

Action [or Decision] Memo Template

- To accommodate **Times New Roman 12-pt. font**, margins are 1.0 top and left; 0.9 right and bottom. Single-spaced text and double-spaced between headings and text; between paragraphs you may use 10, 11, or 12 pt.
- The date and the word “Action” (or “Decision”) are centered. Paragraphs are not indented, nor right justified.
- The sender should sign or initial by his/her name. The “through” person should also sign or initial.
- Memos for the Secretary or Deputy Secretary must be signed by the Component Head. Component Heads may not delegate this authority to their Deputy or Chief of Staff.
- The signature block and recommendation will now be placed on their own page. To link the signature page to the Action/Decision memo, please use a header indicating the subject (in bold) and page number.
- PRE-DECISIONAL/DELIBERATIVE will now be added to the header and footer of every page except for the signature block page.

Date

ACTION (or DECISION)

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY (OR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY)

THROUGH: (if applicable)

FROM: Component Head Name
Title (if not on the letterhead)

SUBJECT: **Boldfaced; no acronyms in subject; do not underline bold type**

Purpose: The first paragraph should state the purpose of the memorandum, or why the issue requires a decision and is being brought to the attention of the recipient.

Background or Context: This is a brief summary of factors to be considered in making a decision, the issue’s historical background, and its current status. Identify legislative or other underlying requirements.

Please present options for resolution and explain the implications of those options. Include internal input, Component equities, and clearances, including any supporting and opposing viewpoints. If the issue is particularly complex, additional background may be provided as numbered attachments.

Signature Level Justification: If the memo is requesting Secretary review/decision please explain why the decision must be made at this level (statutory/congressional requirement, condition of policy directive, etc.) or indicate that the signature level may be delegated to another DHS official.

Timeliness: Is there a key action that is awaiting this decision or required by a certain date (i.e., charter expiration/upcoming meeting/statutory requirement)? If so, please explain. Do not include this section if it is not relevant.

Subject

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Recommendation: Please provide a clear recommendation of specific action(s) requested of the Secretary or Deputy Secretary or a clear set of options. The signature block and recommendation should be on their own page. The memorandum should close with:

Approve/date _____ Disapprove/date _____

Modify/date _____ Needs discussion/date _____

Attachment(s) (if applicable)