

# Suspected Foodborne Illness Procedure

## Purpose

This document explains what to do if two or more people, including adults and children, report having symptoms of foodborne illness.

## Guidance

People can get sick if the food they eat has harmful chemicals or germs. This is called foodborne illness. The most common foodborne illnesses are foodborne infections caused by germs that grow in food or inside of our bodies. Symptoms of foodborne infections include diarrhea, vomiting, fever, headache, and stomach aches. Symptoms may be noticed from several hours to several weeks after eating the food.

In the United States, the Centers for Disease Control estimates that about 48 million Americans get sick and up to 3,000 people die each year from unsafe food. If you suspect someone at your site may have a foodborne illness it is important to implement this procedure quickly.

## Procedure

### 1. Listen

- You must listen carefully to a parent, child or other adult who reports having symptoms they believe linked to food from an Early Learning Program.
  - Do not assume the complaint is unjustified.
  - Remain calm and polite.
  - Tell the person reporting the illness you are documenting it on a report form and sending it to the PSESD for evaluation and further action.
  - Record only the information relayed by the person reporting the illness.
  - Avoid making a diagnosis or suggesting treatment.

### 2. Document

- You must complete a [Suspected Foodborne Illness Report](#) immediately after having received the complaint. Tell families that you or someone from the PSESD Early Learning program will contact them.
  - Call your Health/Nutrition/Safety Coach.
  - Complete the [Suspected Food Borne Illness Report](#).
  - Scan or fax the report to the PSESD Early Learning office.
  - Document the discussion with parents in the Child/Family File.
  - Share the report with team members.

### 3. Monitor

- The site team will work with staff at PSESD Early Learning to help follow up on the complaint.