

Notifiable Diseases and How to Report Them

Office of Infectious Disease
Epidemiology
Division of Public Health
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Why report?

- It is the law.
- Delaware code, Title 16 (Health and Safety), requires that certain diseases that pose a threat to the health of the public be reported to the Division of Public Health.
- See the website below for details regarding notifiable diseases and conditions:

<http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title16/Department%20of%20Health%20and%20Social%20Services/Division%20of%20Public%20Health/Health%20Promotion%20and%20Disease%20Prevention/4202.pdf>



Who is to report?

a. Health Care Providers

- Any health care provider who diagnoses or suspects the existence of any notifiable disease or any outbreak of disease is required to report this to the Division of Public Health.

b. Hospitals

- Each hospital and patient facility should have a person designated to report notifiable diseases/conditions to Public Health.
- When a hospital/facility reports a case, it covers the reporting requirement for the Healthcare provider. However, it is still the responsibility of the person who diagnoses the case to make sure the case has been reported.



Who is to report?

c. Laboratories

- All labs that conduct testing on human specimens (including commercial labs, hospital labs) are required to report to the Division of Public Health results that suggest the presence of:
 - A notifiable disease
 - A suspected agent of bioterrorism
 - Any other agent that may be the cause of an outbreak or public health emergency



Who is to report?

- Pharmacists
 - Required to report unusual or prescription/purchase patterns such as:
 - Unusual increase in demand of medications to treat fever, respiratory or gastrointestinal complaints
 - Unusual increase in number of prescriptions for antibiotics
 - A prescription that treats a disease that is relatively uncommon or may be associated with terrorism.
- Others
 - Individuals who suspect the presence of a notifiable disease and who fall into the following categories are authorized and requested to report to DPH:
 - Family members; School staff (superintendent, principal, teacher); College/University administrators; Owner/operators/teachers at child-care facilities; Owners/manager of food establishments; Public or private camp administrators, Prison administrators



What to report

a. Notifiable diseases

- The most recent list of notifiable diseases is at <http://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/rptdisease.html>
- All notifiable diseases should be reported within 48hrs. However some require immediate notification (see “When to report”).

b. Outbreak or clusters of a disease or symptoms

- When you see an abnormal number of a disease (or of certain symptoms) these should be reported to Public Health even if the disease is not on the notifiable disease list.



What should be contained in report?

- The disease or condition that is suspected/confirmed
- How best to contact you, the person reporting
- The patients' information (as much as is available)
 - Name, address, telephone number, date of birth, race, ethnicity, gender
 - Date of onset of illness
 - Any pertinent laboratory information
- In the case of outbreaks:
 - Where the outbreak is occurring
 - Date of onset and number affected



How to report: Healthcare providers

- Healthcare providers may report by any of these:
 - a. Phone: 302-744-4990 during regular hours or toll-free at 1-888-295-5156 (available 24/7)
 - b. Fax: 302-223-1540
 - c. Verifying your facility has reported (If in doubt, okay to report case again yourself).

For high impact conditions such as high mortality diseases or disease due to agents of bioterrorism (even if naturally occurring), or disease/symptoms involving large numbers of people, please do not rely solely on fax or on your facility reporting, call our 24/7 number to report



How to report: Healthcare facilities

Healthcare facilities

- The preferred method for healthcare facility reporting is through the Delaware Electronic Reporting and Surveillance System DERSS.
- For serious conditions that pose immediate threat to the public including high impact pathogens and agents with bioterrorism potential, DERSS entry should be supplemented by reporting by telephone.
- To report by phone (in addition to DERSS) call DPH epidemiology at 302-744-4990 during regular hours or toll-free at 888-295-5156 (available 24/7).



How to report: Laboratories

- Report results of samples positive for agents of any of the notifiable diseases through the Delaware Electronic Reporting and Surveillance System (DERSS) and the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS)
 - Laboratories without access to DERSS should fax such results to DPH at 302-223-1540
- Laboratory administrators whose lab identify a specimen positive (or suspicious) for high impact pathogens should additionally do the following:
 - Immediately Contact the Delaware Public Health lab at 302-223-1520
 - Save patient sample for transport to Public Health lab/CDC for further testing.



How to report: others

- All authorized individuals who suspect a notifiable disease or disease outbreak should report by calling DPH epidemiology at 302-744-4990 during regular hours or toll-free at 888-295-5156 (available 24/7).
- Individuals authorized and requested to report suspected disease to DPH include:
 - Those who suspect the presence of an outbreak or of a notifiable disease in an individual and fall into one of these categories: Family members; School staff (superintendent, principal, teacher); College/University administrators; Owner/operators/teachers at child-care facilities; Owners/manager of food establishments; Public or private camp administrators, Prison administrators.



When to report

- Outbreaks
 - All disease outbreaks should be reported within 48 hours of identification (even if a lab diagnosis has not been made).
- Symptom clusters
 - Any increase in specific symptoms should be reported within 48 hours (even if a lab diagnosis has not been made).
- Notifiable diseases
 - All notifiable diseases should be reported as soon as possible (but within 48 hours of diagnosis or reasonable suspicion- even if lab results have not been received)
 - Certain conditions should be reported immediately (see next slide).
 - Certain conditions should be reported within 24 hours



Immediately reportable diseases

- Report immediately by fax, phone or electronic means
- Those with * should **always** be reported by phone in addition to fax/electronic

Anthrax*	Botulism*	Cholera	Creutzfeldt-Jakob	Dengue	Diphtheria
Enterohemorrhagic E.Coli eg O157:H7	Glanders	Hantavirus	Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS)	Hepatitis A	Measles
Meningococcal infection (invasive)	Mumps	Pertussis	Plague*	Poliomyelitis	Rabies
Ricin Toxin*	Rubella	Smallpox*	Staphylococcal enterotoxin	Congenital Syphilis	Tetanus
Tuberculosis	Tularemia*	Typhoid fever	Ebola*	Marburg*	Yellow fever
Foodborne disease outbreak		Waterborne Disease outbreaks		Healthcare facility outbreak	

- Report should be made once there is reasonable clinical suspicion even in the absence of confirmatory lab data
- To report, call 302-744-4990 during regular hours or toll-free at 888-295-5156 (available 24/7)



No wrong call

- If in doubt about whether a situation/disease requires reporting, call DPH.
- If in doubt about whether a notifiable disease you diagnosed or are caring for has been reported, call DPH.
- If you have questions about how to report or how your facility can enroll in electronic reporting, call us.
- We would rather you called than not: 302-744-4990 during regular hours or toll-free at 888-295-5156 (available 24/7).

