

# Foodborne Outbreak Investigation and Response Team Roles and Responsibilities

*Team Activity – Courses 1 & 2*



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## Welcome to the Tennessee Integrated Food Safety Center of Excellence *Foodborne Outbreak Investigation and Response Team Roles and Responsibilities* Team Activity Facilitator Guide.

This team activity is intended for members of a local outbreak investigation team. It has been designed to further develop the acquired knowledge of public health professionals who have completed the online courses, *Foodborne Outbreak Investigation and Response Team Roles and Responsibilities: Parts A and B*.

The exercises included in this team activity were designed to be used by a single local outbreak investigation team. However, if necessary, more than one jurisdiction may meet with a facilitator at once, in which case participants should be seated with others from their corresponding organization as they carry out the team activities.

Each of the complementary team activities contains independent or group activities and discussions that will build upon the online coursework and previous team activities. All necessary instructional materials have been provided – worksheets, handouts, and a PowerPoint presentation. After completing all online courses independently and working through the complementary team activities jointly, an outbreak investigation team should have a well-developed set of investigative skills as well as the foundation for a concrete outbreak investigation plan for their jurisdiction.

Activities were created around the online courses' learning objectives. All learning objectives addressed in this activity guide are listed in the "Overview" on page ii.

A "Facilitator's Guide" is provided for the team activity included. This is a tool to assist in leading the group as team members discuss each topic. The top portion lists necessary supplies and learning objectives for the activity, while the left hand column provides an estimate of time required for each section, to help plan an agenda for completing the activity. Each guide also contains read aloud statements, discussion prompts, and possible answers to assist with facilitation.

Make sure to read through all materials prior to facilitating the activity. We hope your group enjoys this hands-on, team-building activity!

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Activities	Communication Procedures
Materials	Team Activity Facilitator PowerPoint Team Activity Facilitator Guide Team Activity Participant Guide * Team Activity PowerPoint * <i>Communication Anticipation/Planning Guide</i> * <i>Communication Checklist</i> <u>Team members should each be provided a copy of the Participant Guide.</u>
Learning Objectives Addressed	<b>Part A, Module 3 objectives</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Identify potential barriers to effective foodborne outbreak response.</li><li>2. Describe ways to improve communications among outbreak investigation team members before, during, and after an outbreak.</li></ol>

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Communication Procedures</b>
<b>Materials:</b>	<i>Communication Anticipation/Planning Guide</i> <i>Communication Checklist</i>
<b>Learning Objectives:</b>	C1. M3.1 C1. M3.2
<b>Getting Started</b> (~10 minutes, independent work)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remind participants that they are about to begin a 3-part team activity based upon the learning objectives found throughout Courses 1 and 2.</li> <li>Ask participants to complete the “Before Exercise” side of the <b>Communication Anticipation/Planning Guide</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Communication Checklist</b> (~40 minutes, group work)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once individuals have completed their Anticipation/Planning Guide, ask participants to find the <b>Communication Checklist</b> in their participant packets.</li> <li>Participants will discuss each statement in the communication checklist and the current situation of each best practice indicated within their organization. The group should complete the checklist items for each of the following sections: Contact List, Internal Partners, External Partners</li> </ul>
<b>Discussion</b> (~10 minutes, group work)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upon completing the checklist, ask individuals to complete the “After Exercise” reactions on their Anticipation/Planning guide.</li> <li>Ask groups/individuals to share what their communication strengths and weakness are and how they plan on addressing their weaknesses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Example:</li> <li><i>Weakness</i> – No standardized documentation</li> <li><i>How to Address</i> – Create a document by combining preexisting ones and talk to other agencies/jurisdictions to see what they use</li> <li><i>Timeline</i> – Complete in the next 3 weeks.</li> </ul> </li> <li>At the meeting’s conclusion, encourage participants to complete the activity evaluation at <a href="https://is.gd/compl_activity_eval">https://is.gd/compl_activity_eval</a></li> </ul>

## Communication Anticipation/Planning Guide

Read the following statements about communication prior to completing the activity. Decide whether each statement applies to your role within an outbreak investigation team. Note your answer in the “Before Exercise” column. Circle Y for YES and N for NO. After completing the exercise, provide a brief description in the “After Exercise” column of the steps to be taken to address each point and the anticipated timeline for completing the indicated improvements.

Before Exercise	Statement	After Exercise Improvements Planned	Anticipated Completion Date
Y / N	1. I am aware of the members on my outbreak team and have their contact information including after-hours information.		
Y / N	2. For each outbreak, my outbreak team uses standardized procedures and paperwork.		
Y / N	3. I interact (e.g., in person, e-mail, phone) with all members of my outbreak team on a monthly to weekly basis.		
Y / N	4. I am aware of how to appropriately share confidential information with all members of my outbreak team during an outbreak.		
Y / N	5. I have established working relationships with other potential outbreak team members in case of an outbreak that my current team could not handle (e.g., involving other jurisdictions, agencies, or states).		

## Communication Checklist

<b>Create/Maintain a Contact List</b>	Already in Place  (Check)	If already in place, select a date to review, revise, and distribute	Priority for Implementation or Improvement in Your Agency/Jurisdiction  (Circle 1=low, 5=high)						If <b>not</b> already in place, select a date to develop and distribute
			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
Prepare contact information for people in the agency who should be contacted in the event of an outbreak, including backups and after-hours contact information.									
Prepare contact information for contact people in external agencies (e.g., other local, state, and federal agencies) including after-hours numbers.									
Prepare contact information for important food industry contacts, including trade associations.									
Ensure that all contact lists are updated at least twice yearly and, when feasible, made available to all stakeholders in both electronic and hard copy formats.									
Distribute a list of your agency's contacts to other agencies, and obtain a current list of their contacts. Provide the contact list in electronic and hard copy formats.									
Develop an electronic distribution list for rapid information sharing with those who should be contacted in the event of an outbreak.									

*Team Activity – Courses 1 & 2*  
*Communication Procedures*

<b>Work with Internal Partners</b>	Already in Place  (Check)	If already in place, select a date to review, revise and distribute	Priority for Implementation or Improvement in Your Agency/Jurisdiction  (Circle 1=low, 5=high)						If <b>not</b> already in place, , select a date to develop and distribute
Ensure that members of the outbreak response team know each other before an outbreak occurs.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
Establish and use routine procedures for communicating among outbreak response team members and their units and agencies before an outbreak occurs.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
Define a formal communication process for agencies' use during outbreaks. Options include daily phone calls and routine e-mail alerts.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
Decide who will be notified when an outbreak is suspected. Decision may be based on personnel roles, and should detail any changes in notification according to the nature of the outbreak (e.g., pathogen type, involvement of commercial product) and timing (weekends and holidays versus week days).			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
Determine whether and how confidential information (e.g., from forms and questionnaires) is shared within the outbreak response team before an outbreak occurs.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
During an outbreak response, maintain close communication and coordination among outbreak response team members. Note any needed changes to defined processes for later update.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
During an outbreak response, identify persons who will be responsible for communication on behalf of their organizational unit and for the outbreak response team.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
During an outbreak response, communicate actions taken and new outbreak information to all members in the outbreak response team. Make sure public information officer (PIO) is routinely updated to ensure appropriate messaging to the public and media.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
During an outbreak response, arrange for the outbreak response team to meet regularly (often daily) to update the entire team in a timely manner.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	



*Team Activity – Courses 1 & 2*  
*Communication Procedures*

<b>Work with External Partners</b>	Already in Place  (Check)	If already in place, select a date to review, revise and distribute	Priority for Implementation or Improvement in Your Agency/Jurisdiction  (Circle 1=low, 5=high)						If <b>not</b> already in place, select a date to develop and distribute
Develop standardized processes (including notification triggers and timelines) for sharing information with other local, state, and federal agencies, including who will notify the next level of public health, environmental health, or food-regulatory agencies. Identify who will notify collaborating agencies and when.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
Identify an agency lead for interactions with other agencies, typically the lead investigator. Establish procedures for coordinating communication with these agencies to provide consistent public messaging and accurate information flow between agencies.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
Foster working relationships with other agencies, holding joint meetings and planning sessions before an outbreak occurs. Take the opportunity to ensure contact information is up-to-date.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
Establish processes for participating in multiagency, multijurisdictional conference calls and review conference call etiquette with staff.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
Determine whether and how confidential information can be shared with other local, state, and federal agencies.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
Identify and regularly communicate with agencies or organizations that receive possible foodborne illness complaints (e.g., agriculture agencies, facility licensing agencies, poison control centers) and ensure that they have current contact information for your staff.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
Rapidly post subtyping results to PulseNet and report newly detected clusters to PulseNet and Foodborne Outbreak listserves or other surveillance systems.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
Document every outbreak investigation using a standard form to facilitate inclusion in state and national outbreak databases.			1	2	3	4	5	N/A	