

**Robert Johnson's Comments**  
**Report of Investigation – Department of Veterans Affairs**  
*OSC File Number DI-15-1941*

**Conclusions for Allegations 1**

**(1) VA did not substantiate that NFS has a substantial mouse problem:** These issues were noted in 2014. During my employment from April 2014 to December 2014, I observed mouse droppings along the walls and behind the freezers and refrigerators and personally cleaned the area myself. Mice were running across the floors and between the ovens along the serving lines. I along with other employees personally watched them get caught in traps and had to discard them during working hours. I submitted photos of the mouse droppings prior to cleaning the areas that clearly show that there was a rodent problem that was not related to construction.

**(2) VA did not substantiate that hood range filters were extremely dirty and created a fire safety hazard:** These issues were noted in 2014. During my employment between March 2014 and December, 2014, on numerous occasions I brought the problem of the dirty hood range and filters and the build-up of grease creating a fire hazard to the attention of my immediate supervisor Kyrese Scott and the Chief of Nutrition and Food Service (Su-Anne Forde). I repeatedly explained that the grease and dirt buildup created a hazard not only for the kitchen but for the entire medical center. When no action was taken, I personally borrowed a ladder from Charline Wilson-Ray, manager of EMS, and removed filters and cleaned them. Anthony Graham, a cook in our department assisted me. I also presented photos of the hood range and filters that substantiate my claims.

Further, it was only after I went above Ms. Scott and Ms. Forde and my submitted my complaint that was any action taken with respect to this issue in 2015. For at least nine (9) months the hood ranges were only cleaned when I personally did it. No contractor was there to

clean them during working or non-working hours. Their subsequent measure was an attempt to cover up many years of neglect. At no time during my tenure with the VA were those filters changed or cleaned until I did so.

**(3) VA did not substantiate that the pots and pans and drying racks were not adequately cleaned and sanitized:** These issues were noted in 2014. During my employment with the VA I made repeated request to the NFS supervisor to ensure that the pots and pans were properly washed, rinsed and sanitized using the three compartment method as required by OSHA. I personally washed and directed other cooks to re-wash pots and pans prior to use due to un-sanitized conditions. I also submitted photos of the dirty pots and pans to substantiate my claims.

**Conclusion for Allegations 3**

**(4) VA did not substantiate that that employees did not comply with personal hygiene requirements:** These issues were noted in 2014. During my VA employment I personally raised unsanitary hygiene concerns about employees with Kyrese Scott and Su-Anne Forde on several occasions. I personally counseled employees under my supervision about unsanitary hygiene issues and sent them home. There should have been Report of Contact (ROC's) maintained by Ms. Scott to substantiate my claims.

**Conclusion for Allegations 4**

**(5) VA did not substantiate that that the NFS lacks food safety policies. NFS has a full range of policies.** These issues were noted in 2014. During my VA employment I repeatedly requested from my immediate supervisor, Kyrese Scott, a copy of the policies and procedures that governed NFS. Ms. Scott stated, "we don't have one," and suggested that I write an

operational policy. Although requested, at no time during my tenure at the VA was I given an NFS policies and/or procedures manual.

**(6) VA did not substantiate that the lack of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan.** This was a major noted issue in 2014. During my employment I noticed that there was no HACCP plan in place and made several attempts to establish one. I tried to establish a HACCP plan to keep a running log of all potential hazards within the kitchen and to better manage the ongoing sanitation issues within the kitchen. This issue was raised with Kyrese Scott and Su-Anne Forde with no resolve. My repeated attempts to put this plan in place jeopardized my employment and was a major reason why I was targeted by management for removal from my job.

#### **Conclusion for Allegations 5**

**(7) VA did not substantiate that NFS management has not taken appropriate action to ensure employee compliance with sanitation standards despite reports that violations were regularly occurring.** These issues were noted in 2014. Despite going to my immediate supervisor on numerous occasions regarding this issue, no action was taken regarding my concerns resulting in insubordination by employees under my supervision that I was not allowed to discipline. There were no consequences for employees who blatantly ignored sanitation standards.

**(8) Food Transportation Carts.** This was a noted issue with ongoing discussions as to who would be responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the food carts. During the early phase of my employment I personally tool apart four food transportation carts to clean and sanitize them

in an effort to mitigate any potential cross contamination that could potentially become a hazard to the veterans. I don't know what has been done since my departure in December 2014.

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Date

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