

# Epidemic Intelligence Service

CDC's disease detectives apply evidence-based training to rapidly respond to outbreaks, natural disasters, and other public health threats



The Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) is a renowned epidemiology training program that assigns doctors, nurses, veterinarians, scientists, and other health professionals to CDC and health departments across the country. Since 1951, EIS officers—CDC's disease detectives—have responded to every major public health threat.

## What Officers Do

EIS officers work with CDC and health departments to:

- **Investigate and respond to disease outbreaks** to find out what's making people or animals sick and stop the spread of disease.
- **Use health data to understand public health problems** and recommend quick and evidence-based action to stop health threats.
- **Give public health guidance during emergencies** to help people stay healthy and safe.
- **Strengthen response systems** so communities are prepared for future emergencies.
- **Conduct analyses and communicate findings** for public health action.



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## By the Numbers

**300+** public health investigations conducted each year

**135** officers supported local emergency response in FY 2024

**4,000+** officers trained since 1951

**97%** of recent graduates continued careers in public health

## Where EIS Officers Work

**96 officers** with the Classes of 2024 and 2025 serve at CDC and health departments nationwide:

- ★ **54** at CDC
- ★ **27** at state or territorial health departments
- ★ **14** with partners and city, county, and tribal health departments
- ★ **1** in a joint local-federal role

[www.cdc.gov/eis](https://www.cdc.gov/eis)

## Why this Program Matters

The EIS program makes extraordinary contributions to public health by:

- **Enhancing capability.** EIS attracts, selects, and trains professionals from a wide variety of disciplines who otherwise would not have pursued careers in public health.
- **Preparing the next generation of public health leaders.** EIS alumni have served as CDC directors, state health officers, state epidemiologists, state public health veterinarians, and in other critical public health leadership roles domestically and internationally.
- **Being first on the scene.** EIS officers are strategically assigned across the United States as vital members of CDC's preparedness efforts to detect and respond to threats and public health emergencies.

## A Closer Look

CDC's disease detectives protect health and save lives. For example, officers have:



**Protected people from rare infections like Melioidosis.** Officers identified aromatherapy oil in stores that was contaminated with the bacteria that causes Melioidosis. This led to a swift recall that removed the contaminated products from store shelves and saved lives.



**Prevented further illness and death from outbreaks.** Officers linked a tuberculosis outbreak to contaminated bone graft tissue that sickened 87 people and caused 3 deaths. Their work led to a quick recall of the contaminated products.



**Safeguarded residents in Nevada from dangerous avian influenza (H5N1).** Officers developed infection-tracking systems, provided protective equipment, and offered laboratory testing, leading to safety guidance for healthcare workers and farmers.

Just knowing that something was out there that was **causing children to die** was enough to motivate everyone. There was this very palpable **sense of urgency to figure out what the cause was.** Whatever it was, the **source was still out there**, not just for this family we were talking to, but for **thousands of families across the US.**

— Julia Petras, EIS Class of 2021, on the 2021 Melioidosis investigation



EIS Officer Julia Petras and LLS Fellow Maureen Ty (Class of 2021) obtain samples while investigating the multistate Melioidosis outbreak.