

Requesting an Epi-Aid

Epidemiologic assistance from CDC

What is an Epi-Aid?



An Epi-Aid is an investigation of an urgent public health problem, such as infectious or non-communicable disease outbreaks, unexplained illnesses, or natural or manmade disasters. When a public health authority requests assistance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an Epi-Aid allows rapid, short-term (1–3 weeks), generally onsite, technical assistance by Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) officers and other CDC subject matter experts. The focus of an Epi-Aid investigation is to assist partners in making rapid, practical decisions for actions to prevent and control the public health problem.

Who participates?

An Epi-Aid team includes at least one EIS officer and other CDC subject matter experts. This team joins local staff in the community where assistance is requested. The requesting public health authority provides overall leadership for the investigation, while the Epi-Aid team provides technical assistance.

Who can request an Epi-Aid?

Various officials with authority for public health can request an Epi-Aid.

- State and territorial public health authorities
- Local public health authorities, in coordination with the state authorities
- Elected tribal leaders of federally recognized tribes
- Foreign countries' ministry of health authorities
- Federal agency officials
- American military base commanding generals
- CDC's Vessel Sanitation Program officials

An Epi-Aid allows rapid response by CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service officers in investigating urgent public health problems, such as infectious and non-communicable disease outbreaks, unexplained illnesses, or natural or manmade disasters.

Can a local jurisdiction request an Epi-Aid?

Yes. CDC responds to direct requests from local jurisdictions. When a local jurisdiction requests an Epi-Aid, CDC is committed to ensuring the state is aware of the request and is appropriately engaged in the Epi-Aid. The EIS program frequently helps with coordination among the state and local jurisdictions and CDC programs.

How can a public health authority request an Epi-Aid?

1. The requesting authority contacts the subject matter expert at CDC or the EIS program.
2. The CDC subject matter expert contacts the EIS program (or vice versa) to discuss the Epi-Aid request. Once CDC decides it can support the Epi-Aid, the CDC subject matter expert notifies the requesting authority.
3. If CDC can support the Epi-Aid, upon notification, the requesting authority emails an invitation to the CDC subject matter expert contact or to the EIS Program Chief at EpiAid@cdc.gov.
4. The EIS program approves the Epi-Aid.

How do Epi-Aids benefit public health?

An Epi-Aid benefits public health in several ways. Epi-Aids can:

- Increase the technical capacity and workforce available for rapid response
- Streamline access to CDC subject matter experts and laboratory resources
- Build epidemiologic capacity through collaboration
- Enhance public health relationships
- Contribute to practical understanding about the problem being addressed

What is the role of the requesting public health authority?

The public health authority provides overall leadership of the Epi-Aid investigation while benefitting from a collaborative relationship with the Epi-Aid team. The public health authority generally retains custody and control over all data collected as part of the investigation. After the Epi-Aid is completed, the public health authority often requests CDC's continued collaboration and assistance in data analysis, report writing, presentation preparation, and additional programmatic technical assistance.

How can I get more information?

For more information about Epi-Aids, call the EIS office at +1 (404) 498-6110, send an e-mail to EpiAid@cdc.gov, or visit the [EIS website](#).

Requesting an Epi-Aid

- Contact the CDC subject matter expert directly, or
- Contact the EIS office
 - **At any time:** E-mail EpiAid@cdc.gov
 - **During business hours** (8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. ET): Call the EIS office at +1 (404) 498-6110
 - **After business hours:** Call CDC's Emergency Operations Center at +1 (770) 488-7100