

Bacteria in food caused nearly 60 to fall ill at Maitland office party, CDC says

Health officials say food, clinical specimens tested positive for bacteria

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CDC: Bacteria caused party illness

ORLANDO, Fla. -

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said on Wednesday that bacteria in food is what caused nearly 60 people to fall ill at a large holiday party in a Maitland office building last month. The Florida Department of Health Orange County said that it received information from the CDC that food and clinical specimens from the foodborne outbreak tested positive for [Staphylococcus aureus](#) and [Bacillus cereus](#). Health officials said in a release that the "outbreaks often have been linked to foods that require a lot of handling when they are being processed, prepared, cooked and cooled." "The department continues its investigation and the initial findings suggest the pathogens multiplied by time and temperature abuse during the food preparation, transportation and serving processes," the release stated. Authorities were called to Maitland Colonnades on Lucien Way roughly two hours after the building-wide catered luncheon. The event was catered by Kitchen Divas, according to the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation. Employees tell Local 6 they were served food like sliced turkey, ham, stuffing and green beans. They say all 700 employees who work for various companies in the building were invited to the luncheon. Officials with the Maitland Fire Department said dozens of patients were treated for nausea, vomiting and diarrhea after the holiday luncheon. Some left and came back after getting sick at home and several were transported to the hospital. Days after the party, Local 6 tracked down the owner of Kitchen Divas, Susan Kocay, who was licensed out of a commercial kitchen in Winter Springs. Other caterers who worked in that kitchen told Local 6 Kocay had made most of the meal at her home.

Local 6 contacted Kitchen Divas for a comment on the CDC's findings, but have not heard back.

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