



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
LANSING

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GOVERNOR

MITCH IRWIN
DIRECTOR

DATE: May 31, 2006

TO: All Local Health Departments (LHDs)
MDA Regional Supervisors
Attn: Director of Environmental Health/Chief Sanitarian/Medical
Director/Communicable Disease Supervisor

FROM: Gerald Wojtala, Deputy Division Director
Food and Dairy Division
Michigan Department of Agriculture

Kevin Besey, Manager
Food Service Sanitation
Food and Dairy Division
Michigan Department of Agriculture

SUBJECT: Local Health Department (LHD) and Michigan Department of Agriculture Roles and Responsibilities in Foodborne Illness Complaint Investigations

This guidance addresses handling of multi-jurisdictional investigations of isolated foodborne illness complaints and replaces the June 14, 2000 MDA Food Service Sanitation Section memorandum entitled "MDA and LHD Investigative Jurisdiction on Food Complaints".

Legal Basis:

- Under Michigan's Public Health Code PA 368 of 1978, R 333.2433, local health departments are required to investigate the causes of disease. In the case of a foodborne illness complaint or outbreak, the local health department is responsible for completing the epidemiologic investigation for all reported illnesses. *This includes those associated with establishments not regulated by the local health departments such as: grocery stores, picnics, nursing homes, jails, assisted living centers, pot-luck dinners, etc.*
- The Michigan Food Law of 2000, sec. 3129(2) states that "If an investigation indicates that a source of foodborne disease or poisoning was from a food processing, food storage, or similar type of food establishment over which the department (MDA) has legal jurisdiction or responsibility, the local health department shall immediately notify the department while the local health department is completing the epidemiological investigation. "

Guiding Principles

- Sanitation-related complaints should be referred to the agency with regulatory jurisdiction over the facility in question and addressed in accordance with that agency's established procedures.
- Foodborne illness outbreak surveillance will be accomplished through;
 - Regular review of foodborne illness logs by LHDs, AND
 - State-level review of laboratory confirmed infections {e.g., PulseNet & Michigan Disease Surveillance System (MDSS)} and unconfirmed illnesses (Reportfoodpoisoning.com).
- Reports of alleged foodborne illness outbreaks should be investigated in accordance with the Foodborne Illness Response Strategy (FIRST) and Procedures To Investigate Foodborne Illness, IAFP 5th edition.
- MDA will coordinate communications between LHDs and Federal food agencies as needed.

Investigations Involving Facilities Not Regulated by LHDs - coordinate human illness investigation activities with the agency that has regulatory jurisdiction:

- **MDA regulated food establishments**
 - Investigate as shown on the attached flowchart.
- **Hospitals and nursing homes**
 - Contact Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Bureau of Health Systems, Division of Health Facilities and Services, Health Facilities and Evaluation Section, 517-241-3420.
- **State prisons**
 - Contact Michigan Department of Corrections, Environmental Health and Fire Safety Section Manager, 517-335-2251.
- **County jails**
 - Contact local sheriff.
- **Indian reservations**
 - Contact tribal authorities in accordance with established procedures. Investigative assistance may be made at the request of the tribe. Recommend contacting U.S. Public Health Service, Bemidji Area Indian Health Service, 522 Minnesota Ave. NW, Room 119, Bemidji, MN 56601, 218-444-0458.

Investigations Involving Multiple LHDs:

- Each LHD is responsible for the following:
 - Record all complaints received in their foodborne illness log (See "MDA/MDCH FBI Documentation and Reporting memo, dated February 3, 2006);
 - Collect all epidemiologic and case history information from complainant(s) living within their jurisdiction, *AND*
 - Immediately refer the complaint to the LHD where the alleged source of disease is located.
 - Provide timely documentation of investigation of alleged disease sources (examples: site visit or phone conversation) to LHDs referring foodborne illness complaints as outlined above.
- All parties involved should handle outbreaks involving multiple LHD jurisdictions in a mutually agreeable manner. MDCH and MDA will assist in coordinating roles and tasks as needed.

C: Sally Bidol, MDCH
Mary Grace Stobierski, MDCH

Isolated Illness Complaint Regarding MDA Inspected Establishment*

MDA	LHD
<p>1. INTAKE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. MDA will take complaint information and enter key information into e-inspector or complete template form (FI-226), as appropriate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Nature of complaint. (illness vs. injury) ii. Specific food product, iii. Purchase date, etc. b. Detailed symptoms, meal history and other case interview information should not be collected. c. MDA explains LHD will do interview of ill persons then, within 1 business day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. refer to LHD EH office or ii. directly transfer call to LHD EH office or iii. fax e-inspector complaint form to LHD with request to investigate d. Document when referral and follow-up sent to LHD e. Make initial determination if regulatory investigation of food establishment is warranted (i.e. adulteration, recall, traceback issues, etc.). <p>2. FACILITY CONTACT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. MDA makes facility aware of complaint. b. MDA asks facility if they are aware of additional illnesses. <p>3. SITE VISIT (Regional Office or LHD requested):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conduct environmental assessment, as needed, based upon epi work done by LHD or other reason shows a need. b. Item 2 above may be completed during site visit. c. Take regulatory actions as needed. <p>4. FOLLOW-UP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Communicate results of any investigation made and actions taken to LHD. Names and contact information for any additional ill persons must be forwarded to the LHD immediately. At a minimum, advise LHD that facility was made aware of complaint and if facility was aware of any other ill individuals or employees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Fax final e-inspector complaint to LHD ii. Call or e-mail LHD with information. iii. Close complaint after 10 days of inactivity if no further investigation request received from LHD. 	<p>1. INTAKE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Receive complaint. b. Notify MDA regional office that complaint was received. <p>2. Initiate investigation per department policy.</p> <p>3. Notify MDA of LHD case interview investigation results and indicate if an environmental assessment of a MDA inspected facility is needed based upon epi work. Joint visits to conduct environmental assessments are encouraged. Occasional joint investigation visits are encouraged, even if not epidemiologically necessary, to maintain joint investigation skills.</p> <p>4. Receive information from MDA on any investigation made.</p>

***Notes:**

1. MDA means appropriate MDA Regional Office, unless otherwise specified.
2. If LHD determines complaint to be an outbreak - contact MDA's Food Safety Planning and Response (FSPR) Unit. FSPR staff will assist in coordinating outbreak investigation between LHD and MDA regional staff.

Referral text for illness complaints- for use by MDA Regional Offices.
When illness complaint at an MDA inspected facility is referred to local health department for case investigation, please advise complainant as follows:

Illness complaints are investigated jointly by Michigan Department of Agriculture and the local health department. MDA will work with the establishment and the local health department will interview those that were ill. First, I need to get some information on your complaint for MDA's records. {OBTAIN E-INSPECTOR COMPLAINT INFORMATION}

So that the local health department can interview those ill:

-I will forward your call to the _____ County Health Department, Environmental Health Division, so they can get the information they need. I will transfer you now, but if you need to call them directly their number is: _____.

OR

-You should call _____ County Health Department, Environmental Health Division, so they can get the information they need. Their number is:_____.

OR

-I will fax a copy of your complaint to the _____ County Health Department. They should contact you to get more information.

NOTE: Document in e-inspector complaint, which of these referral methods was used along with referral date/time.

5/31/06

- Division Office
- Regional Office
- Establishment
- Inspector

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD & DAIRY DIVISION
LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909**

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES:

COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION REPORT

(In accordance with Act No. 92, Public Acts of 2000)

DATE AND TIME RECEIVED	RECEIVED BY (NAME AND REGION)	REFERRED TO (REGION - INSPECTOR NUMBER AND NAME)
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REGION	COUNTY	LICENSE	WORK ORDER(S) I = C =							
NAME		ESTABLISHMENT		PRIMARY FOCUS <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		NAME	COMPLAINANT		ANONYMITY REQUESTED <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
ADDRESS				ADDRESS			HOME PHONE			
CITY		ZIP	PHONE		CITY		ZIP	WORK PHONE		
PERSON IN CHARGE			TITLE		COMPLAINT TYPE					

COMPLAINANT'S ALLEGATIONS

SUBJECT PRODUCT (IDENTITY AND BRAND)	CONTAINER DESCRIPTION (SIZE TYPE CODE)	MANUFACTURER/DISTRIBUTOR LICENSE NUMBER
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MANUFACTURER / DISTRIBUTOR NAME / ADDRESS

DESCRIPTION OR NATURE OF ADULTERATION/FOREIGN MATERIAL

DETAILS OF INVESTIGATION	INVESTIGATION START DATE
<input type="checkbox"/> NO FIELD INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED. EXPLANATION IN DETAILS SECTION ABOVE	

REFERRED TO INSPECTOR FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION			SPECIAL REPORT DATES		
DISCUSSION - COMPLAINT	DISCUSSION - ESTABLISH.	LETTER SENT/MESSAGE	OTHER FORMS		
ESTABLISHMENT CONTACT NAME AND TITLE			INSPECTOR(S) SIGNATURE(S)		CONTACT

DISPOSITION <input type="checkbox"/> USDA <input type="checkbox"/> FDA <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> Complainant Notified; Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Unable To Notify Complainant; Closed	INVESTIGATION END DATE	COMPLAINT COMPLETED DATE
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