# What to Know: BIG Updates to Foodborne Illness (FBI) Complaint Events

Major updates were made to MAVEN FBI complaint events on August 21, 2025. See the following MAVEN Tip Sheet on Foodborne Illness Complaint Events for more details.

*NEW*		
FBI COMPLAINT WORKFLOW	the workflow for 2 weeks	
ADMINISTRATIVE FIELDS	<ul> <li>Complaint Status: Allows for duplicate or invalid FBI complaints to be identified without deleting them from MAVEN (completed by DFP)</li> <li>Complaint Information Complete: Improved tracking of events with information pending from complainant</li> <li>Complaint Source: Data collected on how complaint information was received (ex: disease investigation, phone)</li> </ul>	
"OTHER EXPOSURES" QUESTION PACKAGE	For undiagnosed individuals only. Collects information on non-foodborne transmission routes for enteric infections:  • Waterborne: recreational and drinking water  • Animals: exposure to animals  • Person-to-person: exposure to other ill people, large gatherings, congregate care settings	
EXTRACT FOR FBI COMPLAINT DATA	Extract your jurisdiction's FBI complaint data	

* IMPROVED FUNCTIONALITY *		
JURISDICTION AUTOMATICALLY ASSIGNED  Jurisdiction is automatically assigned to events based on Ill personal city and Purchase location official city. Previously a LBOH user of access if they created the FBI complaint event or the event was should be accessed in the personal city.		
REDUCED DATA ENTRY FOR DIAGNOSED CASES  Streamlined reporting for individuals with an enteric disease event in MAN  • After linking associated disease event(s) to an FBI complaint event, limited demographic and clinical information needs to be entered		
PRINT TEMPLATE FOR SHARING WITH INSPECTIONAL STAFF	Redesigned print template for handing off FBI complaint information to inspectional staff  • Relevant clinical information added, including diagnosis, onset date(s), and symptoms for undiagnosed individuals  • Complainant and ill person names removed to maintain confidentiality	

### **MAVEN Tip Sheet: Foodborne Illness (FBI) Complaint Events**

Foodborne illness (FBI) complaint events are created in MAVEN to document the foods and drinks consumed by an individual, or common foods consumed by a group of ill people, prior to onset of gastrointestinal illness symptoms associated with a diagnosed or undiagnosed disease. FBI complaint events are used to communicate food exposures between individuals conducting case interviews and those who permit or license implicated food establishments. Additionally, they are used to monitor trends in illness across Massachusetts and for outbreak detection. FBI complaint events are reviewed by DPH's Division of Food Protection (DFP), formerly the Food Protection Program (FPP).

#### Contents

LBOH Access to FBI Complaint Events in MAVEN	2
Confidentiality	2
General FBI Complaint Guidance	3
Creating an FBI Complaint Event	4
Administrative Question Package (QP)	4
Complaint Information Question Package (QP)	4
Food History Question Package (QP)	6
*New* Other Exposures Question Package (QP)	8
*New* Outbreak Response Question Package (QP)	8
Requesting assistance from DPH to create a complaint	9
*New* Workflow: LBOH Foodborne Illness (FBI) Complaint Notification	10
Understanding variables in the workflow:	10
Responding to a Complaint in Your Jurisdiction	11
How an LBOH will be notified to communicate information to their inspectors	11
How to share a complaint with inspectional staff	12
LBOH inspectional follow up for FBI complaints	13
*New* Report for Extracting FBI Complaint Data	13
*New* Transmission of Complaint Information to METRIK	14
Resources	14

#### **Share your feedback**

General feedback on recent updates to FBI complaint events and associated guidance materials can be provided here: <u>Foodborne Illness Complaint Feedback</u>

Please contact DPH via phone with any questions about specific complaints.

- Division of Food Protection: (617) 983-6712
- Division of Epidemiology: (617) 983-6800

Any issues with MAVEN not working correctly should be directed to MAVEN Help: mavenhelp@mass.gov

Ver 5.0 – August 2025 Page **1** of **14** 

#### **LBOH Access to FBI Complaint Events in MAVEN**

In August 2025, MAVEN was updated to improve local board of health (LBOH) users' access to FBI complaint data by assigning jurisdiction to events. Prior to this update, an LBOH user only had access to an FBI complaint event if they created it or it was shared with them or a user group they belong to.

### \*New\* LBOH Access to FBI Complaint Events in MAVEN

An LBOH MAVEN user has access to a foodborne illness (FBI) complaint event if:



An ill person lives in LBOH's jurisdiction (Complaint Information question package)

OR W

A food establishment is located in LBOH's jurisdiction (Food History question package)

LBOH access is based on "official city" variables that auto populate when both city and state are completed.

A given LBOH that meets the above criteria will have access to the full FBI complaint event (not just information pertaining to the ill person or food establishment in their jurisdiction).

### Confidentiality

Information in MAVEN should be shared on a need-to-know basis. An FBI complaint event often has sufficient details for another jurisdiction to complete environmental follow up. In these instances, a case's MAVEN disease event does not also need to be shared with other jurisdictions.

Ver 5.0 – August 2025 Page **2** of **14** 

#### **General FBI Complaint Guidance**

- ✓ Create an FBI complaint event for both in-state <u>and</u> out-of-state food exposures. Out-of-country exposures do not need to be included.
- ✓ Only one FBI complaint event needs to be created per person or per party.
- ✓ Multiple food exposures for an individual or party can be entered into a single foodborne illness complaint event.

## DPH recommends creating an FBI complaint event in MAVEN when:

## **Undiagnosed**



An undiagnosed individual with gastrointestinal illness reports one or more of the following in the 7 days before symptom onset:

- ✓ Eating food prepared outside of a private residence
- ✓ Consuming one of the following high-risk foods: Unpasteurized milk, unpasteurized and unaged (<6 months) cheese, unpasteurized juice or cider, or raw shellfish or seafood
- ✓ Consuming food at an event or gathering where others are also sick

### **Diagnosed**



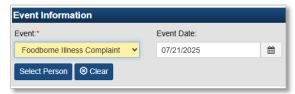
A diagnosed enteric disease case reports one or more of the following during their incubation period:

- ✓ Eating food prepared outside of a private residence
- ✓ Consuming one of the following high-risk foods:
  Unpasteurized milk, unpasteurized and unaged (<6 months) cheese, unpasteurized juice or cider, or raw seafood or shellfish</p>
- ✓ Is an infant that is primarily formula fed
- ✓ Consuming food at an event or gathering where others are also sick

Ver 5.0 – August 2025 Page **3** of **14** 

#### **Creating an FBI Complaint Event**

• Click on "Create Event" from the left-hand menu of the MAVEN dashboard. Use the "Event" drop-down menu and select "Foodborne Illness Complaint":



• Add the complainant's name to the "Name" field:

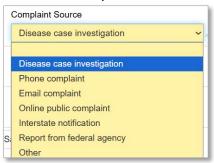


Note: The complainant is whomever provided the illness and exposure information (the ill individual, a medical provider, etc.).

Click "Save" which will create and open the FBI complaint event

#### Administrative Question Package (QP)

\*New\* LBOH users should document how a complaint was received using the Complaint Source field.



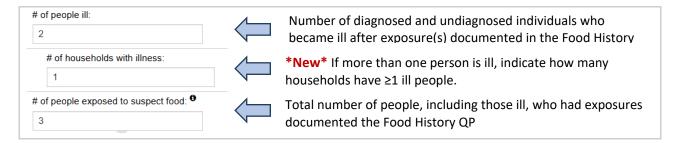
- All other fields will be completed by DPH Division of Food Protection (DFP):
  - \*New\* FBI Complaint Status will be completed using the following: <u>FBI Complaint Status</u> Classification
  - \*New\* Public complaint ID will be auto filled for complaints received through a new online foodborne illness report form. The online report system is anticipated to go live in early 2026.

### **Complaint Information Question Package (QP)**

- \*New\* Indicate the language used to conduct the interview and collect FBI complaint information
- \*New\* If all information that is expected to be collected has been collected and documented, respond to FBI complaint information complete? as "Yes."
  - If information is pending from complainant, select "Information pending." Try to collect and document any missing information within 3 business days of initial report of complaint, and once complete, make sure to update this field. DFP recommends waiting to share information with inspectional staff until it is complete.

Ver 5.0 – August 2025 Page **4** of **14** 

- \*Updated\* The Complainant Information section only needs to be completed if the individual reporting the FBI complaint is not ill, but is reporting on behalf of someone else.
- Document the number of people ill and exposed:



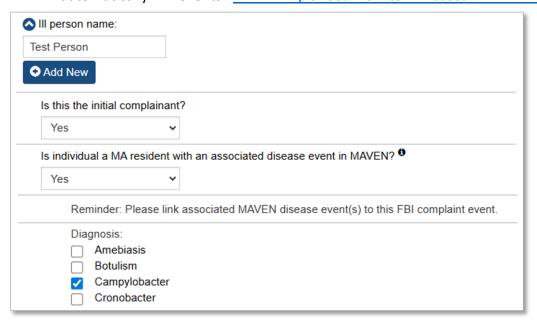
#### **Foodborne Illness Outbreaks**

Two or more people ill from different households following a common exposure may be considered an outbreak. In addition to creating the FBI complaint event in MAVEN, please call DPH:

Division of Food Protection (DFP) at (617) 983-6712 or Division of Epidemiology at (617) 983-6800.

#### a) For Diagnosed Illness (Individual with an Enteric Disease Event in MAVEN)

- \*New\* After entering the case's name, indicate "Yes" to the question Is individual a MA resident
  with an associated disease event in MAVEN?
  - New\* If you are completing the FBI complaint following a disease investigation, answer "Yes" to Is this the initial complainant?
  - Enter the following fields: diagnosis, city, state, and symptom onset.
  - Link the individual's disease event(s) to the FBI Complaint. MAVEN will not automatically link events. MAVEN Tip Sheet: How to link cases in MAVEN



 If an individual reports having received a diagnosis of a reportable condition but an event cannot be found in MAVEN, indicate "No" and complete all subsequent fields (follow guidance below for Undiagnosed Illness).

Ver 5.0 – August 2025 Page **5** of **14** 

#### b) For Undiagnosed Illness

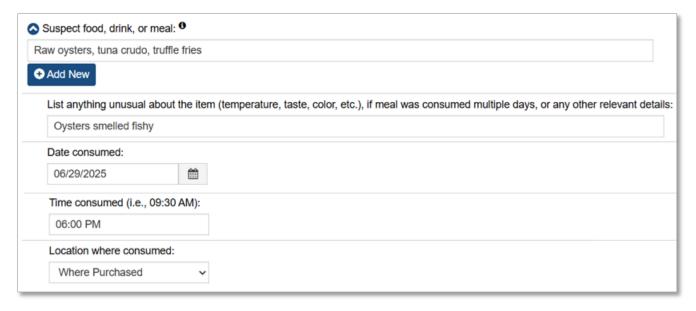
- New\* Indicate "No" to the question Is individual a MA resident with an associated disease event in MAVEN?
  - o If individual resides outside of your jurisdiction and you cannot confirm they have a disease event, indicate Unknown and complete subsequent fields.
- \*Updated\* The following should be collected and documented for each ill individual:
  - <u>Demographic information</u>: name, address, contact information (phone, email, preferred language), age, gender identity, if they work in a high-risk setting with potential foodhandling duties
  - <u>Illness information</u>: onset date and time, symptoms, hospitalization, if medical attention was received, and medical diagnosis

#### Food History Question Package (QP)

- An entire meal or a single high-risk food (e.g., unpasteurized milk) can be listed in the Suspect food, drink, or meal field.
  - After entering a suspect food/meal, additional questions will populate to collect details about the listed item. Complete all fields that follow.
  - Multiple food exposures can be reported within a single FBI complaint event. An "Add New" button will appear after entering the first suspect food item.

#### Tips for entering food exposures

- Reminder: Enter exposures that took place in Massachusetts as well as outside of the state (but within the US). DFP will notify other states as needed.
- A meal does not need to be broken up across multiple fields unless listed items were purchased from different food establishments.



\*New\* The field List anything unusual about the item can be used to capture subjective comments
about the listed item (e.g., tasted bad, appeared undercooked) or if the meal was consumed across
multiple days.

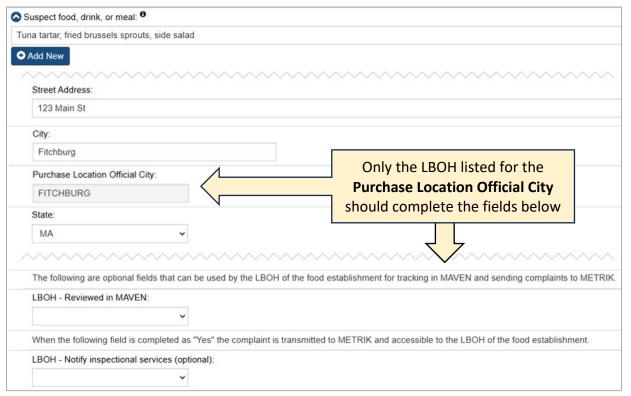
Ver 5.0 – August 2025 Page **6** of **14** 

 DFP will indicate if follow-up is recommended for each documented suspect food/meal using the variable DPH – Notify inspectional services:

DPH – Notify inspectional services		
Yes	DPH recommends LBOH follow up. The type of follow-up or investigation is determined by the LBOH's internal procedures for responding to an FBI complaint unless a specific request is made by DPH.	
Awareness only	Tollow up may not be needed, but some information regarding the exposure	
No		

DFP will only recommend follow up if the complaint is assigned an FBI Complaint Status of "Valid."

- The following optional fields can be completed by the LBOH of the listed food establishment:
  - \*New\* The LBOH can document if they have reviewed a reported food exposure using the LBOH – Reviewed in MAVEN fields.
  - \*New\* The LBOH can indicate if they want to notify their jurisdiction's inspectional services using the field LBOH - Notify inspectional services (optional).



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Data are not currently being transmitted from MAVEN to METRIK; this functionality is anticipated in 2026. Once established, historic foodborne illness complaint data (September 2025 onwards) will be transmitted if criteria are met. LBOHs can consider using this field prior to the METRIK data integration if they would like to ensure the complaint information are transmitted to METRIK once functionality is established.

#### Q: What is all this stuff about METRIK in the Food History Question Package?

**A**: In 2026, data from MAVEN FBI complaint events will be transmitted to METRIK. One of the following fields will need to be completed as follows for the event to be transmitted.

- DPH Notify inspectional services: Yes, Awareness only
- LBOH Notify inspectional services (optional): Yes

No data are currently being transmitted to METRIK. You can disregard the METRIK guidance at this time.

### \*New\* Other Exposures Question Package (QP)

- This QP collects information on possible non-foodborne sources of enteric infection, including travel, exposure to recreational and drinking water, exposure to animals, contact with other ill people, and exposure to large gatherings or congregate care settings.
  - This information will be reviewed by DFP in conjunction with food exposures when providing a recommendation for follow up at a food establishment.
  - This QP only needs to be completed for ill MA residents who do not have a disease event in MAVEN. See guidance at the top of the QP.

### \*New\* Outbreak Response Question Package (QP)

• **LBOHs have read-only access to this QP,** which is used by DPH to track and summarize foodborne outbreak investigations.

Ver 5.0 – August 2025 Page **8** of **14** 

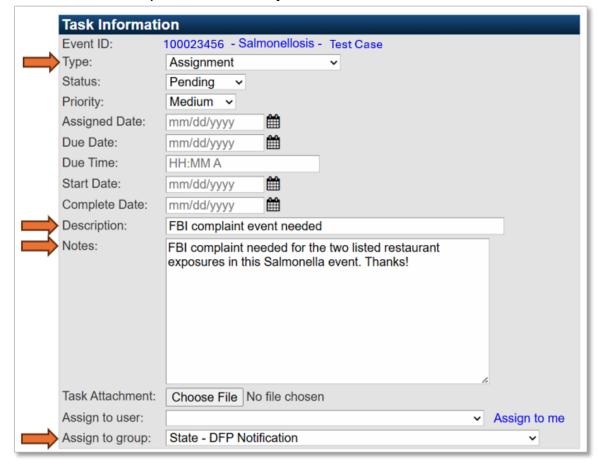
#### Requesting assistance from DPH to create a complaint

If you are unable to create an FBI complaint event after interviewing a diagnosed enteric disease case, the disease event can be tasked to the "State – DFP Notification" group and DFP will assist in making an FBI complaint event if one is needed.

1) With the disease event open, go to the "Tasks" tab on the dashboard and click "Add Task"



- 2) Complete the four fields below:
  - Type: Assignment
  - **Description**: Add a description of your request
  - Notes: Indicate which exposure(s) warrant an FBI complaint event
  - Assign to group: Select "State DFP Notification" from the drop-down list
  - Status and Priority can remain the default values.



DFP will receive this request and create an FBI complaint if one is needed.

Ver 5.0 – August 2025 Page **9** of **14** 

### \*New\* Workflow: LBOH Foodborne Illness (FBI) Complaint Notification

The LBOH Foodborne Illness (FBI) Complaint Notification workflow is populated with all FBI complaint events that list an LBOH MAVEN user's jurisdiction in either of the following fields:



Multiple jurisdictions will have access to an FBI complaint event if ill individual(s) or reported purchase location(s) are in different jurisdictions.



	To enter workflow	All newly created FBI complaint events enter the workflow. An LBOH user will be able to see all complaints associated with their jurisdiction(s).	
<b>—</b>	To exit workflow	FBI complaint events leave this workflow <u>two weeks</u> after they are created.  There is not a field in MAVEN that an LBOH user can complete that will remove an FBI complaint event from this workflow or keep it there for longer than two weeks.	

To continue to track a complaint after the complaint has left the workflow, you can task the complaint to yourself or your LBOH's user group. <u>MAVEN Tip Sheet: Tasking Events in MAVEN</u>

### Understanding variables in the workflow:

- FBI Complaint Status: This is assigned by the DPH Division of Food Protection (DFP) using the following criteria: FBI Complaint Status Classification
- **Single Incident?**: This field is completed by DFP and is used to distinguish an FBI complaint that reports illness among a single person or household from a suspect foodborne illness outbreak.
  - o "No" indicates that the complaint event is being investigated as an outbreak by the Working Group on Foodborne Illness Control at DPH in conjunction with associated LBOH(s).
- **FBI Complaint Information Complete?**: Completed by the individual reporting the complaint and updated as needed by LBOH or DPH MAVEN users.
- Assigned to Group: If DFP has tasked a complaint event to an LBOH user group because information needs to be communicated to inspectional staff, the city/town name will appear here.

Ver 5.0 – August 2025 Page **10** of **14** 

#### Responding to a Complaint in Your Jurisdiction

DFP is automatically notified of every FBI complaint event when it is created in MAVEN.

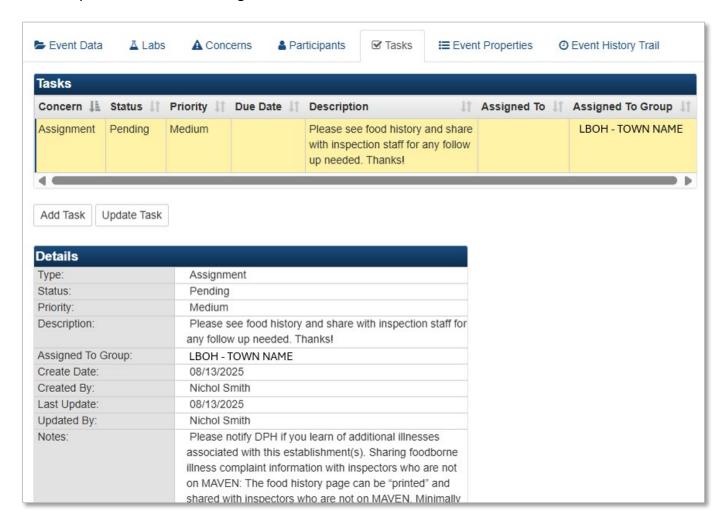
Once information has been entered and complaint information is complete (Complaint Information QP variable FBI complaint information complete? = "Yes"), DFP will review and indicate if additional follow-up is recommended using the DPH – Notify inspectional services field in the Food History QP.

No specific follow up is requested by DPH if an ill person resides in their jurisdiction.

#### How an LBOH will be notified to communicate information to their inspectors

DFP will task a MAVEN LBOH user group if inspectional follow up is recommended for a food establishment listed within an FBI complaint event. An LBOH will be able to tell what follow up is recommended using the variable **DPH – Notify inspectional services** in the Food History QP. LBOHs will be notified by:

1) <u>Email notification</u>: Tasking generates an email notification to individuals included in the MAVEN user group. The email notification includes the MAVEN ID. LBOH users can log in to MAVEN to review the request outlined in the assigned task.



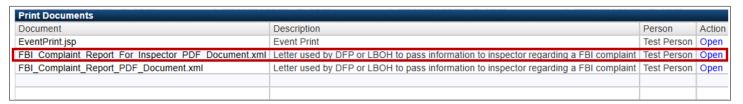
Ver 5.0 – August 2025 Page **11** of **14** 

- 2) Event will populate in your workflows:
  - a. My Groups' Open Tasks: Any task assigned to an LBOH user group you belong to will appear in this workflow.
  - b. \*New\* LBOH Foodborne Illness (FBI) Complaint Notification: All complaints your LBOH has access to will appear in this workflow. If DFP recommends follow up, you will see your jurisdiction listed under "Assigned To Group." For more information, see <a href="section above">section above</a>.

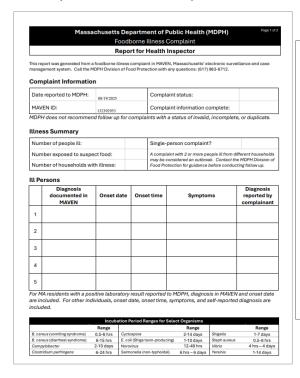
#### How to share a complaint with inspectional staff

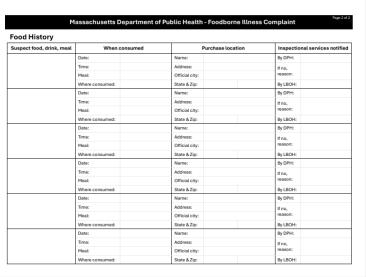
To generate a report that can be shared with inspectors from the MAVEN FBI complaint event:

- 1) With the FBI complaint event open in MAVEN, select "Print Event" from the left-hand menu.
- 2) Click "Open" next to "FBI Complaint Report For Inspector PDF Document.xml"



This opens a PDF report containing relevant information from the FBI complaint event that can be securely emailed, faxed, or printed to handoff to your LBOH's inspectional staff.





- 3) Use your jurisdiction's Communication Event in MAVEN to identify contact information for environmental health (inspectional) staff in your city or town.
  - For more information, see <u>Environmental Health Contacts in MAVEN Communication Events</u>.
     Please update your jurisdiction's Environmental Health Contacts as frequently as necessary.

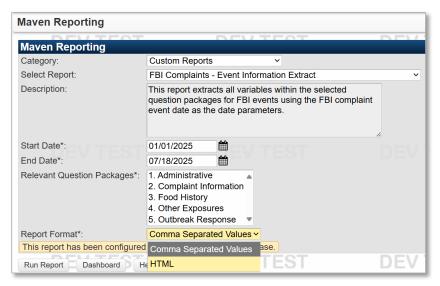
Ver 5.0 – August 2025 Page **12** of **14** 

#### LBOH inspectional follow up for FBI complaints

- DPH has the final determination if follow up is recommended and the LBOH where the establishment is located has the final determination of follow up activities.
- Follow-up might vary across jurisdictions per internal procedures. In accordance with the <u>Foodborne</u> <u>Illness Investigation and Control Manual Chapter 4</u>, it is recommended that some level of investigation should be done for a single possible case of foodborne illness.
- Unless a specific request is made, no information is needed to be returned to DPH, but any
  documents collected or generated during follow up may be attached to the MAVEN event for record
  keeping.

#### \*New\* Report for Extracting FBI Complaint Data

The data available in each question package (QP) in MAVEN foodborne illness complaints can be extracted using the FBI Complaints – Event Information Extract.



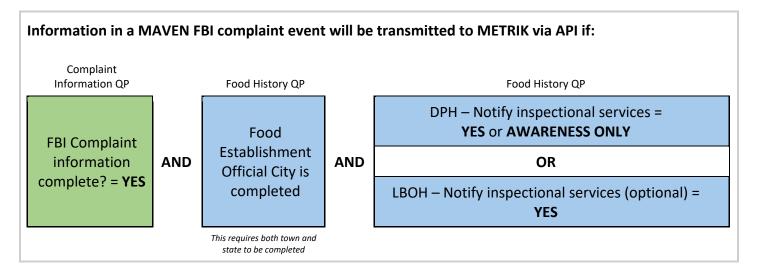
Any complaint that an LBOH user has access to will appear in the data extract. You may have access to a complaint if your city/town is listed in:

	Where an ill person lives	Where a food establishment is located
Question Package	Complaint Information	Food History
Variable (repeatable)	OFFICIAL_ILL_PERSON_TOWN	OFFICIAL_SUSPECT_FOOD_OR_DRINK_CITY

Ver 5.0 – August 2025 Page **13** of **14** 

#### \*New\* Transmission of Complaint Information to METRIK

- METRIK is a local public health data solution under development by the DPH Office of Local and Regional Health (OLRH) in conjunction with local and state public health professionals. Once completed, METRIK will be available to all local boards of health, health departments, and inspectional service departments performing public health work across the state to collect, organize, share, report, and analyze public health data and streamline their work. METRIK will include tools to support food establishment inspections and response to foodborne illness complaints.
- In 2026, an applied program interface (API) will be established to transmit information from a MAVEN FBI complaint event to METRIK for follow up by LBOH inspectors. Variables were incorporated into MAVEN in August 2025 to prepare for the transmission of information.
- No information is currently being transmitted to METRIK. There will be widespread communication when this functionality is enabled. In the interim, please reference information on "How to share a complaint with inspectional staff" in the previous section of this document.



#### Resources

- For more information on investigating foodborne illness, refer to the MDPH Foodborne Illness Investigation and Control Manual
- For more information on incubation periods of various diseases refer to <u>CDC's Guide to Confirming</u> an <u>Etiology in Foodborne Disease Outbreak</u>
- For more information on foods commonly associated with various diseases refer to
  - CDC: Foods That Can Cause Food Poisoning
  - FDA: What You Need to Know about Foodborne Illnesses

Ver 5.0 – August 2025 Page **14** of **14**