

## Who should be counted as an epidemiologist?

Epidemiologists working for the STATE health department (HD). For example, epidemiologists who work at the LOCAL or STATE level who are employed or contracted by the state are considered epidemiologists. Epidemiologists who are paid by an academic institution but work for state public health should be considered epidemiologists. When considering who should be counted, please focus on the functions performed by the individual rather than the job title. State level epidemiologists include all those employed by the state, all those working at the state level who are either federal assignees (e.g., EISO, CEFO, PHPS) or contract employees (e.g., CSTE trainee, contracted from school of public health to work at or for the state health department), and state employees assigned to work in a regional office (e.g., to conduct contact investigations for a region of the state).

## What is an Epidemiologist?

According to Last (*A Dictionary of Epidemiology*, 4th Ed., 2001) an Epidemiologist is defined as “an investigator who studies the occurrence of disease or other health related conditions or events in defined populations. The control of disease in populations is often also considered to be a task for the epidemiologist.”

The discipline of Epidemiology is defined as the “study of the distribution and determinants of health related states or events in specified populations, and the application of this study to control of health problems.”

- “Study” includes surveillance, observation, hypothesis testing, analytic research and experiments.
- “Distribution” refers to analysis by time, place, and classes of persons affected.
- “Determinants” are all the physical, biological, social, cultural, and behavioral factors that influence health.
- “Health related states or events” include diseases, causes of death, behaviors such as use of tobacco, reactions to preventative regimens, and provision and use of health services.
- “Specified populations” are those with identifiable characteristics, such as precisely defined numbers.
- “Application [...] to control” makes explicit the aims of epidemiology: “to promote, protect, and restore health.”

Potential sources of information to use in completing the ECA:

- Organizational charts
- Other STATE HD staff within subject-specific program areas

The definition of an epidemiologist and who should be counted as an epidemiologist are the same as in CSTE’s 2001-2009 ECAs and 2010 Epidemiology Enumeration Assessment. If you completed those assessments in the past, please answer this assessment in the same way.