

Foodborne Illness Investigation Task List

This is a comprehensive list describing many of the important tasks that may be part of a foodborne illness outbreak investigation. This list is a guide of procedures that may be undertaken during an investigation.

Epidemiology	Environmental	Laboratory
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Interview complainant and complete FBI Complaint Worksheet <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain list of attendees of suspect meal including names, addresses, phone numbers <input type="checkbox"/> Determine if cases had other common exposures <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain list of cases: symptoms, onset, medical attention, diagnoses <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain line list of foods eaten <input type="checkbox"/> Look for additional cases <input type="checkbox"/> Develop and distribute questionnaires to attendees <input type="checkbox"/> Interview food employees for evidence of illness <input type="checkbox"/> Interview ill food employees to determine common exposures <input type="checkbox"/> Develop and distribute questionnaire to food employees <input type="checkbox"/> Analyze questionnaires <input type="checkbox"/> Write final report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain a copy of the menu of the foods served <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain a list of food employees <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain food employee work schedules <input type="checkbox"/> Determine food employee duties <input type="checkbox"/> Exclude/restrict ill food employees <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct a thorough food preparation (HACCP) risk assessment of suspect foods, including who prepared what and when, by observation if possible or by interview <input type="checkbox"/> Observe general food preparation practices <input type="checkbox"/> Interview food employees about food preparation practices <input type="checkbox"/> Initiate and document corrective actions <input type="checkbox"/> Identify the source of suspect foods <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain the suppliers' receipts for the suspect foods <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain original packaging if possible <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct a traceback of suspect foods <input type="checkbox"/> Summarize and determine contributing factors <input type="checkbox"/> Recommend actions to prevent future outbreaks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate the collection of stool samples from food employees <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate the collection of stool samples from patrons <input type="checkbox"/> Verify patron-reported diagnoses <input type="checkbox"/> Verify that bacterial isolates from hospital and private labs have been sent to the State Lab for further analysis and comparison <input type="checkbox"/> Collect left-over food samples from patrons, and submit to the State Lab <input type="checkbox"/> Collect relevant food samples from the establishment, and submit to the State Lab <input type="checkbox"/> Collect relevant environmental samples (swabs, water), and submit to the State Lab
<p>Other agencies which may need to be contacted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Working Group on Foodborne Illness Control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Food Protection Program (Phone: 617-983-6712, Fax: 617-983-6770) <input type="checkbox"/> Division of Epidemiology and Immunization (Phone: 617-983-6800, Fax: 617-983-6840) <input type="checkbox"/> Bureau of Laboratories (Food/Enteric Lab: 617-983-6610, Analytical Chemistry Lab: 617-983-6653 or 6658) <input type="checkbox"/> Other state agencies and local health departments <input type="checkbox"/> FDA or USDA (Usually contacted through Food Protection Program) <input type="checkbox"/> CDC (Usually contacted through Division of Epidemiology and Immunization) 		