

## Foodborne Outbreak Investigations

### What is a foodborne outbreak (FBO)?

- An outbreak is two or more cases of a similar illness, from different households, resulting from the ingestion of a common food, liquid, or exposure of ill foodservice employee.

### How is a FBO reported?

- A FBO can be reported by phone, email, or fax to the county or state health department by a customer, employee, or manager.

### Who investigates a reported FBO?

- County health department environmentalist
- ADPH field surveillance staff (FSS)
- ADPH Bureau of Communicable Diseases, Epidemiology Division (EPI)
- ADPH Bureau of Laboratories (BCL)

### What are the steps to a FBO investigation?

- After a complaint or report is made to ADPH by a customer, employee, or manager, the environmentalist will begin the investigation by making a visit to the site to complete an Environmental Assessment Report (regardless of the last full inspection). They may request collection of food samples for testing, floor plan, employee schedules, invoices, employee contact information, menus, and customer receipts.
- The FSS will request the list of customers and staff to conduct interviews, arrange clinical specimens to be tested, and provide education.
- BCL will perform lab tests on the food, environmental, and clinical specimens submitted.
- EPI will analyze all the information to determine the implicated source, if possible and creates an outbreak report to share with investigators, the facility, and other entities upon request.

### Where can I find more information about foodborne outbreaks in Alabama?

- Go to [www.adph.org/epi](http://www.adph.org/epi), Foodborne Outbreaks0