



**ALAMEDA COUNTY HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY  
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Division of Communicable Disease Control and Prevention  
1100 San Leandro Blvd  
San Leandro, CA 94577  
Tel (510) 267-3250  
Fax (510) 273-3744

**Colleen Chawla**, Agency Director  
**Kimi Watkins-Tartt**, Department Director

**Nicholas Moss**, MD, MPH, Health Officer  
**Kavita K. Trivedi**, MD, Communicable Disease Controller

## HEALTH ADVISORY

### **Outbreak of Shigellosis likely associated with a Conference at a Hotel Venue in Downtown Los Angeles, August 21-24, 2023**

SEPTEMBER 1, 2023

#### **SITUATION:**

Alameda County Public Health Department, in coordination with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), is investigating an outbreak of shigellosis likely associated with a union delegate conference held at a hotel venue in downtown Los Angeles from August 21-24, 2023. The event included an estimated 300+ attendees from across California. As of August 31, 2023, CDPH is reporting six shigellosis cases from four California local health jurisdictions among event attendees, including Alameda County residents. At least three/six cases were PCR+ for *Shigella*; culture and additional subtyping are pending. Known illness onset dates were on 8/25/23; at least two patients have been hospitalized. As of September 1, 2023, Alameda County is reporting three shigellosis cases to CDPH, all of whom attended this event.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Shigellosis is an intestinal illness caused by a group of bacteria called *Shigella*. Common symptoms include diarrhea (sometimes bloody), abdominal cramps, nausea, and fever. Symptoms usually begin within two days after exposure to *Shigella* and typically last for five to seven days. Many people may have mild disease that gets better without medical treatment and will recover fully. However, some people, especially young children, older adults, and persons with weakened immune systems, may have severe disease that requires hospitalization. A small number of people can develop complications such as blood stream infections, seizures, kidney failure or arthritis.

*Shigella* is very infectious and spreads easily. An infected person sheds *Shigella* bacteria in their stool while they are sick and often for more than a week afterwards. Not washing your hands well after using the toilet can spread the bacteria. *Shigella* spreads from exposure to feces of an infected person, which can occur during sexual contact. It also spreads by eating foods or liquids contaminated with feces from an infected person or swallowing untreated recreational water (such as lakes or water park play fountains) contaminated with *Shigella*.

Health care providers are required by law to report cases of shigellosis to the local health department. To prevent the spread of *Shigella*, local health departments are required to restrict activities of people with shigellosis who work in certain settings, such as day care, food-related businesses, and health care workers who have direct patient contact, until they are no longer infectious.

#### **Actions Requested of Healthcare Providers:**

- Order diagnostic testing for patients presenting with symptoms consistent with *Shigella* infection.
- When ordering diagnostic testing for suspected shigellosis, stool culture is preferred for patients who will require antimicrobial treatment.

- Order antimicrobial susceptibility testing if the culture is positive for *Shigella*, as there have been reports of increasing numbers of *Shigella* resistant to common antimicrobials used to treat shigellosis, including fluoroquinolones, macrolides, and ceftriaxone.
- Report all persons with *Shigella* infection via CMR reporting. Fax the completed CMR to (510)273-3744 or email [acutecd@acgov.org](mailto:acutecd@acgov.org) within one business day.
- In addition, indicate on the [CMR](#) report “LAC Conference Outbreak” for persons identified with recent *Shigella* infection who have also:
  1. Attended a conference event held at a hotel venue in downtown Los Angeles County from 8/21/23-8/24/23 or consumed food provided by the event, **or**
  2. Stayed at or visited a hotel venue in downtown Los Angeles County during the seven days prior to illness onset, **or**
  3. Traveled to Los Angeles County during the seven days prior to illness onset.
- Ensure the clinical laboratory performs reflex culture with antimicrobial susceptibility testing on any clinical specimens positive for *Shigella* by culture-independent diagnostic testing.
- Ensure the *Shigella* isolate is forwarded to Alameda County Public Health Laboratory for further confirmation and subtyping.
- Communicate with patients to expect additional follow-up from Public Health to capture exposure details to help identify the source of the outbreak and to discuss isolation/restriction of activities.
- For additional questions, please email [acutecd@acgov.org](mailto:acutecd@acgov.org) or call (510) 267-3250 during business hours; after hours you may call the On-Call Duty Officer via (925) 422-7595.

**Actions Requested of Laboratories:**

- Perform reflex culture with antimicrobial susceptibility testing on any clinical specimens positive for *Shigella* by culture-independent diagnostic testing related to this outbreak.
- If unable to submit via Electronic Laboratory Reporting, please fax culture results to 510-273-3744 or email to [acutecd@acgov.org](mailto:acutecd@acgov.org).

**RESOURCES:**

[Shigellosis \(acphd.org\)](http://acphd.org)