

# Release of a Select Agent or Toxin: A Shared Responsibility

## Who is Involved in a Response?

### Entity Working with Select Agents or Toxins

- Laboratory experiences the release and must immediately report it to FSAP
- Critical that the entity immediately assesses the scope of the situation and the health of potentially exposed individuals, and ensures that the select agent or toxin is contained
- All registered entities are required to have an incident response plan as a condition of program registration
  - This should include an assessment of risk and detail how the entity will handle those situations
  - It should be specific to the entity and the agents they are working with, up-to-date, effective, and ready to implement when needed



### State/Local Public Health or Agriculture Officials

- Responsible for human and agriculture health and safety in their jurisdiction, and have the authority and responsibility to assist the entity
- Can play an active role in assessing the situation and responding to the event
- Will typically engage when the situation goes beyond the ability of the entity to manage
- May request assistance from other federal agencies



### Federal Select Agent Program (FSAP)

- Receives report of a release from entity
- Works with the entity to get a complete picture of the incident – primary focus is on making sure the threat to public health or agriculture is contained, any exposed individuals have been properly evaluated, the select agent or toxin is secure, and helping the entity to assess why the failure occurred so that it does not happen again
- Can facilitate assistance between the affected entity and appropriate agencies
- May conduct an on-site visit to confirm corrective actions have been taken and/or provide technical expertise to the entity



### Other Federal Agencies

- May get involved in the case of a significant threat to public health or agriculture, or when specific assistance is requested
- Assistance is typically coordinated through the state's emergency management process
- May include federal agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), or Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

