
Subject: **EXAMINATION AND FOLLOW-UP OF SUSPECTED FOODBORNE ILLNESS
(F.A.C. 64E-11)**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide the steps that must be taken once a foodborne illness is suspected.

Foodborne Illness

Foodborne illness is a general term often used to describe any disease or illness caused by eating contaminated food or beverage. Almost all reported cases of food poisoning or foodborne illness are caused by bacteria or by toxins produced by bacteria. Bacterial contaminated food often cannot be detected by taste, odor, or color. These disease-causing organisms can be prevented when proper food handling procedures are followed.

The following are food safety hazards that cause foodborne illness:

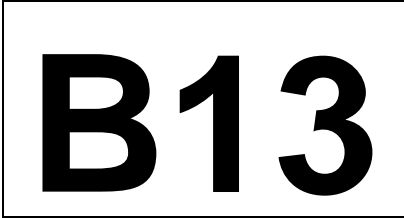
- Biological hazards, e.g., bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi.
- Chemical hazards, e.g., natural toxicants, chemicals, including cleaners and sanitizers and food additives.
- Physical hazards, e.g., unprotected open wounds, dirty hands, fingernails and hair, coughing and/or sneezing around food or food production.

Properly washing hands, keeping hot ($\geq 135^{\circ}\text{F}$) and cold ($< 41^{\circ}\text{F}$) foods at proper temperatures, and avoiding cross contamination between foods are important food safety procedures.

Please refer to Section H (HACCP) of Food and Nutrition Procedures for additional information, prevention and aids in protecting the safety and well being of our children.

Preventing foodborne illness and responding to reports of suspected foodborne illness is a high priority for the Department of Food and Nutrition. Accordingly, food service staff receive safe food handling practices training continually throughout the school year.

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The prevention of foodborne illness is a top priority in all school food service operations. Food prepared in a private home shall not be used or offered for sale in a school food service facility.

When foodborne illness is suspected in a Miami-Dade County Public School, these procedures must be followed:

- A. The food service manager/satellite assistant must immediately notify the principal and the Department of Food and Nutrition (786-275-0400).
- B. The school principal will initiate the steps outlined in the M-DCPS Emergency Operations Plan under Food-Borne Illnesses (Version 2.1, 11/26/07) as follows:

Procedures to be followed by the school's Administration

- A. Call the following parties immediately, in the order shown, when a foodborne illness is suspected during the school day.

- 1. Emergency Rescue 911
- 2. Miami-Dade Schools Police/DCIRT 305-995-2677
- 3. Poison Information Center 1-800-222-1222
- 4. Miami-Dade County Department of Health
Epidemiology Department 305-470-5660
- 5. Notify the parents or guardians of ill students
- 6. M-DCPS Department of Food and Nutrition 786-275-0400
- 7. School's Food Service Manager
- 8. School's Regional Office

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- B. In addition to the above, the principal or designated representative shall notify the school's food service manager/satellite assistant that:
1. Pots, pans, utensils and dishes used in the preparation of items in question are to remain untouched, when possible, so that examination and tests may be performed by county health authorities.
 2. All food service employees involved in the production of suspected menu items are to be examined by the public health official.
 3. Food samples are to be made available to the Miami-Dade County Department of Public Health in accordance with procedures outlined by the Department of Food and Nutrition.
- C. The **principal or designee** is to gather information and document any suspected foodborne illness using the Basic Food History form that is included ([Attachment A](#)). Information will be used to assist in determining the cause of the illness and whether there is reason to pursue the situation as a foodborne illness or whether it seems to indicate a virus.
- D. Upon notification of a possible foodborne illness, the food service supervisor is to follow-up by making an immediate onsite visit the same day the possible foodborne illness is reported.

They are to do the following:

1. Conduct a Quality Control Inspection.
2. Check and obtain copies of all temperature charts from the last two (2) months (refrigeration [[Attachment B](#)] and serving lines [[Attachment C](#)])
3. Review Production and Menu Records
4. Check recent DOH Inspection Reports
5. Complete Suspected Foodborne Illness Questionnaire ([Attachment D](#))
6. Obtain Student Account Statement Report (if possible)

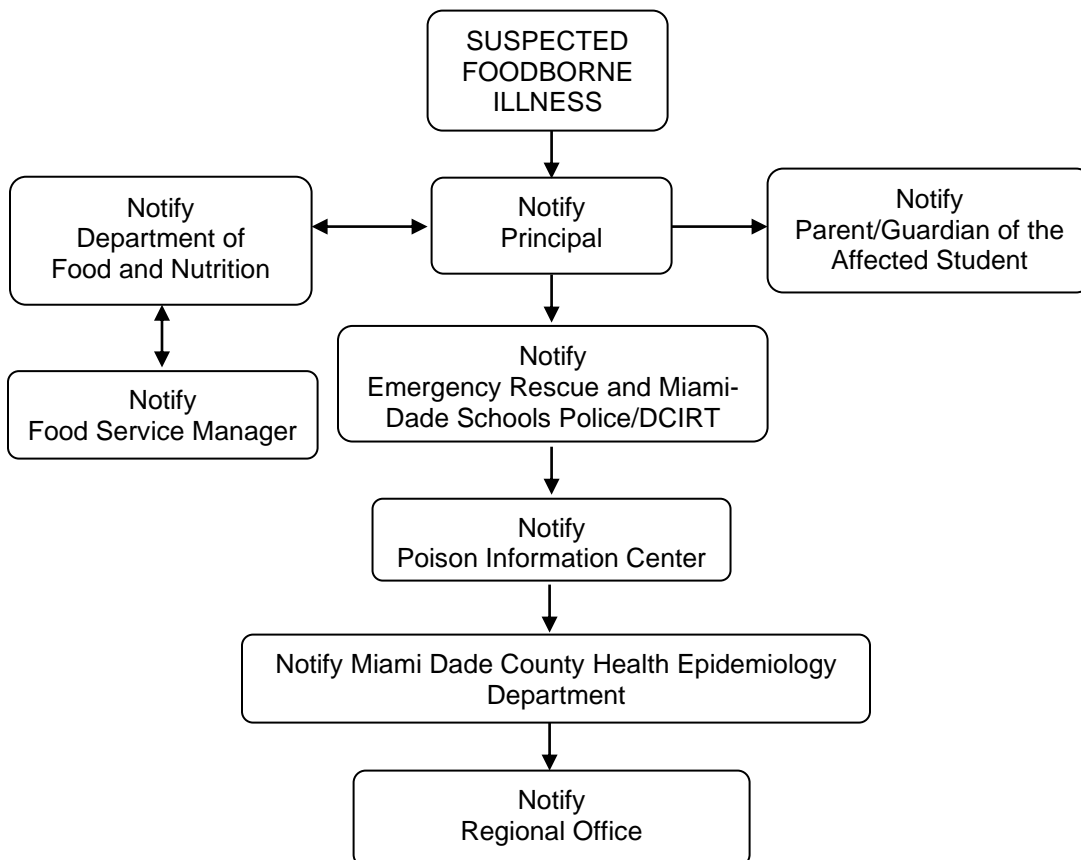
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7. Check to ensure that available samples of food items are properly kept and labeled for the Department of Health

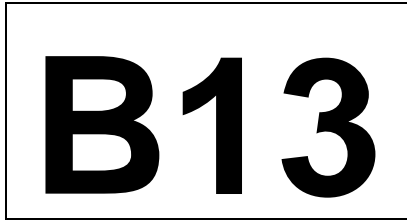
8. Provide in-service to staff regarding safe food handling

All school food service managers/satellite assistants receive training in HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) principles as well as on-site reviews, a minimum of two (2) annual Department of Health Inspections per school year and continuing education in food safety. In the event of a reported and/or confirmed outbreak of foodborne illness, all food and nutrition employees at the affected school will be required to receive re-training on food safety and sanitation procedures to be conducted by the food service supervisor.

**MDCPS- Department of Food and Nutrition
Foodborne Illness Communication Tree**



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For Action By: Principals, Food Service Managers and Satellite Assistants

Refer Questions to: Department of Food and Nutrition

Created:

Revised: March 2005(4th), July 2006, July 2007, July 2008, July 2011, July 2019

Reviewed: July 2023