

Environmental health checklist when responding to a *Salmonella* outbreak

Employee Health

- Determine if the establishment has an illness policy and review the details of that policy.
- Review the employee illness log and assess recent employee illness.
- Implement the illness-screening form so management can screen all employees before they begin their shift.
 - a. Anyone reporting illness must be excluded from work and referred to EH for re-interview.
 - b. Inform Lead Epi if this occurs.
- Interview all employees, including management.
 - a. If an employee has been recently ill with any GI symptoms (time frame determined by Epi):
 - i. The employee is excluded until they test negative for *Salmonella* twice.
 - ii. Specimens must be collected at least 24 hours apart.
 - iii. The lead Epi can help arrange stool kit distribution.
- Distribute stool kits to ALL employees, including management.**
 - a. All employees must submit two stool samples, collected at least 24 hours apart, regardless of illness status.
 - b. Explain the stool kit requirement clearly to the PIC so he/she can facilitate follow-through with staff.
 - c. Stool kits must be returned to the Public Health Laboratory (coordinate with Epi).
 - d. Any employee who has not submitted a stool kit by the date chosen by EH/Epi will be excluded until kits are received.
 - e. Antibiotics are not recommended for most *Salmonella* infections. Taking antibiotics may prolong the duration of shedding of *Salmonella* in stool.

Customer and Menu/Food Information

- Ask management if they have received any illness complaints.
 - a. If they have, and the complaints were not reported to EH, inform them that this is a violation of the food code and that all future complaints need to be reported.
- Collect records to contact additional patrons from the meal date(s) in question, and provide them to the lead Epi:
 - a. Credit card receipts with names
 - b. Reservation lists
 - c. Online reservation lists (ex: Open Table)
 - d. Takeout/carry out orders
 - e. Loyalty programs
- Obtain a restaurant menu (if different from online menu), provide to Epi.
- Ask if the establishment had any specials on the date(s) in question.

- Collect a list of food suppliers.
 - a. This includes distributors, grocery stores, warehouse stores, etc.

Environmental Assessment

- Review general cross contamination potential throughout the facility.
 - a. How does the establishment clean the kitchen areas (i.e. using a hose to spray the floors, wiping cloth bucket practices)?
 - b. How do they store food and utensils (i.e. dirty knives and utensils stored between prep tables, cutting boards with cloth underneath, raw above RTE in coolers)?
 - c. How do they prep food (i.e. same cutting boards for raw and RTE, improper handwashing between changing tasks), etc.?
- Review food flows of particular item(s) of interest from receiving to service to determine the potential for cross contamination (by both hands and equipment).
- Determine if the establishment maintains temperature logs and review, if available.
- Take final cook temperatures of animal proteins.
- Assess if “risky” foods are being served.
 - a. e.g.) Is the restaurant using raw shell eggs in any menu items: mayo, aioli, custards, desserts, hollandaise sauce, Bearnaise sauce, fancy drinks?
 - b. Any other food items of interest reported by Epi.
- Ask if there have been any recent changes to the menu, food suppliers, or other unique events that occurred policy or practice-wise?
- Review hand-hygiene (adequate handwashing? Bare-hand contact with RTE?).
- Note violations and provide appropriate corrective actions.

Cleaning, Sanitizing, Condemnation and Embargo

- Wash, rinse, and sanitize all food contact surfaces, equipment and utensils in the kitchen area.
 - a. Standard bleach and quaternary ammonia concentrations are effective against *Salmonella*.
 - b. Thorough cleaning of all surfaces, both food-contact and non-food-contact, is important to stop further contamination.
 - c. Consider steam cleaning surfaces that cannot be cleaned with sanitizer.
- Embargo any remaining suspect food items from the meal date if available.
 - a. Notify Epi and discuss if sampling would be appropriate. If yes, Epi can help coordinate the collection of food samples by MDA.
- After appropriate sampling has occurred, or if Epi determines sampling would not be appropriate, ensure the remaining food in question is completely discarded.
- Discard any ready-to-eats foods prepared by ill workers.

Communication

- Provide *Salmonella* factsheet to management:
MDH Salmonella Factsheet
- Establish the best method for ongoing communication with both Epi and the establishment regarding:
 - a. Employee stool sample results and employee exclusion.
 - b. Additional questions about food handling practices in the restaurant.
 - c. Addition questions about invoices, purchasing, and financial records.