long term. It is not fully known how this exposure may affect the physical or mental health of those who experienced it most directly – workers in the rescue and recovery efforts, office workers, residents, schoolchildren, teachers, and people who happened to be in lower Manhattan on September 11, 2001.

To help answer these questions, the World Trade Center Registry has been established.

What Is The World Trade Center Registry?

The WTC Registry is essentially a giant database, holding self-reported health information about specific groups of people who were most directly affected by the WTC disaster. Its goal is to help researchers understand whether these groups may develop particular physical health or mental health problems over time that may be a result of the disaster. The WTC Registry is a joint initiative of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, a federal public health agency.

Am I Eligible To Enroll in the WTC Registry?

You are eligible to enroll in the WTC Registry if you are in one of the following groups:

- You were working in a building south of Chambers Street on 9/11/01.
- You were in a building, on the street, or in a subway south of Chambers Street on 9/11/01.
- You lived south of Canal Street on 9/11/01.
- You were a staff member, teacher, or student in a school (grades pre-K-12) south of Canal Street on 9/11/01
- You were a rescue, recovery, or construction worker – either at the WTC site, at the Staten Island landfill, or on the barges that carried debris between these sites – on 9/11/01 or in the months after.

Why Is The WTC Registry Important?

The WTC Registry will enable researchers to identify possible patterns of illness in groups of people over time. Because the Registry will have information on a large number of people, in different groups, it will be possible to understand whether certain health effects are related to the disaster or not.

Why Should I Join The WTC Registry?

Without people like you, the WTC Registry won't work. We need to enroll as many as 100,000 to 200,000 people, so that we can find out if there are any health problems related to the September 11th disaster

How Do I Enroll in the WTC Registry?

There are two ways to enroll. Beginning in the summer of 2003, you will be able to call our toll-free information line, or visit our Website at www.nyc.gov/health/wtcregistry.

Also, WTC Registry staff will be mailing information about the WTC Registry and how to enroll. These mailings will go to people who lived south of Canal Street in Manhattan on September 11, 2001. Mailings will also be sent to some employees who worked in buildings south of Chambers Street. We will also send information to workers and volunteers from the World Trade Center disaster site and the Staten Island Landfill.

What Happens After I Enroll?

After you enroll, a researcher will call you to either interview you by phone or to arrange a face-to-face interview. Some of the questions you will be asked include:

- Where were you on 9/11?
- How long were you in areas with smoke and fumes?
- Have you had any health problems since 9/11?
- Have you had added emotional stress?

Researchers will also ask you for your name, address, and date of birth – so they can follow-up with you later. The WTC Registry staff will not share information about you with anyone else.

What if I Decide To Quit The WTC Registry?

Participation in the WTC Registry is completely voluntary. Any one who enrolls in the WTC Registry can drop out at any time.

Is the Information Collected by the WTC Registry Confidential?

All information we collect is confidential. Information on individual people is never shared with anyone outside of the WTC Registry staff. To further insure this, we will have a Federal Certificate of Confidentiality that protects individual identifying data from subpoena in court or from Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

I'm not a U.S. Citizen. Can I enroll?

Yes. You do not need to be a U.S. citizen or a permanent U.S. resident to enroll in the WTC Registry. We will not ask about immigration status. All information will remain strictly confidential, and will not be reported to the Bureau of Citizenship and Naturalization Services.

Will information be available in languages other than English?

Yes, you can still participate. Interviews will be conducted in Mandarin, Cantonese, and Spanish and other languages as needed.

How Can I Contact the WTC Registry?

You can visit our Web site at www.nyc.gov/health/wtcregistry or call New York City's toll-free information line at 3-1-1.

Toll-free Phone Numbers to Find Out About Mental Health and Counseling Services Available to Those Affected by the WTC disaster:

1-800-LIFENET (1-800-543-3638) for English speakers; **ASIAN LIFENET** (1-877-990-8585) for Chinese language speakers; **1-877-AYÚDESE** (1-877-298-3373) for Spanish language speakers; or TTY: **212-982-5284**. For other languages you can call 1-800-LIFENET and ask for an interpreter.