

## Lead Interview FAQ

You may have received a letter or been contacted by the Pennsylvania Department of Health's (DOH) Adult Blood Lead Epidemiology and Surveillance (ABLES) program regarding a recent blood lead test. The ABLES program has developed a survey tool to expand our knowledge of workplace and non-workplace lead exposure. This knowledge will help us identify key sources of exposure, communicate with stakeholders to improve occupational health and safety, and create relevant educational materials for greater lead exposure awareness. Ultimately, information gained from surveys with individuals like you will be used to protect employees and their families from lead poisoning.

Below are some frequently asked questions regarding the interview process to provide you with additional information. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any additional questions you may have at 717-787-3350 or [dehe@pa.gov](mailto:dehe@pa.gov).

### Is this interview related to COVID-19?

No, this interview is not COVID related, rather it is standard practice for public health to monitor and protect individuals from environmental exposures, including lead. Another example of a regular public health task is to conduct interviews for food-borne outbreaks.

### How did the DOH get my information?

Blood lead laboratory reports are reportable to the DOH (28 Pa. Code § 27.34). This means that when an adult blood lead test is performed and the result is greater than 5 µg/dL, the lab is required by state law to send the test result with other personal information (e.g., name, date of birth, residential address, etc.) to the DOH. We monitor these reports to keep people safe, particularly in the workplace.

### Why am I being contacted for an interview?

We are contacting individuals who have a BLL  $\geq$  25 µg/dL within the past year. Even if your most recent BLL result was below 25 µg/dL, we may still contact you regarding a previous test.

### Are you going to share this information with my employer?

Any information you provide will help us understand the source of lead exposure and keep other employees safe. In mitigation efforts, we may disclose to your employer that some of their employees had participated in a DOH lead interview, however we will not share your name or other personal identifiers with your employer. You will be kept anonymous.

### Why are you asking for my personal information?

Health disparities in the workplace based upon demographics such as age, race, and sex may be contributing to your lead exposure. We hope to identify inequalities that may be occurring, as well as identify occupational and nonoccupational sources of lead exposure, and work to eliminate them. In addition, we want to confirm that our current information is correct, so that we can follow up with the appropriate stakeholders and communities for outreach.

### How are the interviews conducted?

The interviews can be conducted over the phone or through a personalized online survey link. In both cases, information collection is secure.

The postcard I received regarding the interview says that there is a \$25 token of appreciation. What is that and when will I receive it?

The \$25 token of appreciation is to thank you for taking the time to complete the lead interview with us. Once you have completed the interview, you should receive our thank you in the mail, in the form of a Visa gift card, within 1-2 months. We ask for your patience in allowing time for processing.

Why is understanding sources of lead exposure so important?

By identifying sources of lead exposure, we can develop relevant tools to minimize and eliminate lead exposure in workplace and non-workplace settings. Please see our lead fact sheets for [occupational](#) and [non-occupational](#) lead exposure and lead poisoning. If you have additional questions regarding lead exposure, please do not hesitate to contact us at 717-787-3350 or [dehe@pa.gov](mailto:dehe@pa.gov) or reach out to your primary care doctor.

I do not feel comfortable participating in the interview. Is this interview mandatory?

No, the interview is not mandatory. However, we encourage you to participate in this voluntary survey. The information you provide will help keep you and others safe from lead exposure.

*The ABLES program is supported by the PADOH and the federally funded Pennsylvania Occupational Safety and Health Surveillance program (PennOSHS). For more information regarding PennOSHS, please visit [PennOSHS \(pa.gov\)](#), email [dehe@pa.gov](mailto:dehe@pa.gov), or call 717-787-3350.*