

# Instructions

## Critical Finding Report – DR Form 320

### Definition

Federal Regulations (*23 CFR 650, Subpart C*) defines a critical finding as “A structural or safety-related deficiency that requires immediate follow-up inspection or action.”

NDOR further defines a critical finding as a condition that requires closure or partial closure of a bridge as the “immediate follow-up inspection or action” to be taken. Load posting without a load rating analysis shall not be an option.

Critical findings shall include, but are not limited to: a partial or complete bridge collapse, structural or other defects posing a definite and immediate public safety hazard, a condition rating of 2 or less for any of the following bridge elements: 58 (*deck*), 59 (*superstructure*), 60 (*substructure*), 61 (*channel and channel protection*), 113 (*scour critical*), or a load rating of less than 3 tons.

### Purpose

The purpose of the Critical Finding Report is to assure that bridges with serious damages or defects are closed to traffic until they are repaired and that they are repaired in a proper and timely manner and that the damages and repairs are well documented for future reference. Federal regulations require critical findings to be reported to FHWA.

### **Critical Finding Procedures for County/Municipal/Urban Bridges**

1. The inspector discovering the critical finding shall immediately report the finding to the responsible local official and clearly state that the bridge must be closed immediately.
2. The inspector shall complete Part 1 of the Critical Finding Report, DR Form 320, and submit a copy to the State Project Manager and the responsible local official within 48 hours of the finding.
3. The responsible local official shall complete Part II of the critical finding report and submit a copy to the State Program Manager within 5 days of the finding.
4. When final action is taken, or every six (6) months until final action is taken, the responsible local official shall complete Part III and Part IV, if necessary, and submit a copy to the State Program Manager.

### **Critical Finding Procedures for Bridges on the State Highway System**

1. The inspector discovering the critical finding shall immediately report the finding to the State Program Manager and notify responsible District personnel to immediately close and barricade the bridge.
2. The inspector shall complete Part 1 of the critical finding report, DR Form 320, and submit a copy to the State Program Manager within 48 hours of the finding.
3. The State Program Manager shall complete Parts II thru IV of the critical finding report.