



# Exercise tests Detrick's response to cyber attack

By Lanessa Hill, USAG Public Affairs

Fort Detrick faced a simulated cyberattack that brought its network and phone systems to a standstill on Aug. 18, forcing the garrison to react to a sudden communications blackout.

This Integrated Protection Exercise wasn't just about technical recovery; it was a crucial test of Fort Detrick's agility — evaluating how first responders reacted, how communications would be maintained with the community, the ability to shift resources to sustain vital missions, and ultimately, keep everyone safe.

Each year, the Garrison meticulously plans and executes an exercise to push its capabilities, fine-tune responses, and uncover areas for improvement before a real emergency strikes. These exercises rotate threats, ensuring a diverse range of objectives are tested, always with the core goals of rapid incident containment, shortening disruption, and achieving a swift recovery.



**Beth Bolish (left), one of Fort Detrick's two Installation Emergency Managers, watches over the Emergency Operations Center during an Integrated Protection Exercise here Aug. 18, 2025.** (Photo by Lanessa Hill, USAG Public Affairs)

ery. This year's scenario involved key partners like the Network Enterprise Center and the Logistics Readiness Center.

The nine-month effort behind this impactful and educational event was spearheaded by Installation Emergency Managers Beth Bolish and Taischa Castro. Their critical work involves orchestrating comprehensive plans and procedures for various threats, coordinating across agencies and with stakeholders, conducting rigorous training and drills, and guiding the community's response and recovery efforts during times of crisis. They are the architects of resilience, ensuring Fort Detrick and its vital national interests can effectively navigate and minimize the negative impacts of both natural and human-made disasters.

Castro emphasized the vital importance of these exercises.

"Conducting functional training exercises on cyber-attacks is crucial for several reasons," she said. "Especially in today's digital age where cyber threats are prevalent and constantly evolving."

Bolish echoed the sentiment.

"By simulating a realistic attack, the Garrison can assess readiness and response capabilities and proactively prepare for potential cyber threats, thereby safeguarding operations and maintaining the trust of our customers, active-duty service members, and employees."

The exercise served as a powerful reminder of how deeply reliant we've become on technology. It challenged everyone to think creatively, find "outside the box" solutions, and in some cases revert to manual, "old school" methods to document essential information, continue serving customers, and fulfill mission-critical requirements.

The next full-scale exercise, scheduled for 2026, will include an in-depth evaluation of the Emergency Operation Center's emergency support functions by a team from Installation Management Command.

# GEMS Mentors Hear Senior Scientists' Career Stories

By Paul Lagasse, DHA R&D-MRDC Public Affairs

High school and college students participating as near-peer mentors in this year's Gains in the Education of Mathematics and Science summer program had the opportunity to hear from two senior Defense Health Agency Research & Development-Medical Research and Development Command leaders about their scientific career journeys and to ask them about the benefits of pursuing careers in STEM. In addition to offering valuable career advice to budding young scientists, the engagement also supported DHA R&D-MRDC's mission to cultivate the future workforce that will ensure DHA R&D-MRDC remains in the forefront of military medical research and innovation.

Dr. Carrie Quinn, Deputy to DHA R&D-MRDC's Commanding General, and Col. Jacob Johnson, a Fellow in the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases Biosafety and Biosecurity Program, spoke about their career influences, educational background, military research, and leadership assignments to the GEMS near-peer mentors, who provide academic guidance to elementary school students participating in the annual extra-curricular STEM education program. Quinn and Johnson were among a dozen subject matter experts from across the command who spoke to students and mentors throughout the five-week program.

In her discussion, Quinn emphasized that students could follow many paths to a career in science, citing her own eclectic journey as an example. After working as a physical therapist and emergency medical technician, she joined the U.S. Army so that she could pursue a position as a research scientist at the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine, part of DHA R&D-MRDC. There, she led a team conducting research into human performance in extreme environments. As director of USARIEM's GEMS program, she was famous for greeting the students with high-fives every morning as they arrived at the front gate of the Natick Soldier Systems Center.

"There's no normal pathway. It's the pathway you want to follow," said Quinn. "I followed almost none of the normal trajectory because I was willing to say yes to opportunities that sounded maybe a little bit weird. Every next job I've had has been better than what I expected it to be, and the number of doors that each opportunity has opened has been spectacular. So, don't be afraid to say 'yes.'"

In addition to conducting research in military medicine, Quinn has long been interested in its strategic policy aspects as well. Prior to joining DHA R&D-MRDC, she served in the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering as a senior advisor for critical and emerging technologies. She also worked for the Defense Intelligence Agency, where she served on special assignment to the White House Situation Room supporting the President, Vice President, and the National Security Advisor.

Quinn stressed that rapid advances in science and technology such as artificial intelligence in decision making, organoids for



**Dr. Carrie Quinn, Deputy to the Commanding General of the Defense Health Agency Research & Development-Medical Research and Development Command, speaks with near-peer mentors participating in the Gains in the Education of Mathematics and Science summer program at Hood College. Quinn discussed her career path and emphasized the importance of having a strong grounding in ethics.** (Photo by Charles Bell, DHA R&D-MRDC Public Affairs Office)

biological testing, and drones in combat will require tomorrow's scientists to have a strong grounding in ethics.

"You are going to confront so many more ethical questions in your STEM careers than what I've ever had to deal with up to this point," said Quinn. "Know your moral compass and do not stray from that. We have a saying in the Army: 'the hard right and the easy wrong.' If you choose to go with the easy wrong, you'll lose every time, and you'll lose the faith and trust of your followers. And getting that back is almost a hundred percent not going to happen."

Johnson emphasized that a STEM education can be parlayed into career opportunities beyond conducting research in an academic laboratory. STEM skills and knowledge are valuable assets for careers in fields as varied as publishing, technology transfer, program management, policy, and even financial services. Many of these non-laboratory activities play vital roles in DHA R&D-MRDC's day-to-day operations.

"The career space today is completely different than it was decades ago, when I was in school, and it's constantly changing," said Johnson. "The idea that you have to wear a white coat and work at a lab bench is only true if that's the path you want to pursue. There are so many options out there, just waiting for you."

To explore those opportunities, Johnson encouraged the near-peer mentors to actively seek out people in those fields who would be willing to share their experience and knowledge and introduce them to colleagues who can help them get a foot in the door.

"If I didn't have the folks who assisted me since the seventh grade, I don't know that I would be here right now," said Johnson. "They inspired me when I was having tough moments, they be-

**MENTORS, continued on Page 3**



## Detrick Soldiers recognized as Hometown Heroes by local radio station

Every year, Fort Detrick works with local radio station WFMD 930 AM in a recognition program called “Hometown Heroes”. The program honors individuals and organizations that make significant contributions to the Frederick County community. This includes first responders like firefighters, law enforcement officers, and other individuals who demonstrate dedication and service to the area.

This year, our first participant was Sgt. Tyric Miller, who is a Religious Affairs Non-Commissioned Officer. Miller talked about his role in supporting the warfighter by providing spiritual and religious services.

Other Soldiers highlighted this year were AMLC Commander Col. Deon Maxwell, AMLC Command Sgt. Maj. Babriel Wright, and Staff Sgt. Connor Comiskey of USAMRIID.

[Listen on the WFMD website.](#)



### MENTORS, continued from Page 2

lieved in me when I doubted myself, and they encouraged me when I frustrated. That's why I keep coming back every year to speak at the GEMS program.”

Johnson has a doctorate in cell biology and immunology from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. After com-

pleting the Army Medical Department Officer's Basic Course, the Army assigned him to DHA R&D-MRDC's Walter Reed Army Institute of Research as a principal research investigator. Prior to his fellowship, he was director of the DOD Blast Injury Research Coordinating Office and the Joint Trauma Analysis & Prevention of In-

jury in Combat program office, located at DHA R&D-MRDC's headquarters at Fort Detrick. As a biosafety and biosecurity program fellow, Johnson is gaining practical experience in how to conduct operations in high-security environments of the DOD's most complex biosafety level 3 and 4 laboratories.

Johnson says workforce development is a vital prerequisite for DHA R&D-MRDC to be able to carry out its mission to improve Warfighter survivability and lethality, enhance force protection and readiness, drive medical modernization throughout the DHA enterprise, and contribute to deterrence and posture at the theater and global levels.

“I look at programs like GEMS as the lifeblood of our scientific bench,” said Johnson. “We are planting a seed with future scientists who could go on to impact government science, whether they end up wearing the uniform or serving as a civilian or contractor, or working with one of our partners in the larger community of interest. The near-peer mentors who participate in GEMS are getting a full-spectrum learning opportunity that will prepare them for their professional education and hopefully inspire them to become lifelong learners. Who knows what game-changing medicines or devices they could create?”



**Col. Jacob Johnson, a Fellow in the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases Biosafety and Biosecurity Program, speaks with near-peer mentors participating in the Gains in the Education of Mathematics and Science summer program at Hood College. Johnson gave a presentation about career opportunities in STEM and shared stories about his experiences serving in posts around the world as an officer in the Medical Service Corps. (Photo by Samuel Mensah, DHA R&D-MRDC Public Affairs Office)**





## National Night Out

Fort Detrick's Directorate of Emergency Services hosted its National Night Out event Aug. 5, 2025. It's an opportunity for the community to get to know their law enforcement officers while eating some free food and participating in fun activities. (Courtesy photos)





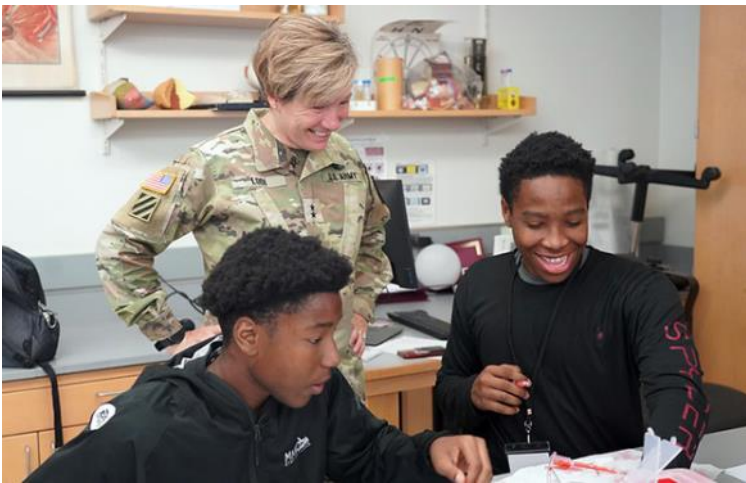
# MRDC hosts annual GEMS program, June 23 - Aug. 8

By DHA R&D-MRDC

This summer, U.S. Army Medical Research & Development Command at Fort Detrick hosted the 2025 Gains in the Education of Mathematics and Science (GEMS) program at Hood College in Frederick, Md., from June 23 through Aug. 8.

Weeks One and Two of the program welcomed 27 Near-Peer Mentors (high school students grades 10-12 and college freshman and sophomore students) as well as four Resource Teachers (FCPS teachers boasting as much as 37 years of classroom teaching experience) to a comprehensive training experience designed to prepare all staff members for the forthcoming five weeks of classroom sessions with students. During the two-week staff orientation, Dr. Robert Leonard and Mr. Carlos Davis of MRDC Educational Outreach introduced staff to the forthcoming five-week curriculum focused on preparation for, and understanding of, various engineering challenges and hands-on laboratory experiences designed to further students' understanding of STEM concepts. During the training sessions, Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) provided in-class training in the areas of suturing, dissection, and various experiments, and shared career trajectory and opportunity sessions intended to inspire Near-Peer Mentor introspection into the myriad of pathways available as vehicles to pursue their desired future research, clinical, and other STEM pathways.

Following the two-week orientation sessions, staff hosted 538 registered rising grades 5-through-12 students for classes in the



**Fort Detrick and USAMRDC Commanding General Maj. Gen. Paula Lodi interacts with students in the GEMS program. MRDC hosted the annual event at Hood College. (MRDC photo)**



**U.S. Army Medical Research & Development Command at Fort Detrick hosted the 2025 Gains in the Education of Mathematics and Science (GEMS) program. (MRDC photo)**

areas of Crime Scene Investigation, Biofabrication and Commercialization, Biomedical Engineering, Earth and Environmental Science, Sustainability and Environmental Science, Engineering and Computer Science: Battlebots, Intermedia Science, and Advanced Science. Each week welcomed a new cohort of students and included presentations from SMEs, military and industry-based guests, and a special visit from MRDC's Commanding General, Major General Paula Lodi. 1SG Alice Lewis (MRDC) supported the program as siting judge for the Biofabrication and Commercialization project presentations during the program, as did LTC Nizamettin Gul (MRDC), who also served as GEMS Gov POC.

Each Tuesday and Thursday, following student dismissal, afternoon career speaker presentations were conducted by professionals including Dr. Erika Stoor-Burning; MAJ Sara Sulkosky, MAJ William Baskerville (USAMRID), and LTC Cara Reiter (U.S. Army Veterinary Corps); Akua Roach, PhD (USAMRDC); Sena Gul (National Institutes of Health); Michael Levandusky (Chemical Defense Pharmaceuticals); Pia Bhunia (Towson University student); COL Jake Johnson (U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases); Dr. Carie Quinn (USMRDC); Dr. Willie Sanders (Towson University Professor of Cybersecurity); and MAJ Caitlin Gabor (WRAIR).

The annual GEMS program is free to attend, and students receive a \$125 stipend to offset the cost of transportation and lunches. Over the course of the past eight years, Fort Detrick MRDC has hosted nearly 4,000 students at GEMS.





## Back to School

Fort Detrick helps start off the new year by participating in the annual flag raising event at Whittier Elementary School in Frederick, Md. Garrison Commander Col. Chris Chung and Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Erick Detrich provided remarks and charged up the children for the new school year. Whittier is one of only two schools in Frederick County designated as a Purple Star school for providing specialized support to military children and families.

(Photos by Lanessa Hill, USAG Public Affairs)



# USAMRIID scientists develop novel 3D bioprinted tissue model

By Quentin Johnson, USAMRIID

Scientists at the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases have successfully created a novel 3D bioprinted vascular liver tissue model, marking a significant advancement in biomedical research and biodefense applications.

This breakthrough leverages cutting-edge bioprinting technology to address critical gaps in traditional research methods, offering improved testing results, cost efficiency, and enhanced physiological accuracy, says Yantenew Gete, a contract scientist with Chenega, Cherokee Nation Integrated Health, LLC, working in USAMRIID's Therapeutic Discovery Branch.

The 3D model offers several advantages over 2D models, which lack the complexity of a three-dimensional physiological system, and animal models, which are costly, time-consuming, and genetically different from humans.

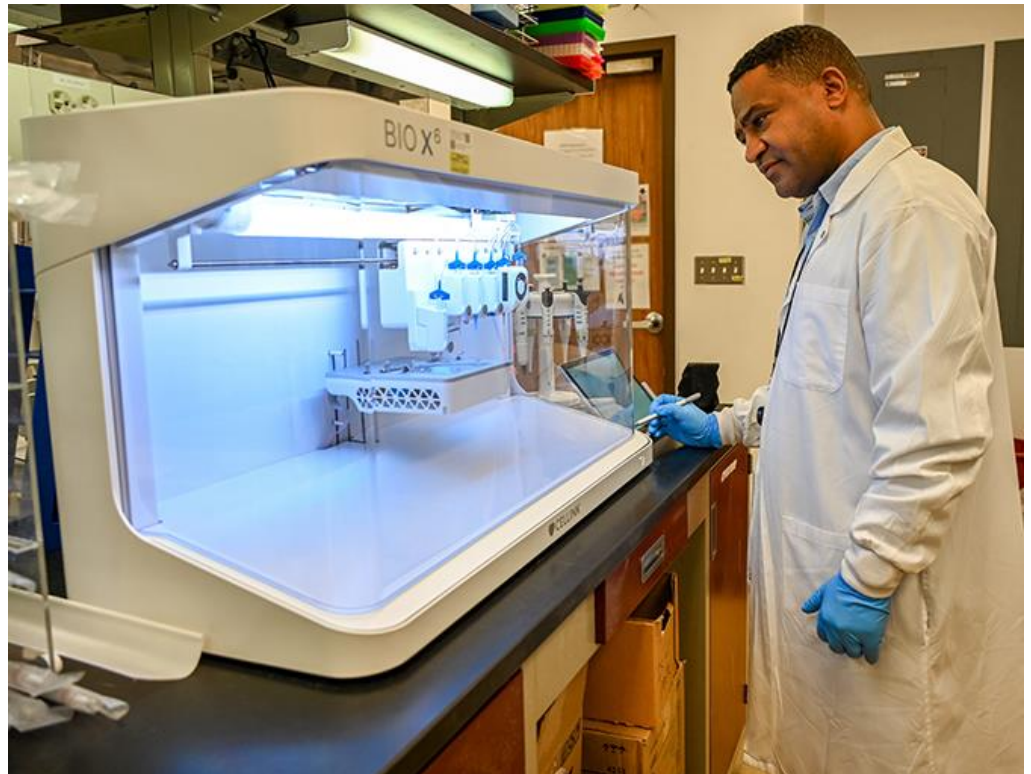
"3D models capture the spatial layouts of cells and native microenvironment more effectively, while accelerating research timelines, with tissue maturation sometimes occurring within a week," says Gete.

This model provides a better chance to study viral infections, particularly those targeting liver cells, and to develop novel medical countermeasures, while recapturing human physiology in a way that traditional methods cannot, says Gete.

The Bioprinting Process involves three critical steps: a digital file or 3D model is created and read by the printer while bioink is prepared; the bioink, typically composed of hydrogels and live cells, is used to print the structure; and the printed tissue may require treatment with UV light, incubation, or other processes to ensure viability.

While the process appears straightforward, developing a functional tissue model posed unique challenges for the USAMRIID team.

"Creating a model that accurately mimics human physiology required months of meticulous work to ensure the structure was



**Yantenew Gete, a contract scientist with Chenega, Cherokee Nation Integrated Health, LLC, working in USAMRIID's Therapeutic Discovery Branch, runs diagnostics on the Cel-link Bio X6™ bioprinter ensuring accurate printing during his tissue modeling projects.** (Photo by Quentin Johnson, USAMRIID)

sound and viable for infection studies," says Gete.

The team's previous work on Dengue fever and Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever laid the foundation for this project. Using HepG2 human liver carcinoma cell line and endothelial cells, the researchers optimized tissue remodeling to allow viral penetration—a challenge due to the intertwined structure of the tissue.

"Developing the system is one thing, but infecting the system is another issue," says Gete. "We had to ensure the structure was robust enough for viruses to infect, with each print taking at least a week to mature and remodel."

The model also has potential biosafety applications, with data suggesting it could shorten the time required to inactivate contagious pathogens, enabling quicker studies and improved standard operating procedures, says Gete.

Improved operating procedures help organizations adhere to the regulatory guidelines and ethics policies as the development of 3D bioprinted tissue has

raised important bioethical and regulatory questions related to biological materials and equitable access, according to a review published in *Bioengineering (Basel)*, 2023.

Emphasizing the importance of addressing these challenges assures the responsible development and application of bioprinting technology.

"As we advance this field, we must navigate the ethical and legal complexities to ensure safety, accessibility, and compliance with international standards," says Gete.

Moving forward, USAMRIID aims to expand its scope of viral infection 3D modeling, and applications in drug development and regenerative medicine with some projects funded by the Military Infectious Diseases Research Program.

"This field is growing rapidly, and new systems are being applied to address complex biomedical challenges," says Gete. "Our work demonstrates the potential of 3D bioprinting to revolutionize research and therapeutic discovery."





## Keys show military appreciation

The Frederick Keys hosted their annual Fort Detrick and Military Appreciation Night, as they took on the Trenton Thunder in Major League Baseball's Draft League, Aug. 28. Fort Detrick was represented by a color guard, and Staff Sgt. Lauren Pechev from U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command sang the National Anthem. Col. John Sanders, commander of the 21st Signal Brigade, also provided opening remarks before the game and threw out the ceremonial first pitch. The Keys will serve as the Class A-Advanced affiliate of the Baltimore Orioles starting in 2026.

(Courtesy photos by Patrick McKinney)





# News - Events - Training

## Barquist Reduced Hours and Clinic Closures

Sept. 19: Reduced Hours of Operation – Closed at noon.

## Basic Life Saving Training Dates

Sept. 10, Oct. 9, Nov. 13, Dec. 11

Enrollment deadline is two weeks before the course date. Please ensure BLS Eligibility Form is completed and emailed to the POC prior to course entry. Please contact Ms. Maylis Burns (301-619-2275, [malis.n.burns.civ@health.mil](mailto:malis.n.burns.civ@health.mil)) for availability, registration and questions.

Priority is to Barquist staff. Additional slots only available to Active Duty Service Members and DOD Civilians.

## National Museum of Health and Medicine upcoming family-friendly event

Teddy Bear Clinic

Saturday, Sept. 13, 2025

9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

National Museum of Health and Medicine, 2500 Linden Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20910

The Teddy Bear Clinic is designed to help children feel more comfortable with medical care by letting them play the role of caregiver. Kids are invited to bring their favorite stuffed animal for hands-on activities like splinting, bandaging, and a teddy bear check-up station — guided by real medical professionals.

This event is free and open to the public. For more information, [click here](#).

## Road, walking path closures near Beasley, Davis

Beasley Drive, between Building 375 and Building 393 (including the perimeter walking path) and Davis St. is closed to traffic and pedestrians. The closure is necessary as part of the ongoing construction project in that

area and more importantly to ensure the safety of everyone. The closure will continue through the entire length of the project, estimated into 2031. Fort Detrick Police and the Installation Safety Office ask that everyone on post treat all areas with posted signs and temporary fencing as off-limit areas. DO NOT walk or drive around barriers or enter fenced areas.

## Upcoming lane closures at Nallin Farm Gate

The Directorate of Emergency Services has announced a delay in the planned lane closure project at Nallin Farm Gate, originally scheduled to begin mid-August. The project will now commence in October 2025.

In the beginning phase, both lanes of the inbound side will be closed and redirected to a single lane normally designated as an outbound lane. Once inbound lane barriers are replaced, both outbound lanes will close, and vehicles will be redirected to a single lane normally designated as an inbound lane.

These improvements are essential to ensure the long-term safety and reliability of Nallin Farm Gate for the traveling public. This project is estimated to take several months to complete. We understand that lane closures can cause inconvenience, and we apologize for any disruption this may cause. We are committed to delivering a high-quality project that will benefit the Fort Detrick community for years to come.

## Track area closing for renovation, Sept. 22

Beginning Sept. 22, 2025, the track and infield will be closed. The closure is necessary as part of a renovation. A new track and field is anticipated to open June 2026.

For FMWR News and Events, visit

[www.detrick.armymwr.com](http://www.detrick.armymwr.com), Instagram us at #DetrickMWR, and like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/DetrickMWR](http://www.facebook.com/DetrickMWR).












Clearance holders are required to self-report changes or incidents that may impact their clearances to safeguard the integrity and trustworthiness of the federal and contractor workforce.

# SELF-REPORTING

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

By law, security clearance holders are required to self-report all life events — incidents that could impact your ability to meet security clearance requirements. Self-reporting is mandatory, and it's always better to be honest and forthright. Even if you do not have a clearance, your agency may still require you to report to your security office on certain changes and information about yourself. Please contact your agency's security office with any questions regarding your specific situation.

### WHAT TO REPORT

	<b>CHANGES IN PERSONAL STATUS</b>	This includes any changes to your marital status, cohabitation status (doesn't include non-romantic roommates), and any name changes.
	<b>FOREIGN TRAVEL</b>	Foreign travel is defined as ALL trips and vacations abroad, even day trips to Mexico and Canada. Any work trip that is not official government business needs to be reported. If you're stationed abroad, you must report all personal travel to other countries during that time period.
	<b>FOREIGN CONTACT</b>	If it's someone that could have personal information about you, including details about your life, they qualify.
	<b>LOSS OR COMPROMISE OF INFORMATION</b>	Inadvertent or accidental loss/compromise of classified or other sensitive information.
	<b>FINANCIAL PROBLEMS</b>	Filing for bankruptcy, garnishment of wages, having a lien placed on your property for failing to pay a creditor, eviction from a residence for failure to pay rent, or inability to meet all financial commitments.
	<b>ARRESTS</b>	Any arrest, regardless of whether or not charges were filed, or general involvement with the legal system (such as being sued, or you filed a claim against someone else).
	<b>PSYCHOLOGICAL OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELING</b>	<p>Reportable mental health issues include legal findings of mental incompetence, court-ordered mental health care, in-patient mental health care, certain diagnoses which may impair judgment or reliability, and self-appraised mental health concerns that could impact judgment or reliability.</p> <p>Please note that seeking mental health treatment and counseling in and of itself is NOT a reason to revoke a clearance. Seeking care for personal wellness and recovery may contribute favorably to decisions about your eligibility or continuous evaluation.</p>

If you're not sure what to report, ask your security manager, facility security officer, or recruiter.  
For more information go to [www.dcsa.mil/mc/pv/mbi/self\\_reporting/](http://www.dcsa.mil/mc/pv/mbi/self_reporting/)

DEFENSE COUNTERINTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY AGENCY







---

The crisp autumn air signals the changing of seasons, but it also brings fire safety risks associated with fall activities. Here are some fire safety tips for the coming Fall:

- \* Be sure you are at least 25 feet away from structures or anything else that can burn before building a fire. Choose an open, level location and clear away any dry leaves and sticks, overhanging branches and shrubs.
- \* Never use gasoline, kerosene or any other flammable liquid to start a fire. Instead, use a match or lighter to ignite tinder (small twigs and dry leaves); add larger sticks and pieces of dry wood.
- \* Keep the fire small and controlled, and never leave it unattended.
- \* Keep a hose, a bucket of water, or a shovel and dirt or sand nearby to extinguish the fire once you're finished. Be sure the fire is completely out before leaving the site — any remaining embers could ignite, with disastrous consequences.

#### **Halloween Decorations and Fire Safety:**

Dried flowers, crepe paper, cornstalks and decorative scarecrows may make your home look festive for fall, but these classic decorations can also pose a scary fire risk. The National Fire Protection Association says flammable decorations are the first things to ignite in 900 reported home fires each year; two of every five of these incidents start by a candle.

**Decorate safely and keep these tips in mind:**

**Don't put decorations near open flames and other heat sources, such as light bulbs and heaters.**

**Check that any decorative lights have been tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory. Examine each set of lights for broken sockets, frayed wires or loose connections, and discard any damaged sets. Be careful not to overload sockets when plugging in lights and other electronic decorations.**

**Consider glow sticks or battery-operated candles instead of real candles when lighting your jack-o'-lanterns or other luminaries. If you do use real candles, light them with long, fireplace-style matches or a utility lighter. Keep lit decorations off of doorsteps, yards and sidewalks where excited trick-or-treaters may knock them over.**

**Check that no decorations are blocking your home's exits or pathways, so you have a clear escape route in case of an emergency.**

By Order of: *Matt Spencer*  
Fire Protection Specialist