**Federal Register No. 2022-11237** <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/05/25/2022-11237/draft-guidelines-for-examining-unusual-patterns-of-cancer-and-environmental-concerns>

**Regulations.gov:** <https://www.regulations.gov/document/CDC-2022-0070-0001>

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**Docket No.** CDC-2022-0070

**Comment Due Date:** July 25, 2022

**Summary:** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), announces the opening of a docket to obtain comment on the *Draft Guidelines for Examining Unusual Patterns of Cancer and Environmental Concerns* (2022 Draft Guidelines). The 2022 Draft Guidelines provide updates to the 2013 publication, *Investigating Suspected Cancer Clusters and Responding to Community Concerns: Guidelines from the CDC and the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE)* (2013 Guidelines). The updates provide state, tribal, local, and territorial health departments guidance for a revised and expanded approach to evaluating concerns about unusual patterns of cancer in communities, including those associated with local environmental concerns. The 2022 Draft Guidelines provide recommendations only; compliance with these recommendations is voluntary.

**Public Participation**

Interested persons or organizations are invited to participate by submitting written views, recommendations, and data related to the 2022 Draft Guidelines. In addition, CDC invites comments specifically on the following:

1. Please comment on the strengths and limitations of the enhanced approach for routine, proactive evaluation of cancer patterns.

2. Please comment on the strengths and limitations of the recommendations for enhancing communications and engagement with communities.

3. Please comment on the strengths and limitations of the enhanced phased approach for responding to community inquiries.

4. Please comment on the strengths and limitations of the new criteria for suggesting continued assessment of a report of an unusual pattern of cancer and addressing environmental concerns.

5. Please comment on the strengths and limitations of the revised definition of a cancer cluster.

6. Please comment on the strengths of the 2022 Draft Guidelines and provide suggestions to address weaknesses.

7. Please comment on whether the language in the 2022 Draft Guidelines is sufficiently clear for both the general public and state, tribal, local, and territorial public health agency staff, in terms of comprehension of the investigative process and recommendations.

8. Please provide any additional comments about the document.

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| **Comment No.** | **Guideline Reference (Section, Page No., etc.)** | **Guideline Statement** | **Comment** | **Suggested alternative approach, language, etc. (if applicable)** |
| *Example:* |  |  |  |  |
| *1* | *Introduction, Quick Summary, p. 1* | *“…unusual patterns…”* | *The term “unusual” should be clearly defined. What might be “unusual” to the community or other public health professionals may not be “usual” to cancer epidemiologists.* | *Avoid utilizing ambiguous terms in overall guidance or define it up front in the document to provide specific context to audience on what is mean by “unusual”.* |
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