

## ● Role of CCDEH and Local EH

- CCDEH represents all 62 local environmental health departments across the state; 2/3 in health departments
- Of the 10 core EH programs, Retail Food Safety is largest program
- Approx. 900 staff that permit and inspect annually 120,000 retail food facility. These range from coffee and hot dog carts to big box grocery stores.
- Engaged early with Gov Office and CRA on guidelines for safe restart of restaurants after lockdown
- Worked on legislation like AB 61 to accommodate new normal of restaurant operation

## ● Survey Responses to Questions #1 and 2

○ Was your EH Department able to effectively implement pandemic induced workplace and food safety policies?

- 12 Yes, 3 No, 4 Sort of
- EH had to enforce guidelines, but not given the authority to do so, thus had to modify inspections
- Despite inconsistent support and a lack of a statewide coordinated effort, many had reliable employees and were able to adapt using virtual inspections

Were you able to communicate the science/data that drives the food safety policies/programs?

- 14 Yes, 3 No, 3 Sort of
- Mainly focused on guidelines
- Passed on available information, with some more successful than others
- Overall, not enough information was made available to them, and not quickly enough, so some damage control was necessary

## ● Survey Responses to Questions #3 and 4

○ How can communication/transparency be improved for future pandemic emergency responses?

- Information was fragmented and not able to be shared immediately with businesses
- Have a working list of restaurants/businesses/EH to send available information directly to quickly
- More information publicly available in general

Do you have any other comments/observations to share?

- EH & Public Health professionals need to be more involved and protected from political interests
- Problems with credibility were government-wide and some were non-partisan

## ● Overarching Conclusions

- Fear over physical and economic wellbeing, misinformation, conspiracy theories and political agendas fomented resentment and resistance to public health directives
- Undermined long-standing trust in “public health” servants and some fundamental public health tenets
- With all politics being local, local HO and EH had to bear brunt of much of the anger/ frustration
- Local PH and EH undermined in many jurisdictions by lack of state support and local law enforcement – even own governing boards (18 Hos resigned/ pushed out of positions)

- Contact Info

Justin Malan  
Executive Director  
[justin@ccdeh.com](mailto:justin@ccdeh.com)

