







## Surge Epidemiologists

### I. Policy

It is the policy of the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department (TLCHD) to adhere to all state, federal, and local statutes governing the management and case investigation of individual communicable disease cases and outbreaks within Lucas County.

### II. Scope

This procedure/process applies to any staff member that has agreed to assist epidemiology staff in situations of large outbreaks or events that require more staff assistance than existing epidemiology staff can handle.

### III. Purpose

Public health surveillance and epidemiologic investigations are critical public health functions for identifying threats to the health of a community. It is necessary for TLCHD to be prepared and have staff familiar with epidemiologic investigations and understanding their role and need for assisting in large scale outbreaks or events.

### IV. Background

Per the Local Public Health Emergency Preparedness Grant in years previous, TLCHD has had to demonstrate that staff were adequately trained and capable to assist epidemiology staff with outbreak response, when needed.

### V. Procedure

#### A. Identification of Surge Epidemiologists

1. The division of Community Services and Environmental Health has previously offered sanitarian staff that were interested in assisting with epidemiology investigations the opportunity to be designated as surge epidemiologists and be called upon whenever assistance in outbreak response was needed.
2. All TLCHD employees with an interest in assisting in large-scale outbreak investigations are able to work through their supervisor(s) and be trained as a surge epidemiologist.

#### B. Training of Surge Epidemiologists

1. Once identified, TLCHD infectious disease epidemiologists will work with the employee(s) and their supervisors to schedule one-on-one or small group training sessions to go over the



following topics to ensure uniform training of surge epidemiologists:

- a. Class A Diseases and ODH Contact
- b. HIPPA/FERPA and Public Health Exemptions
- c. Job Responsibilities
- d. Local contacts
  - i. Infection Control Practitioners
  - ii. Health Alert Network
  - iii. Fax Resources
- e. Vectorborne and Vaccine Preventable Illnesses
- f. Outbreaks
  - i. What is an outbreak?
  - ii. Outbreak process/procedure
  - iii. What information is requested/needed for an outbreak
  - iv. Line listings
  - v. Types of outbreaks
  - vi. Data systems and information required for entering in each
    - 1) NORS
    - 2) ODRS
  - vii. Examples of outbreak reports

2. Training will be offered on outbreak or infectious disease related topics on a routine basis

### **C. Request for Assistance**

- 1. Routinely, TLCHD epidemiologists investigate outbreaks and may require assistance from additional staff when capacity for staff response is exceeded.
- 2. Epidemiology supervisor will contact the supervisor of available surge epidemiologists and discuss potential needs, duration, and duties.
- 3. Upon availability and workload, surge epidemiologists will be asked to assist with outbreak investigation

## **VI. Maintenance**

### **A. Review**

- a. The Infectious Disease standard operating procedures are to be reviewed every other year or as needed to ensure compliance with both agency and accreditation standards.



- b. If guidance/recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control, Ohio Department of Health or law changes regarding this infectious disease, TLCHD will follow the most up-to-date guidance and adjust the SOP(s) as needed.

## **B. Revision**

1. All changes made to this SOP are to be noted on the **Record of Change**. Substantial changes will require renewed signatures from all applicable parties. This includes changes to the intent, scope, procedures, or policy statement.
2. Changes in style, format, grammar or minor error correction will not require renewed signatures but must be indicated on the Record of Change.

## **C. Attachments**

1. A listing of surge epidemiologists will be maintained by the Epidemiology Supervisor and shared with TLCHD supervisory staff when changes are made. This listing can be found on S:\CSRP\SOGs\Surge Epidemiologists



## Record of Change

(Required for all procedures)

Date of Change	Changes Made By	Changes Made/Notes	Approved By