

## **REPORTING A SUSPECT FOOD-BORNE ILLNESS:**

In case of a **single complaint of food-borne illness** or complaint of unsanitary conditions regarding retail food establishments, please contact the **Retail food program**.

Complaints should be reported to the local sanitarians' office located at the parish health unit, where the establishment is located. Contact numbers are provided at the following web address <http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/subhome/19/n/292>

### **To report a suspect food-borne outbreak within Louisiana and/ or among Louisiana residents, call the Infectious Disease Epidemiology Section:**

- **During daytime hours of 8:00 AM through 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday (except holidays), call (504) 568-8313.**
- **After normal work hours, on weekends and holidays, call 1-800-256-2748. The 800 number is also staffed by an epidemiologist 24 hours, 7 days of the week.**

Why investigate a suspect food-borne outbreak?

- Helps identify food-borne illness outbreaks, within the state and multi-state.
- Prevents the spread of illness in the current outbreak
- These investigations provide insights in how to improve prevention strategies in terms of future outbreaks

### **DEFINITIONS:**

**Confirmed Food-borne Outbreak:** is defined as an incident in which two or more unrelated persons experience a similar illness after ingestion of a common food or eating at a common restaurant/ gathering and epidemiologic evaluation implicates the meal or food as the source of illness. Confirmed outbreaks include isolation of identical microorganisms or toxins both in the food and in clinical specimens.

Most single source food-borne outbreaks will meet this definition; however continuous source outbreaks or outbreak involving diseases with long incubation periods do not meet this definition.

**Probable Food-borne Outbreak:** is defined as an incident in which two or more unrelated persons experience a similar illness after ingestion of a common food or eating at a common restaurant/ gathering, and epidemiologic evaluation implicates the meal or food as the source of illness.

**Suspect Food-borne Outbreak:** is defined as an incident in which two or more unrelated persons experience a similar illness after ingestion of a common food or eating at a common restaurant/ gathering.

For additional information on food-borne outbreaks, please refer to the Food-borne Outbreak Investigation Manual <http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/assets/oph/Center-PHCH/Center-CH/infectious-epi/EpiManual/FoodOutbreakManual.pdf> .