

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INVESTIGATION

Illness outbreak investigations are conducted under the oversight of Licensed Environmental Health Practitioners.



Who are Licensed Environmental Health Practitioners (LEHPs)?

LEHPs have education and experience in the physical, chemical, biological, and environmental health sciences and are trained to organize, implement, and manage environmental health programs. They have specialized training to carry out education and enforcement activities for the promotion and protection of the public's health and the environment, and are licensed as an environmental health practitioner by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation.

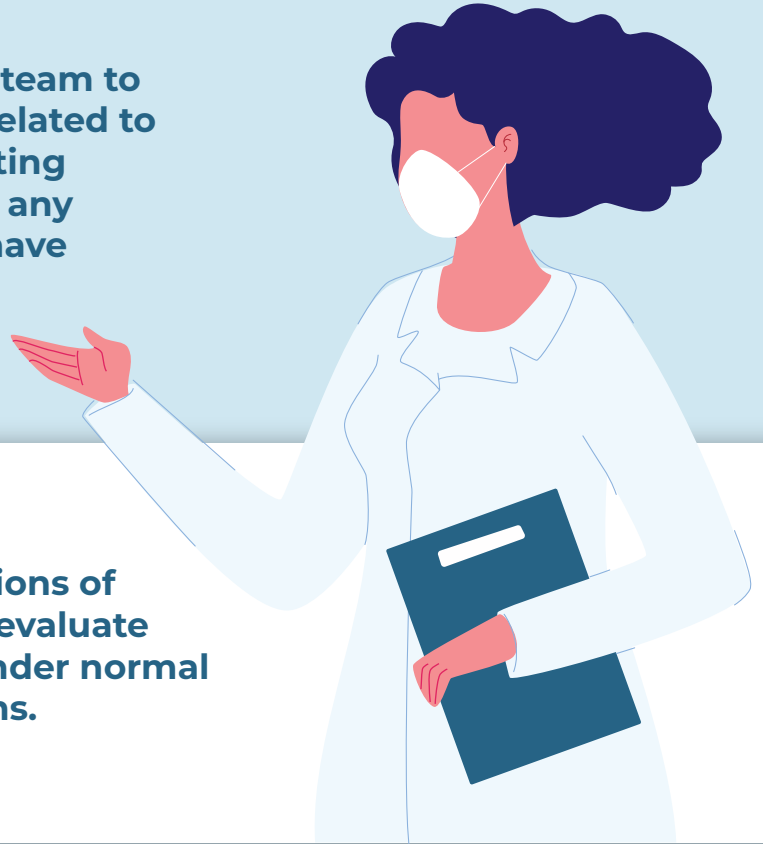
During an illness outbreak investigation, Environmental Health Practitioners (EHP) assist in the identification and evaluation of potential common exposures. This is done through

- Interviews
- Onsite inspections
- Record collection and review
- Evaluation of processes and operations
- Collection of environmental samples (food, water, swabs, etc.)



If a food item or product is suspected to be the cause of illness, the EHP will review the handling of that food item in detail using a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) process. HACCP is a system that provides the framework for monitoring the total food system using technical and scientific principles.

EHPs often work with the epidemiology team to create employee surveys to gather data related to assigned duties and standard operating procedures. This helps them identify any breakdowns in processes that may have contributed to illness.



EHPs conduct observations of establishments to better evaluate processes and procedures under normal operating conditions.

When deficiencies are documented related to Ordinance requirements, Environmental Health staff implement corrective action.

In the final report, EHPs develop additional recommendations to be implemented to prevent a reoccurrence of illness.

