WORKSHEET 4.13

An Outbreak Under a Valid Certificate

Subchapter 4.13 · case in the book: Colombo

If guests fell ill after one of your events next month, what would the certificate on your wall have promised them, and what would your response prove about the system behind it?

This worksheet turns the tools of the subchapter into a form you can fill in. The texts come from the book; the empty columns are for your own property. Adapt it before use: an unadapted checklist is exactly what the book warns against.

Practical application: what to do in your property

Step (from the book)	Done?	What we found / owner
The certification body first: Any incident that could raise doubt about the system's effectiveness would be reported to the certification body without delay, with the facts known at the time and updates as the investigation progressed;		
Paid exclusion: Agency and contract food handlers excluded for illness would be paid for the shift, and the clause was added to all agency contracts.		
The health question: Every food handler, permanent or temporary, would be asked about symptoms by a named supervisor before each shift, and the answer recorded for events.		
The incident file: The structure in Table 4 became the template for any future incident, and the incident procedure was tested by simulation twice a year.		

These steps are the book's method, not requirements of ISO 22000. Evidence can take whatever form suits the property; a separate document is needed only where an applicable requirement, or the property's own system, makes it necessary.

Verification Pact: what is believed, tested against the standard

What is commonly believed	What actually holds	Our position
"A certified hotel cannot have an outbreak."	No. Certification attests to a conforming system, not to the absence of incidents.	
"An outbreak means the certificate is withdrawn."	Not as stated. The body investigates and decides; suspension or withdrawal follows only if the system is found to have failed.	
"The certification body need not be told until the next audit."	Not as stated. Clients must inform the body without delay of matters affecting the system.	
"The health authority handles outbreaks; the FSMS does not."	No. The organisation must respond and communicate externally, including with authorities.	

What is commonly believed	What actually holds	Our position
“Once the cause is fixed, the incident is closed.”	No. Documented information must be reviewed and updated after any incident.	

Common mistakes: a self-check

Mistake (from the book)	Present here?	Action / owner
Believing certification prevents all incidents		
Not telling the certification body		
Discarding banquet samples too soon		
Exclusion rules that do not reach temporary staff		
Blaming the sick cook		
Closing the incident when the cause is fixed		

Operative synthesis

- **Is there an incident procedure with a named starter? (Food safety team leader): Procedure**
- **Are banquet samples retained long enough? (Executive chef): Retention records**
- **Do health exclusion rules reach every food handler? (Food safety team leader): Briefings; contracts**
- **Will the certification body be told promptly? (General manager): Procedure**
- **Has the incident procedure been tested? (Food safety team leader): Simulation records**
- **If guests fall ill after an event, who starts the response?: A named person**
- **Could we say tomorrow who worked last Saturday’s wedding?: Yes, from the staff list**
- **Would an agency cook tell us he was sick?: Yes, because he is paid to stay home**

Action plan for our property

Action	Owner	Due	How we will know it worked

Source: Francesco Dore, The Helm and the Lens, Volume 6b «The Lens», subchapter 4.13. Edizioni Effedore, 2026. Clause references are paraphrased; this sheet does not reproduce the text of ISO 22000, ISO 19011, ISO 22003-1 or ISO/IEC 17021-1. It is not legal advice: food law is that of the place where the property operates.